LUI/SystemImager merger.
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I'd like everyone to be aware of a fundamental change that's occurring in LUI. After an intensive week long meeting with Brian Finley, ubergeek from VA Linux and curator of SystemImager, we've decided to merge LUI and SI.

We've decided on this merger because we believe it's the right thing for the linux community. The community does not need one installation method that excels at heterogeneity, and a separate one that excels at homogeneity -- it needs a single installation method that excels at both.

We've looked at each other's plans for 2001, and there was a large amount of overlap. It simply makes sense to combine forces in an attempt to strengthen the overall installation method.

The intent of the combined project is to provide a Linux installation method that supports all major distributions of linux, supports the major architectures (IA-32, Itanium, Alpha, PowerPC) and scales. SI already has a large following in the community, and a thriving group of open source developers. LUI brings to the table a unique design to support heterogeneous clusters. Together, we'll tackle the difficult problem of installing any distro from a central location, on any supported platform. Ultimately, we want to make it simple to install the OS on clusters with hetero compositions, to pave the way to run parallel applications on such clusters. At the same time, we want to make it easy to install a pile of machines with the same OS quickly and simply.

Since SI is already entrenched in sourceforge, as are the SI developers, this joint project will be moving to sourceforge. We have created two new projects: SystemInstaller, which will take care of installing any distro on a single client, and SystemConfigurator, which will handle distro and architecture dependent node configuration. We plan on spawning two affiliated projects, one to handle network booting issues, and another to handle data base issues. We invite interested developers from Argonne, Los Alamos, and Oak Ridge National Labs, as well as the MOSIX clustering group to participate in this combined effort.

To our current LUI users, we will continue to support LUI in the 1.x release. We will continue to make bug fixes and necessary improvements, as we do today. However, over the next 6-12 months we would like to assist our customers in moving over to the combined LUI/SI project. One of the reasons for the affiliated data base project is to ensure LUI users access to cluster wide data as we provide today.