

Massive scale installation and management tools for Debian GNU / Linux (part 1)

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You have 5,000 or 50,000 machines to install and manage across the country, at a thousand distant locations into your enterprise.

Such massive GNU / Linux installation and management for corporations needs suitable tools or become a nightmare.

Debian GNU / Linux has some options, that can even be used for other distributions.

It evolved its tools since 1993 to ease the sysadmin work.

At this text we will list and (preliminary) evaluate the features, documentation, scalability, flexibility, stability, community health, track record, success stories and road map of some of the available tools.

Most, if not all, have been packaged for Debian and are available either at official repositories and or at upstream sites.

These massive installation and management tools have a learning curve suitable for the enterprise, so for small office deployments, many are an overkill solution.

But for the proposed scenario, some are like a God bless.

These lists are not exhaustive, but representative of the tools being used at real world large scale deployments.

The text will not evaluate enterprise monitoring tools. They will be the subject of a future article.

Registered users can write comments below the articles.

Tools evaluated

- [Debian Installer preseeding](#) [0]
- [debconf preseeding](#) [25]
- [Jablicator](#) [1]
- [FAI, Fully Automatic Installation](#) [2]
- [Cfengine](#) [3]
- [Pkgsync](#) [4]
- [Puppet](#) [5]
- [Bcfg2](#) [6]
- [Ldfg](#) [7]
- [AIS : Adaptable Installation System](#) [8]
- [Instalinux](#) [9]
- [GOsa](#) [10]
- [Ebox](#) [11]
- [OpenQRM](#) [12]
- [Hyperic HQ](#) [13]
- [Landscape](#) [14]
- [NetDirector](#) [15]
- [The Océano project](#) [16]
- [ISconf](#) [17]
- [psgconf - Modular System Configuration Tool](#) [18]

Sysadmin information sites

- [O'Reilly sysadmin](#) [19]
- [Sysadmin resources](#) [20]
- [SAGE](#) [21]
- [Open Management Consortium](#) [22]
- [Infrastructures.org](#) [23]
- [Debian Administration](#) [24]

At the next parts of this article, we will start to evaluate the tools.

[0] <http://www.debian.org/releases/stable/i386/apb.html.en>

[1] <http://packages.debian.org/etch/jablicator>

[2] <http://www.informatik.uni-koeln.de/fai/>

[3] <http://www.cfengine.org>

[4] <http://packages.debian.org/stable/admin/pkgsync>

[5] <http://reductivelabs.com/trac/puppet/wiki>

[6] <http://www.bcfg2.org>

[7] <http://www.lcfg.org>

[8] <http://www.ensl.cs.gwu.edu/projects/ais/>

[9] <http://www.instalinux.com/>

[10] <http://www.gosa-project.org>

[11] <http://www.ebox-platform.com/>

[12] <http://www.openqrm.org>

[13] <http://www.hyperic.com>

[14] <http://www.canonical.com/landscape>

[15] <http://www.netdirector.org>

[16] <http://www.research.ibm.com/oceanoproject/index.html>

[17] <http://www.isconf.org>

[18] <http://www.feep.net/psgconf/>

[19] <http://www.oreillynet.com/sysadmin>

[20] <http://sysadminresources.com>

[21] <http://www.sage.org>

[22] <http://www.open-management.com/>

[23] <http://www.infrastructures.org>

[24] <http://www.debian-administration.org>

[25] <http://packages.debian.org/etch/debconf-utils>