



X Windows System Administrator's Guide, Vol 8

(Definitive Guides to the X Window System)

Linda Mui, Eric Pearce

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As X moves out of the hacker's domain and into the "real world," users can't be expected to master all the ins and outs of setting up and administering their own X software. That will increasingly become the domain of system administrators. Even for experienced system administrators, X raises many issues, both because of subtle changes in the standard UNIX way of doing things and because X blurs the boundaries between different platforms. Under X, users can run applications across the network on systems with different resources (including fonts, colors, and screen size). Many of these issues are poorly understood, and the technology for dealing with them is in rapid flux. This book is the first and only book devoted to the issues of system administration for X and X-based networks, written not just for UNIX system administrators but for anyone faced with the job of administering X (including those running X on stand-alone workstations). The book includes:

- An overview of X that focuses on issues that affect the system administrator's job.
- Information on obtaining, compiling, and installing the X software, including a discussion of the trade-offs between vendor-supplied and the free MIT versions of X.
- How to set up *xdm*, the X display manager, which takes the place of the login program under X and can be used to create a customized turnkey X session for each user.
- How to set up user accounts under X (includes a comparison of the familiar shell setup files and programs to the new mechanisms provided by X).
- Issues involved in making X more secure. X's security features are not strong, but an understanding of what features are available can be very important, since X makes it possible for users to intrude on each other in new and sometimes unexpected ways.
- How fonts are used by X, including a description of the font server.
- A discussion of the issues raised by running X on heterogenous networks.
- How colors are managed under X and how to get the same colors across multiple devices with different hardware characteristics.
- The administration issues involved in setting up and managing an X terminal.
- How to use PC and Mac X servers to maximize reuse of existing hardware and convert outdated hardware into X terminals.
- How to obtain and install additional public domain software and patches for X.
- Covers features new in R5, including the font server and Xcms.



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