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Understanding LDAP (IBM Redbook)



Synopsis

Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) is a fast-growing technology for accessing common directory information. LDAP has been embraced and implemented in most network-oriented middleware. As an open, vendor-neutral standard, LDAP provides an extendable architecture for centralized storage and management of information that needs to be available for today's distributed systems and services. After a fast start, it can be assumed that LDAP has become the de facto access method for directory information, much the same as the Domain Name System (DNS) is used for IP address look-up on almost any system on an intranet and on the Internet. LDAP is currently supported in most network operating systems, groupware and even shrink-wrapped network applications. This redbook was written for those readers who need to understand the basic principles and concepts of LDAP. Some background knowledge about heterogeneous, distributed systems is assumed and is highly beneficial when reading this book. Because this book is not meant to be an LDAP implementation guide, it does not contain product-related or vendor-specific information other than that used in examples.

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Customer Reviews

One of the best kept secrets among consultants is IBM Redbooks cover many more topics than IBM products, and do so in a vendor-neutral manner. This book is no exception - it provides a clearly written, unbiased description of LDAP from standards-based and practical implementation perspectives. This book starts off with a chapter that explains the basics of directory services as an infrastructure component, how directory services have evolved, then focuses on LDAP in particular.

It then devotes chapters to concepts and architecture, designing and maintaining LDAP directories, building LDAP-enabled applications, and the future of LDAP. Also included are excellent appendices that provide references to additional sources of LDAP information, LDAP products and services, API functions and error codes and other useful topics. Highlights of this book are:- Clear writing and little fluff. The authors do not wander off topic and have carefully culled relevant information and present it in a manner that flows from one topic to the next in a seamless and logical way.- Covers all of the important topics: data models, physical design guidelines, security policies, migration planning, and manageability.- Drills down into important details, such as LDAP URL APIs, Java Naming and Directory Interface (JNDI), and example scenarios for small and large organizations.- Remains vendor neutral throughout. I was particularly impressed by Appendix B (LDAP Products and Services), in which other vendor offerings were given the same comprehensive and honest assessment as IBM's offerings). Note that this book is somewhat light on LDAP version 3, which makes the material in the chapter on building LDAP enabled applications less than complete. However, from a high-level perspective this book remains one of the clearest and best written for defining LDAP and how it can be used as an important component of an enterprise infrastructure.

Very good book for a starting point on ldap. I've been reading it and i'm impressed. For a good test-drive of the book go to IBM.com and search for 'redbook understanding ldap'. The info page will come up on the book with a link in the top right corner to a sample pdf.

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