



# RED HAT NETWORK CORPORATE ACCOUNT PRACTICES

This guide is designed to help corporate customers begin using Red Hat Network (RHN) and avoid some of the pitfalls that exist in establishing and configuring accounts. The following tasks are described in detail:

- **Creating the corporate account** – How to establish a single, appropriate Red Hat account
- **Obtaining entitlements** – How to purchase entitlements and activate your products using the correct account
- **Registering systems** – How to enable RHN service for systems under the corporate account
- **Applying entitlements** – How to associate RHN entitlements with your systems
- **Using channels** – How to obtain Red Hat and custom software, both individual packages and full distributions
- **Grouping systems** – How to categorize system profiles in order to ease maintenance and coordinate oversight
- **Adding administrators** – How to create sub-accounts and correlate them with system groups and software channels

For this reason, Red Hat recommends reviewing this guide before beginning an evaluation or establishing a permanent account. Refer to Red Hat Network technical documentation, especially the RHN Reference Guide for your entitlement level, available at: [www.redhat.com/docs/manuals/RHNnetwork/](http://www.redhat.com/docs/manuals/RHNnetwork/)

You may contact Red Hat for assistance at anytime using the Customer Service and Support options described in the Getting help section at the end of this document or by simply writing [customerservice@redhat.com](mailto:customerservice@redhat.com).

## IMPLEMENTING THESE PRACTICES

Before you begin taking the steps prescribed in this guide, you should understand at whom they are aimed. The next five sections (Creating the corporate account through Using channels) are applicable to all RHN customers. The remaining technical sections (beginning with Grouping systems) apply to customers with Management or Provisioning entitlements only.

## CREATING THE CORPORATE ACCOUNT

First, you should understand the account you establish for Red Hat Network is actually applicable to all of Red Hat. This means the same account should be used for purchasing software, activating products, obtaining RHN entitlements, and accessing support. Therefore, if your company or organization already has a Red Hat account, you should use it instead of creating another. If such an account doesn't exist, you may establish it through the RHN website ([rhn.redhat.com](http://rhn.redhat.com)) or [www.redhat.com](http://www.redhat.com).

Regardless of the form you choose, you must be sure to create a corporate account. This account will serve all of your Red Hat needs, including access to Red Hat Network. If you are establishing your account through the RHN website, click the Create a new corporate account link that appears after clicking Create Account on the login page. If going through [www.redhat.com](http://www.redhat.com), such as through the Account link at the top-right corner of the main page or while activating a product, ensure you select the checkbox marked Corporate Users.

Creating a corporate Red Hat account, rather than a personal account, prevents the arduous and error-prone task of transitioning your entitlements, systems, and account configuration later. To

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create a corporate account, enter information about your organization. Most importantly, select an intuitive username and identify a contact method useful to your entire set of users. For instance, if your company name is Paper Worx, Ltd., you might use "paperworx," "paper\_worx," or even "pwltd\_admin" as the company username. (Note that special characters like \*, #, /, and others are not allowed in a username.) Everything but the username can be changed later.

Similarly, the email address you provide should be a contact list or alias capable of reaching multiple employees. This precludes a single point of failure resulting from one person being designated to receive all RHN administrator privileges and correspondence. Your initial password can be anything but should be changed to something permanent and secure after you receive confirmation of the account's creation from Red Hat. Make backup copies (digital and printed) of all administrative login information and store it in secure locations accessible by key personnel.

If you've inadvertently established a personal account that must be switched to a corporate account, please contact [customerservice@redhat.com](mailto:customerservice@redhat.com).

## OBTAINING ENTITLEMENTS

To benefit from Red Hat Network, a system must be entitled to RHN. All Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) products come with Red Hat Network Update entitlements, RHN's introductory service level. This entitlement goes into effect whenever the associated product is activated. This is done differently depending on the way the product is purchased. Regardless, you must ensure the entitlements get attributed to the appropriate account, in this case, the primary corporate account, as entitlements are non-transferable. Do not obtain entitlements with a personal account or a sub-account of the corporate account.

If you buy RHEL directly through Red Hat U.S. (1-800-RED-HAT1), the entitlement is automatically applied to the account you provide the sales representative. If you don't yet have an account, the representative will create one for you. (Remember to base this upon your company, not you. See [Creating the corporate account](#).) Similarly, if you make your purchase through either [www.redhat.com](http://www.redhat.com) or the RHN website, the entitlement will automatically be applied to the account you used to log in.

If you buy RHEL through a third-party distributor or Red Hat International, you will need to activate your product manually. Do this by going to [www.redhat.com](http://www.redhat.com), logging in with your corporate account information, clicking Support & Docs, entering your

product ID number from the registration card accompanying the software, and clicking Activate. When you next log into the RHN website, you'll see the available entitlement.

You can also purchase RHEL and RHN entitlements directly through the RHN website. After logging in, click Buy Now within the Your RHN tab and make your selections. This is especially useful in upgrading your service level to the more advanced Management and Provisioning entitlements. For a full description of all RHN offerings, visit: [www.redhat.com/software/rhn/](http://www.redhat.com/software/rhn/)

If you want to purchase entitlements that co-terminate with existing ones, please contact a direct sales representative. If you've obtained entitlements with a personal account that should be associated with a corporate account, please contact [customerservice@redhat.com](mailto:customerservice@redhat.com).

## REGISTERING SYSTEMS

Once you've created the corporate account, you may begin registering systems to be managed by it. For Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) 2.1 systems, registration is handled by the Red Hat Network Registration Client, initiated by running this command: `rhnc_register`. Registration of RHEL 3 systems is carried out by the Red Hat Update Agent, whose registration functionality is called with the command: `up2date-register`.

In addition, Red Hat Network-specific activation keys may be used to assign systems to certain groups and entitlement levels while registering them. This is particularly useful after you've fully configured your organization's account. Refer to the Registering with Activation Keys section of the RHN Reference Guide for instructions.

Regardless of the application you use, you must stipulate your corporate account during system registration. To do this, include the username and current password of the primary account when requested. Otherwise, you will create a new RHN account and separate the system from the organization. Once you finish the registration process, the system should show up in the system list on the RHN website. Contact Red Hat customer service if it does not.

## APPLYING ENTITLEMENTS

Once your corporate account contains entitlements and systems, you can begin matching them up to obtain the levels of service you desire. To do this, go to the System Entitlements page available under the Systems tab in the top navigation bar of the RHN website. Please note that changing a system's entitlement is an irreversible action. Only increases in entitlement levels are allowed. Systems cannot be re-entitled to a lower entitlement level. For

instance, a system entitled to the Update service level can be promoted to the Management level, but this action cannot be reversed. The only way to undo a system's entitlement change is to delete the system profile, re-register the system, and re-apply the original entitlement.

On the System Entitlements page, select the desired service level for each system from the associated pull-down menu. If you need additional entitlements, as indicated by tallies at the bottom of the page, click the Buy them now link at the top or use your preferred method of purchase. As always, ensure you are logged into the corporate account.

## USING CHANNELS

Software channels allow the deployment of software packages and Errata for your systems. Base channels reflect the base operating system installed; Child channels are derivatives of these base channels. All software channels available to your organization through its entitlement level can be found under the Channels tab in the top navigation bar of the RHN website.

In addition to software packages and Errata updates, you may download ISO images containing full Red Hat distributions through the Channels interface. Get to these images through the Easy ISOs page or the Downloads tab of the Channel Details page. These images will need to be downloaded and burned to disc before use in installation. Refer to tips on those pages and these instructions: [www.redhat.com/download/howto\\_download.html](http://www.redhat.com/download/howto_download.html)

## GROUPING SYSTEMS

One of the greatest advantages of Red Hat Network is the ability to group systems, thereby allowing them to be found easily and managed simultaneously. You may use the system groups interface to add and remove systems, assign administrative privileges to users, and apply Errata, with the help of the System Set Manager. Note that systems must be entitled to either the Management or Provisioning service level to be added to a system group.

Before creating and managing system groups, you should understand how they work. First, be aware that each system can belong to multiple groups. This allows your organization to create a variety of categories, rather than a single, binary type; Because a system is of a certain type does not exclude it from additional classification.

For example, systems may be broken down by function, geography and even platforms. Functions can be Web servers, application servers, and databases. The geographies are locales, like L.A., New York, and Raleigh. Platforms may be Opteron, zSeries, and S/390,

among others. So, theoretically, you could create a multitude of different system groups based upon these roles locations, and platforms. These groups are not mutually exclusive. Each locale may offer every function and contain all machine types.

When creating these classifications, you should consider your organizational structure, particularly as it applies to system administration. You may find it useful to make your system groups specific to the classifications. For instance, if you have administrators responsible for each function and location, you could create groups like "web servers – L.A.", "apps servers – new york", "databases – raleigh" and so on. The groups might be further refined by including the platform.

Once you have your systems grouped, you have many options for managing them. First, you can grant administrative privileges to any of your users through the Admin tab of the System Group Details page. (Refer to the next section for adding administrators.) Next, you can use the System Set Manager to conduct a whole host of tasks, including apply Errata Updates, upgrade packages, and change preferences. On the System Groups page, select the groups to be managed, determine whether you want to work with a combination of all the systems contained or only those common to the selected groups, and click the appropriate button: Work With Union or Work With Intersection.

## ADDING ADMINISTRATORS

You may add administrator accounts to your organization at any time, but devising a grouping methodology for systems may help in determining the types of accounts needed. After creating the primary corporate account, you may log into the RHN website using that account's login information and begin establishing sub-accounts. Do this through the Users tab in the top navigation bar. Note that your organization's account must be entitled to either the Management or Provisioning service level to have multiple administrators.

The simplest method for adding administrators is to base accounts upon individuals, typically using their names or email addresses. Since usernames and email addresses must be unique across Red Hat Network, Red Hat recommends making these types of logins the administrator's email address, such as "bsmith@paperworx.com". Doing this provides a direct correlation between the employee and the account. As long as Bob doesn't share his password, you can be assured any action attributed to his account was indeed taken by him.

**Warning** – Note that deleting users, however, can be problematic (especially if the user accounts were used in entitlement purchases) and usually requires the assistance of Red Hat Network support. RHN Satellite Server customers, however, may delete users through the Satellite’s version of the RHN website.

Options exist for creating more flexible user accounts. You may decide to create function-, platform-, or geography-based sub-accounts like “paperworx-web-servers”, “paperworx-itanium” or “paperworx-new-york” to better correlate them to system groups and their intended domains. Since these usernames must also be unique, you should consider including the company name or abbreviation, perhaps as a prefix like in these examples to readily differentiate between these and individual accounts.

You may combine these methods to create administrative accounts based upon geography, function, and platform, such as “paperworx-web-ny-itanium” to encompass a single role within your company. This enables you to match account names to jobs without using employee names, thus preventing you from having to remove users and reassign system groups and other responsibilities when employees change or leave positions.

Once created, you can edit each user and assign additional roles, such as channel and organization administration rights. You may assign system group administrative privileges through the Admin tab of the System Group Details page. Note that user views are limited to the systems and channels they may manage. RHN Satellite Server customers should note user accounts in the Satellite website are independent of those created through RHN.

## RED HAT SALES AND GENERAL INQUIRIES

### USA/Canada

1-888-RED-HAT1  
1-866-273-3428 x44555  
sales@redhat.com

### Europe

France	+33-1-41-91-23 23
Germany	+49-711-96437-0
Ireland	+353-21-230-3400
Italy	+39-02-5681-4487
Spain	900-502-038
UK	+44-1483-300169

### Asia/Pacific and Latin America

Australia	+61-2-8923-2800
Brazil	+55-41-322-5500
China	+852-2892-2003
India	+91-22-22881326
Japan	+81-3-6406-9900
Korea	+82-2-3482-6440
Malaysia	+60-12-297-5516
Singapore	+65-6271-8589

## GETTING HELP

First, you should review RHN technical documentation, available to you under Help on the RHN website, with the appropriate entitlement level. The manuals are:

- **RHN (Provisioning, Management, or Update) Reference Guide** – This guide, the definitive collection of information on Red Hat Network, describes how to create RHN accounts, register and update systems, and use the RHN website to its utmost potential.
- **RHN Satellite Server Installation Guide** – This guide provides the essential steps necessary to get an RHN Satellite Server up and running.
- **RHN Proxy Server Installation Guide** – This guide enables you to get an RHN Proxy Server up and running.
- **RHN Client Configuration Guide** – This guide explains how to configure the systems to be served by an RHN Proxy Server or RHN Satellite Server.
- **RHN Channel Management Guide** – This guide identifies in great detail the recommended methods for building custom packages, creating corporate channels, and managing private Errata.

Next, you should examine the support options available to you, also listed under Help:

<https://rhn.redhat.com/help/contact.pxt>

Finally, you should review descriptions, tours, and screenshots of other RHN products and services by visiting:

[www.redhat.com/software/rhn/](http://www.redhat.com/software/rhn/)