

Re: #host localhost

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.unix.bsd.freebsd.misc/2007-07/msg00395.html>

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 - *Date:* Sat, 28 Jul 2007 04:57:31 +0300
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On Fri, 27 Jul 2007 17:45:44 -0400, Oliver Cromm <lispamateur@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

Is there nothing one can do about "host localhost" showing nonsense?

Sure there is:

```
$ host localhost
localhost.laptop has address 127.0.0.1
$ host 127.0.0.1
1.0.0.127.in-addr.arpa domain name pointer localhost.laptop.
$ cat /etc/resolv.conf
search laptop
nameserver 127.0.0.1
$
```

The output shown above is a result of the named daemon running on my laptop, but that's kind of besides the point here. The real point is that if you are absolutely **determined** to make 'localhost' and 127.0.0.1 resolve correctly, both forwards and backwards, there is indeed a way to do it. Naturally, running a local named daemon comes with a cost -- the cost of learning about DNS and configuring your own, local, caching named daemon -- but that's ok, I guess.

I spent an hour trying to "solve" this problem until I read a comment to the effect that this doesn't work correctly on FreeBSD anyway, and all is well if "ping localhost" goes right.

All my settings are the way it's described here:
http://wiki.unixboard.de/index.php/FreeBSD_-_Namensaufl%C3%B6sung

Can you post **here** what you have tried, what you expected to happen, what you observed, and why you think this is a "FreeBSD problem"?

Not all the people who read newsgroup posts and reply to them are constantly online, and there may be difficulties in tracking down the web page and reading it.

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But "host" insists on

1. adding the domain to "localhost", even when there is no "search" in resolv.conf
2. using DNS to resolve, never the hosts file

This is precisely the way the host(1) utility works. It specifically mentions that it is a *DNS* *lookup* utility in its manpage.

If you want to debug and/or troubleshoot non-DNS resolution of host names, domain names, or IP addresses, you will have to use some other tool (i.e. 'ping' as you have found out already).

Maybe the man page for host should mention that? I guess I just ought to use dig.

It does:

```
% HOST(1) BIND9 HOST(1)
%
% NAME
% host - DNS lookup utility
%
% SYNOPSIS
% host [-aCdlrsTwv] [-c class] [-N ndots] [-R number] [-t type]
% [-W wait] [-m flag] [-4] [-6] {name} [server]
%
% DESCRIPTION
%
% host is a simple utility for performing DNS lookups. It is
% normally used to convert names to IP addresses and vice versa.
```

Nowhere does host(1) mention that it is expected to work, or that it should indeed work for anything else *except* DNS. Please read the manpage more carefully :-)

Well, host doesn't quite work on a RedHat Linux server at work, too, the answer is:

```
Host localhost not found: 2(SERVFAIL)
```

That's ok. You have tried to resolve the non-qualified domain name 'localhost' and the Redhat implementation of host(1) didn't append any domain name, even though the 'localhost' domain name lacks any '.' character and is obviously 'unqualified'.

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But that's slightly better than getting back an external IP. Is that the fault of the DNS server I'm using (openDNS)?

Very likely. Having said that, if you don't like what an external DNS server does, you can always install your own.

Regards,
Giorgos