

Re: Major Version Upgrade – 4.11 to 5.x

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/FreeBSD/questions/2006-12/msg00759.html>

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On Sunday 10 December 2006 15:41, Valen Jones wrote:

I'm interested in upgrading from 4.11 to 5.x. I currently track 4.x stable using cvsup, but I've never done a major version upgrade.

First, should I bother? My hardware has dual pentium 1.13 processors with 1G ram (I'm considering maxing it out at 4). I host a few domains on this machine and I have four jails configured on it which will have to be upgraded too. I have users counting particularly on mail service not being down for too long.

Other than the obvious advice to start with a good backup, can anyone tell me:

- 1) Will I gain a major benefit from upgrading
- 2) Where should I look for instructions / advice on upgrading
- 3) Also any general advice from personal experience.

Beech's advice is sound. I would stress that the simplest and easiest by far is indeed a clean install. And take two backups, if you have customers counting on things going right. Make sure your backups are readable, usable and complete (no bad spots on tape media, no files inadvertently omitted, etc.).

If at all possible, leave the production system running and begin the new installation on separate hardware. If you have a fast new machine to migrate onto, do that. However your current hardware sounds adequate for the light load you describe. If you have just a spare machine of nearly the same horsepower and configuration, you could do the new installation on the spare machine, get it configured and tested, and then backup the old machine twice, wipe the drive and re-partition, and then transfer the newly-built configuration onto your production hardware. Watch out for /etc/fstab gotchas, like if the test machine has an ad0 ATA drive and the production is da0 SCSI.

This will allow you to do a lot of migration, testing and tweaking

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off–line, without your customers noticing much downtime, except for the final changeover.

How current are your installed ports? Review the ports you do have installed, and see whether you're really still using them. It will save you a little time on the new machine by not having to build ports you don't really need anymore. Look at your key applications, and where there are significant version changes between what you're running and what's current, familiarize yourself with the upgrade issues (if any) that each port presents. Be prepared to test any new features you hope to use, or to regression tes