

Desktop Sharing

DESKTOP SHARING

Desktop sharing is a common name for technologies and products that allow remote access and remote collaboration on a person's computer desktop through a graphical Terminal emulator.

The most common two scenarios for desktop sharing are:

- a) Remote log-in
- b) Real-time collaboration

Remote log-in allows users to connect to their own desktop while being physically away from their computer. Systems that support the X Window System, typically Unix-based ones, have this ability "built in". Windows versions starting from Windows 2000 have a built-in solution for remote access as well in the form of Remote Desktop Protocol and prior to that in the form of Microsoft's NetMeeting.

The open source product VNC provides cross-platform solution for remote log-in.

The shortcoming of the above solutions is their inability to work outside of a single NAT environment. A number of commercial products overcome this restriction by tunneling the traffic through rendezvous servers.

Real-time collaboration is much a bigger area of desktop sharing use, and it has gained recent momentum as an important component of rich multimedia communications. Desktop sharing, when used in conjunction with other components of multimedia communications such as audio and video, creates the notion of virtual space where people can meet, socialize and work together. On the larger scale, this area is also referred as web conferencing.

Numerous products on the market are targeting this space, including the latest version of SkypePro. [Citation needed]

CPANEL

CPanel (control Panel) is a graphical web-based web-hosting control panel, designed to simplify administration of websites. CPanel handles all aspects of website administration in its interface. The software, which is proprietary and distributed by cPanel, Inc., is designed for use by commercial web hosting services, so the company does not offer a reduced-cost personal use license; however, owners of non-profit organizations such as educational institutions and charities can request a license at a free or reduced cost. Reduced prices are frequently available from dedicated-server companies, who install it along with the operating system.

CPanel runs on a number of popular RPM-based Linux distributions, such as SUSE, Fedora, Mandriva, CentOS, Red Hat Enterprise Linux as well as FreeBSD. Preliminary support for Debian is claimed, although this version has been in "beta" state for several years, and is not supported. CPanel is commonly accessed on ports 2082 and 2083 (for an SSL version). Authentication is either via HTTP or web page login.

History

cPanel was originally designed as the control panel for Speed Hosting, a now defunct web hosting company which the original author of cPanel, J. Nick Koston had a stake in. It quickly became used by Web King after their merger with Speed Hosting. At the time both companies were hosted at Enet. After Speed Hosting and Webking merger, the new company moved their servers to Virtual Development Inc, a now defunct hosting facility. Following an agreement between J. Nick Koston and VDI, cPanel was only available to customers hosted directly at VDI. Early adopters of cPanel include: LiquidWeb, BurstNET and Powersurge (whose original owners have since started Fastservers) At the time there was little competition in the control panel market with the main choices being VDI and Alabanza. cPanel 3 was released in 1999 with an automatic upgrade and the Web Host Manager being the main features over cPanel 2.

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cPanel 3 tended to be buggy and did not have a good user interface. The interface improved when Carlos Rego of WizardsHosting made what became the default theme of cPanel. Eventually due to internal problems between VDI and J. Nick Koston, cPanel split into two separate programs called cPanel and WebPanel. WebPanel was the version run by VDI. Without the lead programmer, VDI was not able to continue any work on cPanel and eventually stopped supporting it completely. J. Nick Koston kept working on cPanel while also working at BurstNET. Eventually Nick left BurstNET on good terms to focus fully on cPanel. cPanel has been updated and improved over the years. It is now a stable and reliable control panel.

Features

To the client, cPanel provides front-ends for a number of common operations, including the management of PGP keys, crontab tasks, mail and FTP accounts, and mailing lists.

Several add-ons exist for an additional fee, the most notable being Fantastico, a bundle of scripts which automate the installation of, but not the update of (see article), web applications such as SMF, phpBB, Drupal, Joomla!, TikiWiki, Moodle and over 50 others.

Unlike some other web hosting control panels, cPanel manages some software packages separately from the underlying operating system, applying upgrades to Apache, PHP, MySQL, and related software packages automatically. This ensures that these packages are kept up-to-date and compatible with cPanel, but has become a cause for consternation to some, as it becomes difficult to easily install newer versions of these packages.

WHM (Web Host Manager)

WebHost Manager (WHM) is a web-based tool used by server administrators and resellers to manage hosting accounts on a web server. WHM listens on ports 2086 and 2087 by default.

As well as being accessible by the root admin, WHM is also accessible to users with reseller privileges. Reseller users of cPanel have a smaller set of features than the root user, generally limited by the server administrator, to features which they determine will affect their customers' accounts rather than the server as a whole. From WHM, the server administrator can perform maintenance operations such as compile Apache and upgrade RPMs installed on the system

Builds

Several builds of cPanel are available including edge, current, release, and stable, which refer to varying levels of testing.