

BOOK REVIEWS

BY JAMES MOHR

Oracle Database 10g Linux Administration

This book is not just a good introduction to Oracle 10g on Linux; it is a good introduction to Oracle 10g. I also use Oracle 10g on Solaris, and I found this book to be just as useful for my Solaris problems. Naturally, the emphasis is running Oracle 10g on Linux, but I had little trouble mentally migrating the details to Solaris.

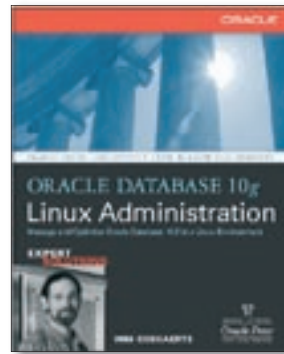
Whether you are familiar with Linux and new to Oracle, familiar with Oracle and new to Linux, or new to both, *Oracle Database 10g Linux Administration* is a valuable and easy-to-use resource. The book starts off with an introduction to both Linux and Oracle, including a (refreshingly short) history of each.

As each section of the book progresses, the author goes deeper into the subject matter. Although I felt he started with topics that were too basic, I found

I could easily overlook the few pages he sacrificed for completeness.

One of the most fascinating parts of the book was the chapter on the Oracle architecture. Although I have seen other books that go into more detail on the topic of Oracle architecture, the author did a nice job of covering the key topics, and the discussion was very easy to understand.

One thing this author did not provide was a discussion of SQL. In my opinion, this was a *good* choice. I consider it a waste of valuable time for the author to use up space in a book for Oracle administrators explaining what a SELECT statement is and discussing the basics of putting together a query.



The book does, however, discuss “Tuning SQL,” an important topic that is often missed.

The last two chapters *Oracle Database 10g Linux Administration* felt more like marketing information than an integral part of

the book. However, considering the amount of information and detail in the rest of the book, I didn’t mind the diversion.

Edward Whalen

465 Pages

Oracle Press – McGrawHill/Osborne,

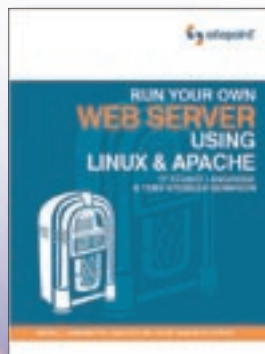
0-07-223053-3

£ 30.00, US\$ 49.99, EUR 37.95

Run Your Own Web Server Using Linux and Apache

After reading this book for a while, I started wondering if there weren’t more to say about setting up an Apache web server. Much of the space is devoted to listings and screenshots, and the information in the book is fairly superficial. I concluded that *Run Your Own Web Server Using Linux and Apache* is definitely not a book for a seasoned Apache administrator.

Then it occurred to me that this book is *not intended* as a book for a seasoned Apache administrator. The book is written for people who, probably for the first time, have decided to take advantage of the power of both Linux and Apache and set up a web server *on their own*. They are not the people



who want to learn the nuts and bolts of either Linux or Apache, but rather are those who just need the necessary foundation to get an Apache web server running in Linux.

When I realized this, I had to go back and review a lot of what I had already read. In doing so, I found this to be an excellent resource for novice Linux and Apache administrators. With just this

book as a guide, I am convinced that anyone with even a basic knowledge of computers and the Internet would be easily able to get an Apache server running.

The book starts off with installing Linux, then moves on to a basic overview of using and administering Linux and Apache. Obviously, just getting the

server running is not even half of the work, which the authors realize. They continue their discussion into basic aspects of administering the system. They then move on to advanced topics like Snort and remote access, presenting the material in a way that is easy for the novice administrator to understand and implement.

Don’t expect to learn about the internals of either Linux or Apache. However, when viewing this book in the light of its true target audience, I consider it a great piece of work. If you are just starting out with building an Apache web server on Linux, this is the book for you.

Stuart Langridge &

Tony Steidler-Dennison

329 Pages Sitepoint,

0-9752402-2-6

£ 27.99, US\$ 39.95, EUR 37.50

Point & Click OpenOffice.org

Point & Click OpenOffice.org provides a quick introduction to some of the key features of OpenOffice.org. If you are new to the product, you can quickly start using the more common aspects of the various components after just a short time. The book is also full of screenshots to help demonstrate the topics discussed in the text.

Unfortunately, that's about where the information stops. Unfortunately, the problems I found with this book do not permit me to say too many good things about it.

The book is *extremely* thin on useful content, and I really don't think it is worth the effort. The topics are covered very superficially, and if you have ever used *any* word processor, spreadsheet, or drawing program, more than likely you would learn just as much by exploring the toolbar and a couple of menus on your own.

Perhaps the reason the publisher charges as much as they do is because

one of the included CDs contains 20 lessons on various subjects, which the author personally presents. Initially, these video lessons seem to be a good thing, at least conceptually. However, like the book, they are very superficial. Plus, the author wastes a lot of time more or less rambling, and it seemed pretty clear he hadn't given any thought to what he wanted to say before he started. Sometimes what he is talking about has nothing to do with the topic at all, or he goes off on a tangent subject that adds nothing to learning OpenOffice.org. These problems are compounded by the fact that the author tends to stumble over words and even mumble in some places.

Another very annoying aspect is that there are 30 pages of "bonus" material covering Firefox and Thunderbird. This adds nothing of any value to learning



OpenOffice.org, and I am at a complete loss to understand why it was included in an already thin book, except perhaps to simply add pages in order to get it out the door quickly.

If you have an O'Reilly Safari account, you might want to consider adding this to your bookshelf. However, because of the limited content you will certainly go through it long before the minimum 30 days. If you don't have a Safari account, explore OpenOffice.org on your own, and use the money to treat yourself to pizza and a good movie.

Robin Miller

195 Pages

Prentice Hall,

0-13-187992-8

£ 21.61, US\$ 29.99, EUR 28.50