

SUSE® Manager

Frequently Asked Questions

June 2017



What is SUSE® Manager?

SUSE Manager is a best-in-class open source IT infrastructure management solution for your software-defined infrastructure. Designed to help your enterprise DevOps and IT Operations teams to reduce complexity and regain control of IT assets by enabling comprehensive management of your Linux systems, VMs and containers with a single, centralized solution. SUSE Manager includes the Salt open source software and provides automated and cost-effective software, asset, patch and configuration management, as well as, system provisioning, orchestration and monitoring capabilities. These capabilities enable you to easily manage and maintain your enterprise Linux system deployments across physical, virtual and cloud environments. As a result, your organization can decrease total cost of ownership while securing enterprise systems and improving compliance and service quality.

What's new in SUSE Manager 3.1?

Building on the previous release, SUSE Manager 3.1 introduces new enhancements focused on improving DevOps efficiency with enhanced management of software templates and compliance in hybrid cloud and container infrastructures. As a key component of a software-defined infrastructure, it delivers best-in-class open source infrastructure management, with new enhancements focused on:

- Improving DevOps efficiency and optimizing operations
- Ensuring container and cloud VM compliance
- Reducing complexity and regaining control of your IT assets

Is there a reinstall needed to move to SUSE Manager 3.1?

No, updating from SUSE Manager 3.0 to SUSE Manager 3.1 is as easy as installing a service pack for SUSE Linux Enterprise. It is essentially running 4 commands.

What are the components of the SUSE Manager solution?

SUSE Manager is made up of 2 main components.

- **SUSE Manager Server:** SUSE Manager server provides the web-based user interface and connection to SUSE Customer Center. It is provided as a software appliance. SUSE Manager Server captures and maintains server data and provides comprehensive lifecycle management functionality via the user interface and a rich API for automation. You deploy SUSE Manager server behind your company firewall. SUSE Manager Server subscriptions are available:
 - For environments with up to 50 managed instances
 - For environments with more than 50 managed instances
- **SUSE Manager Proxy Server:** The proxy server lowers bandwidth needs and provides faster local updates for environments with more than 300 servers or deployments across dispersed geographical locations.

Additionally, for managed systems, we provide a lifecycle management subscription. This subscription delivers functionality for updating servers as well as advanced server management capabilities that increase your Linux environment's scalability and enhance your IT staff's productivity. It enables you to deploy, configure and redeploy Linux systems from a single, centralized console.

A SUSE Manager installation consists of at least one SUSE Manager Server and the SUSE Manager Lifecycle Management entitlement for each managed system that has an active SUSE Linux Enterprise subscription.

What are the key functionalities?

SUSE Manager provides complete control and visibility into your IT resources and lifecycles from asset management to redeployment. Through its automated and effective management, SUSE Manager keeps your data center secure and compliant.

SUSE Manager key functionalities are:

- **Automation** – Automate Linux server provisioning, configuration and patching for faster, consistent and repeatable server deployments.
- **Asset Management**—Inventory your systems and use unattended bare-metal provisioning.
- **Provisioning**—Streamline your operating system (OS) provisioning (bare-metal, VM & container).
- **Software Package Management**—Customize your package management and enable integration with third-party management tools.
- **Patch Management**—Automate your updates and patches.
- **Real-time Orchestration & Configuration Management**—Leverage Salt as part of SUSE Manager for collecting system status for installed packages & config files, using “state files” to hierarchically describe the configuration of your systems, and for automating and orchestrating your container and cloud VM deployments. With SUSE Manager 3.1, IT Admins now have the capability to easily deploy and parameterize salt formulas via standardized forms in the SUSE Manager UI.
- **Redeployment**—Re-deploy on the same hardware with no physical interaction needed.
- **Health Monitoring**—Monitor the health of your systems.
- **Compliance and Security**—Identify security vulnerabilities and keep your systems compliant.

What are the benefits of using SUSE Manager?

With SUSE Manager, you can comprehensively manage your Linux servers across physical, virtual and cloud environments while improving your DevOps and IT Operations efficiency.

- Optimize operations while reducing costs: SUSE Manager provides a unified Linux management infrastructure by standardizing and automating server provisioning, configuration and patching. It helps DevOps and IT Operations teams perform management tasks faster and with fewer errors, which improves productivity while reducing server downtime. Users can also identify server performance issues earlier, thus reducing disruption to services and limiting business impact. As a result, SUSE Manager reduces the cost of Linux management and optimizes operations by standardizing management of your Linux systems.
- Reduce complexity and regain control of IT assets: SUSE Manager enables DevOps and IT Operations teams to manage various Linux distributions (SUSE Linux Enterprise, Red Hat Enterprise Linux¹ and CentOS²), different hardware platforms (from x86, Power to mainframe) and various deployment environments (physical, virtual and cloud) from a single, centralized console using the same automated functionality. As a result, SUSE Manager ensures the same service quality and availability for Linux workloads independently of the number of servers, distributions, architectures and deployment types. This allows companies

¹ This is a supported scenario under certain circumstances or if you are using SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with Expanded Support. Please contact your SUSE Sales Representative for more details.

² Only on request; requires SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with Expanded Support

to optimize and expand their IT operations, reduce complexity and regain control of their IT assets. Additionally, Microsoft Windows customers with Linux environments can use SUSE Manager Management Pack for Microsoft System Center, an add-on to Microsoft Systems Center that allows administrators to manage Windows and Linux servers from one console.

- Ensure compliance with internal security policies and external regulations: SUSE Manager allows administrators to automate operating system tracking and auditing processes. IT organizations can establish and enforce server configurations by tracking server changes, thus ensuring consistency across the data center. SUSE Manager automatically confirms that servers have the latest security updates, checks system-security configuration settings and examines systems for signs of compromise. With these capabilities, you can easily conduct hardware and software inventories to quickly comply with audits. It also improves service quality: by helping you perform management and provisioning tasks faster and with fewer errors, SUSE Manager reduces server downtime. You can also identify server performance issues earlier, reducing service disruption and limiting adverse business impacts. SUSE Manager helps your IT department maximize your systems' reliability, availability and performance.
- Eases migration from Red Hat Enterprise Linux to SUSE Linux Enterprise: If you are a Red Hat Enterprise Linux customer who wants to reduce your cost of ownership and obtain higher quality support, you can now use SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with Expanded Support and benefit from a systems management product that seamlessly manages both Linux distributions. SUSE Manager enables you to manage existing Red Hat servers while migrating to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. If you have Red Hat Network Satellite, you can transition to SUSE Manager through one simple process. And because the SUSE Manager user interface (UI) is similar to Red Hat Network Satellite's UI, you won't need to retrain your IT staff.

Why should I choose SUSE Manager over other options?

When you choose SUSE Manager, you get the most advanced systems management solution for enterprise Linux environments. You also get:

- The only systems management solution tightly integrated with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server: Unlike other Linux management solutions, SUSE Manager is tightly integrated with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, ensuring consistent management across systems by exposing functionality that behaves exactly the same on the managed server and the management console. SUSE Manager enables you to effectively manage SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and all product extensions across physical, virtual and cloud deployments. SUSE Manager also manages SUSE Linux Enterprise Server- based appliances and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z.
- The most efficient solution for managing Linux environments: SUSE Manager delivers best-in-class Linux server management capabilities enhanced by the inclusion of unique SUSE Linux Enterprise capabilities. SUSE Manager eases initial setup for new servers with AutoYaST to reduce your deployment time and effort. SUSE Manager is available as both a SUSE Manager server or a SUSE Manager proxy server.
- The ability to manage both SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and Red Hat Enterprise Linux: SUSE Manager is the only Linux server management solution built to manage both SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and Red Hat Enterprise Linux. SUSE Manager maintains compatibility with Spacewalk and provides a similar feature set and user experience to those available with Red Hat Network Satellite. In combination with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with Expanded Support, SUSE Manager delivers the same management capabilities for Red Hat Enterprise Linux as it does for SUSE Linux Enterprise Server while offering a simple and straightforward migration from Red Hat Network Satellite 5.

What is Salt?

Salt is an increasingly popular execution, orchestration and configuration management framework that is scalable and easy to extend with existing plug-ins for Docker and OpenStack. Salt provides a very scalable, fast and secure way to efficiently collect system status information about installed packages and configuration files in real time for all your systems.

It enables you to deploy tens of thousands of systems without compromising speed or security.

With real-time configuration and monitoring, the time to patch hundreds or even thousands of servers in large environments is significantly reduced. It can also automate and orchestrate cloud deployments and Docker containers.

What versions of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and Red Hat Enterprise Linux does SUSE Manager support?

Currently, SUSE Manager supports workloads running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 11 SP3 and SP4, SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 12, 12 SP1 and 12 SP2, and the latest versions of Red Hat Enterprise Linux 6 and 7.

How does the discontinuation of support from Red Hat for RHN affect SUSE Manager's ability to connect to the Red Hat CDN?

SUSE Manager connects to Red Hat CDN the same way currently supported Satellite Server 6 does - with entitlement certificates that enumerate subscription authorization. Nothing in the RHN support end affects this connection.

How does the discontinuation of support from Red Hat for RHN affect support for SUSE Manager connected Red Hat-based clients?

SUSE Manager by default now uses salt to connect to Red Hat minions - and not RHN nor Subscription Manager. In addition - we are NOT ending support for using the RHN stack to get updates from SUSE Manager, should customers wish to use this "traditional" method.

How do you deploy SUSE Manager, and what are the system requirements?

SUSE provides SUSE Manager Server and Proxy as online repositories for easy installation on top of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 12 Service Pack 2.

SUSE Manager is available with a built-in PostgreSQL database, which is strongly recommended, but can also leverage existing Oracle 11g databases.

Server requirements:

Hardware	Recommended
CPU	Multi-core 64-bit CPU (x86_64)
RAM	Minimum 4 GB+ for test server Minimum 16 GB+ for base installation Minimum 32 GB+ for a production server
Free Disk Space	Minimum 100 GB for root partition Minimum 50 GB for /var/lib/pgsql Minimum 50 GB per SUSE product + 100 GB per Red Hat product /var/spacwalk

Where can I purchase SUSE Manager?

You can purchase SUSE Manager directly from SUSE or from one of our partners, resellers and solution providers.

To buy directly from SUSE, please visit: www.suse.com/products/suse-manager/how-to-buy/

To buy via a reseller or solution provider, please search: <https://www.suse.com/partners/find-partner/>

Where do I get more information about SUSE Manager and other SUSE Enterprise Linux Server products?

For more information about SUSE Manager, visit: www.suse.com/products/suse-manager/

For more information about SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, visit: www.suse.com/products/server/

For more information about SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with Expanded Support, visit: www.suse.com/products/expandedsupport/