

The server 12 months later

Written by Maxx
Sunday, 25 October 2009 07:17

I just noticed that I have not updated my blog about the server since last year ... over 12 months ago. Since this machine is running 2 external web pages I did some little notes on Linuxspace.net, but I have noticed some people have actually been coming here.

Well since then, the server has moved from the old IBM Fedora box to a dual core AMD and Ubuntu. Why the switch, well I was able to get email working on Ubuntu easier than Fedora. I have also switched to Ubuntu on the desktop from Mandriva. I still think Mandriva is a great product but KDE 4.0 seemed to crash a lot on me.

The other part of the upgrade task was to see how to recover from a catastrophic failure. i.e. A total hardware meltdown. I find a lot of new IT people who can set the machine up, but do the long hours trying to recover from a failure as they do not do that often. I would recommend anyone to stage a recovery if they can to be sure they can install backups o.k.

So now I setup a LAMP server in Ubuntu. That is a Linux Apache MySQL PHP server, which is required for the webpage. Second was to install Postfix MTA. I used Dovecot for the IMAP/POP server (I use IMAP). Also installed BIND for the local network. Lastly, installed Webmin for managing. This is not part of Ubuntu's core packages so it needs to be installed separately.

Other apps installed include Joomla web management, squirrel mail for web based mail access, and VPN server as well. One thing I have noticed with the VPN, you need a router that supports VPN passthrough, if you do not have that, VPN connections can be a bit hit and miss.

When you setup Joomla, make sure you understand these rules. With both Joomla and Webmin I have the following rules.

1. Always setup a second admin account that used a name that does not have an account on the system. So don't use root, admin, administrator, sysadmin ...etc. And don't use your name, something like "king" or "emperor". Again, make sure the name does not exist on the system as a user.

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2. Use a unique password. I know sounds a bit silly, but what risk do you put your password if it is the same one that you use to get into online banking. The best tip I heard was "If you need to write it down, its probably a good password". Make sure this password is not the same as you root user password or any other account for that matter.

So to recap on security, you should have a root password, a webmin user and password, and a Joomla user and password, along with your regular account and password.