

RE: What version of FBSD does Yahoo run?

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/FreeBSD/questions/2004-10/0798.html>

From: Ted Mittelstaedt (*tedm_at_toybox.placo.com*)

Date: 10/09/04

To: <TM4525@aol.com>, <questions@freebsd.org>

Date: Fri, 8 Oct 2004 21:03:02 -0700

> -----Original Message-----

> From: owner-freebsd-questions@freebsd.org

> [mailto:owner-freebsd-questions@freebsd.org]On Behalf Of TM4525@aol.com

> Sent: Friday, October 08, 2004 8:15 AM

> To: questions@freebsd.org

> Subject: Re: What version of FBSD does Yahoo run?

>

>

> In a message dated 10/8/04 2:42:11 AM Eastern Daylight Time,

> tedm@toybox.placo.com writes:

> > Here is a thought.

> > Why would they be running a pre-production release as a production

> > server????

> > I have no idea what yahoo does, but I think it would be irresponsibile

> > for them to attempt using 5.x on a production machine...

> >

>

> I'm sure that Yahoo, like any large commercial enterprise, has a whole

> host of specific customizations that they have applied to FreeBSD,

> and their version of FreeBSD doesn't look like what we have, at least not

> where the good bits are.

>

> Why would they customize a "beta", knowing that they'd just have

> to redo them

> when its released?

One of the primary reasons is to make sure that the rest of the public distribution doesn't have bugs/problems with their customizations. That is the point of the betas.

There's a time that the beta code must be run on production systems. If all you do as an enterprise is run the beta code on a testbed, then you are setting yourself up for unpleasant surprises when you then apply the new production release to your production network.

Quite obviously you aren't going to put beta code on every one of your

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systems all at once.

> *I doubt they are that stupid.*

TM4525 you are frankly just too used to how beta code is treated in the Microsquash world.

With Microsoft, nobody trusts their code at all, and beta Microsoft code even less. So, most people are afraid to run it on their production systems. In fact most big sites will wait until the first Service Pack comes out for the released code before switching over their production systems. It is really a big case of everyone standing around the boat saying "well it looks like the holes are plugged, you first" None of them are willing to get in, which is one of the reasons Microsoft first releases suck rocks. The other reason they suck rocks is that the developers in Microsoft fuck around for months playing foosball or whatever and wait until 2 months before going golden before actually working – then they work marathon sessions 24x7.

With the UNIX world and FreeBSD in particular the organizations like Yahoo view the beta period as a time for them to get all the stuff they want injected into the source tree, to make their jobs easier. The only way to do this is to actually use the beta code on limited production. The ideal in the FreeBSD world is that the last weeks before going gold, there are only minor changes to the source – and that idea is quite often reached.

You just need to get used to using an operating system that is used by professionals, not kids.

> *Also, If they've done*
> *substantial*
> *customization, then you really need to stop touting them as*
> *"using FreeBSD",*
> *don't you, since they are not using whats available to everyone else.*
>

Substantial customization to what?

Let's see now – let's look at the Linux world. Most Linux distros make mods to the Linux kernel but call their stuff Linux.

Let's look at the UNIX world. Lots of UNIXes are based on the SVR4 source license and meet T.O.G.'s definition of UNIX – but are quite different (or would have you believe so)

Where I think your confused is in the issue of branding. Years ago, lots of UNIX releases would call themselves "BSD" or SYSV variants. The terms BSD and SYSV were branding, not technical, terms.

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When UCB got out of the UNIX business and turned the BSD source over to the community, the original intent was to split BSD into 3 main arms – the i386 arm (FreeBSD) the non-Intel arm (NetBSD) and the commercial arm (BSDI)

What has happened since is that BSDI died and went to heaven. NetBSD, while respectable, does not have the staff working on it to pull all the really cool customizations that have been done in FreeBSD, into it's code. They have enough to do porting to stuff like Mac Centrises. OpenBSD hardly deserves a mention as it's virtually identical to NetBSD with the exception of a code audit, and it has little installed base anyhow – probably less than NetBSD.

That leaves FreeBSD as the flagship BSD.

Because of this, gradually the term BSD has gone bye bye, to be replaced by FreeBSD. And why not? University of California Berkeley (UCB) hasn't touched BSD or FreeBSD in years. What is the point of parading around the BSD name when the college that this was from has so shamefully turned it's back on it? It's much better to focus around a new name that is an amalgamation of the old BSD name and the new efforts the user community has put in.

As FreeBSD is being ported to new hardware, and as the old funky hardware that NetBSD ran on (like Mac Centrises) is going to the Great Graveyard in the Sky, the lines between the NetBSD and FreeBSD charter are being blurred. There will always be a place for NetBSD espically for systems that need to be kept simpler. But it is going to be a niche OS I am afraid – a good, valued, niche to be sure – while FreeBSD has the spotlight.

In time, FreeBSD will end up serving as the birth bed of a whole new generation of UNIX's as more and more ports of it to new hardware are performed.

Yahoo has as much right to the FreeBSD name as FreeBSD has to the BSD name. You might as well ask "you really need to stop touting FreeBSD as "using BSD" don't you, since it's not using the BSD-Lite that is available to everyone else"

Ted

PS I don't expect you to understand much of this by the way – it's not written for your benefit, but for everyone else's.

freebsd-questions@freebsd.org mailing list

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