

FAQ for the launch of Red Hat Enterprise Linux v5

Posted April 2007

When are Dell and Red Hat releasing Red Hat Enterprise Linux v5?

Red Hat will be releasing RHEL 5 in March of calendar year 2007. Dell will follow with an RTS in approximately the middle of April 2007.

Why is the Dell RTS date after the Red Hat RTS?

Dell requires some period of time after the Red Hat release to create the factory pre-load images and to fully test Dell Open Manage components on the final RHEL 5 product.

Has the pricing or licensing for RHEL 5 changed from RHEL 4?

Red Hat has changed the licensing structure for RHEL 5. Previously with RHEL 4 the software was licensed for 3 distinct types of platform: WS (for workstations and HPCC nodes), ES, for platforms containing 2 processor sockets and AS for greater than 2 Sockets. For the introduction of RHEL 5 the licensing structure has been changed on the Dell server product line to a product for 2 CPU sockets (and below) and greater than 2 Sockets. Other than the licensing the RHEL 5 product is identical for any size of platform. RHEL 4 will retain the same pricing and licensing structure that it previously had.

The pricing for RHEL 5 on Dell 2 socket platforms will be the same as the previous pricing for RHEL 4 ES. Likewise, the pricing for RHEL 5 on greater than 2 socket platforms will be the same as RHEL 4 AS. Pricing for an HPCC version of RHEL 5 remains the same as RHEL 4 WS for HPCC. Thus, although significant changes have taken place with the licensing structure, the overall pricing has remained the same.

Will I be able to buy RHEL 5 from Dell after the Red Hat release?

Customers will be able to purchase RHEL 5 from Dell immediately after the Red Hat release via the Dell Software and Peripherals (S&P) channel. The product available via S&P will be the 'standard' Red Hat product including bundled Red Hat software support. Customers with Dell support contracts are encouraged to continue purchasing RHEL 4 with their hardware and then use RHN to upgrade to RHEL 5 until RHEL 5 is available via the OEM channel. Please note, if you decide to upgrade your RHEL 4 image via RHN you should read all the sections of this document that address that upgrade.

Can I use my RHN subscription and upgrade my copy of RHEL 4 to RHEL 5 as soon as Red Hat releases it to RHN?

Yes, it is possible for Dell customers using RHEL 4 to upgrade to RHEL 5 as soon as the ISO's are available on RHN. Before doing so, please consider the following caveats:

- If Dell has not posted certification of your hardware platform with RHEL 5 to the Red Hat hardware compatibility page **and** you upgrade from RHEL 4 to RHEL 5 you will technically be running an uncertified and unsupported configuration. While Dell support will offer 'best effort', they may be unable to assist you with major issues and request you to revert back to RHEL 4.
- If you are dependent upon any of the Dell 'Open Manage' tools or utilities to manage your server, then please be aware that the Dell OM software suite WILL NOT be available until the Dell RTS date.
- If you are using fiber channel (FC) storage adaptors, using EMC storage or running 'Power Path', **and** you upgrade from RHEL 4 to RHEL 5 before your storage configuration is listed on the EMC Support Matrix (ESM), you will be running an unsupported configuration. While Dell support will offer 'best effort', they may be unable to assist you with major issues and request you to revert back to RHEL 4. It is highly likely that Power Path will not be available for RHEL 5 at the Red Hat release date.

Dell's advice is to wait for the appropriate certifications and support notices to be posted.

If I purchase RHEL 4 from Dell after the Red Hat release of RHEL 5, but before Dell offer RHEL 5, can I upgrade to RHEL 5 immediately?

Yes, with the caveats already listed in the question above.

Will Dell offer both x86-32 and x86-64 versions of RHEL 5?

Both versions will be supported by Dell; however the factory installed image for RHEL 5 will be the x86-64 (64 bit) version. If you need to use the 32 bit version, you will need to use the DSA OS installer wizard that is part of the Open Manage tool kit and re-install the 32 bit version (erasing the factory image). All the disk partitions will be re-usable and valid.

Will Dell offer RHEL 5 Advance Platform?

No. Dell will not be offering RHEL 5 Advance Platform at this time; however, you may purchase this via S&P. An alternative would be to purchase RHEL 4 AS via the Dell OEM channel then upgrading to RHEL 5 Advance Platform via RHN.

Will Dell be supporting RHEL 5 Advance Platform?

Dell will not support RHEL 5 Advance Platform on any of Dell servers. If you have upgraded from RHEL 4 AS to RHEL 5 Advance Platform via Dell's OEM channel, Dell will provide a warm transfer process from Dell to Red Hat.

If I have a Silver or Gold support product from Dell and I upgrade my system myself – am I still supported?

Yes, once all the product certifications are posted you will be able to upgrade your system yourself and continue to be fully supported. However, the certification caveats outlined in the questions above still apply.

Will Dell continue to offer support for RHEL 4?

Dell will continue to support, sell and certify platforms with RHEL 4, however RHEL 3 will move to 'end of sales life' and no further platforms will be certified.

RHEL 4 will continue to be offered as a factory installed option for some time after the release of RHEL 5.

Is the Xen virtualization technology supported by Dell with RHEL 5?

Yes, Dell will support all of its 9th Generation platforms (PE x9xx) when using the Xen hypervisor. All of the Dell tools and utilities have been tested in this way. The RHEL 5 image supplied by Dell does not contain the Xen virtualization technology. However all the required software components are contained in the media and documentation kit supplied with the server. In order for you to use Xen, you must install the Xen kernel and re-boot your server with that newly installed kernel. After that you will create virtual machines and boot 'guest' Operating Systems in those virtual machines. It is **very important** to consider the support situation for Operating Systems that you intend to use as 'guests'. In order for an Operating System to be supported as a guest, both the original vendor of the OS and Red Hat need to support the Operating System being used in this way. If those conditions are met, then Dell will support the OS running on its platforms as a guest. At this time Red Hat only supports other Red Hat Enterprise operating systems running as guests in Xen domains.

Can I use the 'XEN' virtualization technology in RHEL 5 to run RHEL 3 applications and still be supported?

Yes, however you will need to be using the latest Dell 9th Generation platforms and install the Xen Hypervisor (as mentioned above) in order to be able to do this.

Will my RHEL 4 applications continue to run and be supported?

RHEL 5 has a suite of compatibility libraries that will allow binaries from RHEL 4 to continue to run. Different software vendors will have different positions on how they offer application support on legacy OS versions. Dell suggests that you contact your application vendor for assistance.

If I want to use the RH clustering and GFS software, what should I do?

Currently Dell has not tested or validated the Red Hat cluster suite and GFS. For that reason this software is not supported by Dell, but support is available from Red Hat. The standard media and documentation kit included with RHEL 5

contains both CS and GFS but you will need an access key (available directly from Red Hat) to access this software.

Where can I view the current list of platform certifications?

The best place to view the currently certified combinations for hardware and software would be Red Hat's HCL web page: <http://bugzilla.redhat.com/hwcert/>

What OS versions will be factory pre-loaded, and what versions will be 'Drop in the Box'?

Both RHEL 4 and RHEL 5 will be offered as a factory pre-load with media and documentation included with the platform. The factory pre-load version of RHEL 5 will be 64 bit. The 32 bit version is contained in the media and documentation kit and will work for both 2 and 4 socket systems but will require a self-install.