

Sun Cobalt™ Control Station

New Features

Sun Cobalt™

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Part Number / Numéro de pièce : 816-7861-10

New Features on Sun Cobalt Control Station

This document details the new features available in OS Update 1.0 and Os Update 2.0 for the Sun Cobalt™ Control Station.

OS Update 1.0

Framework

Update method

Update 1.0 is downloaded from a BlueLinQ server and then installed by the user. The installation then occurs and a task is present in the task list. All control modules are updated and as each managed server is accessed, the agent is updated. If a server is not accessible, the user can try to update the agent at a later time.

Encryption

The agent now uses encryption. The connection between the control station and the agent on a managed server is both authenticated and encrypted. During the effort to add encryption, several streamlining changes were added to speed up command-execution times and connect times.

Agent update

When OS Update 1.0 is installed on the control station, the agent must also be updated. When the update is applied, the agent on each of the currently managed servers is automatically updated to the newest version.

Simplified user interface

To simplify the Server Desktop user interface (UI), several of the infrastructure tasks have been combined into a single menu. All control-module administration, server-import, event and task functions have been brought together under a single menu item.

New module-management feature

The user accesses the new module-management feature through the **Control Modules > Administer > Modules** screen.

From this new menu item, the user can add a control module(s) to or remove a module from a specific managed server(s). The screen also displays the control modules that are supported for a server and which modules are installed on each managed server.

New functions in the list of managed servers

The module and grouping functions have been added to the screen displaying the list of managed servers. This allows the user to see the specific control modules that are running on a managed server. The user can also select a set of servers and create a group.

Scheduler function

A Scheduler function has been added; the user can schedule appropriate tasks to execute as a one-time operation at a later time or as a regularly scheduled operation.

The new Inventory, Performance and Software Management control modules use the Scheduler function. The Health Monitoring control module does not use the Scheduler function.

Improvements to Tasks and Events

When a task is executing, a progress bar is displayed in the UI. The user can choose another function in the UI while this task continues executing in the background.

The user can now re-display the progress bar. In the Tasks table, for a task that is currently executing, there is a new button in the Action column to perform this action.

Next to each task in the table, there is a colored ball indicating the status of the task.

Software Management module

Multi-threaded package-file pushing

This feature speeds up the installation process when a package file(s) is installed on multiple servers.

The Sun Cobalt Control Station can now launch 10 “push” operations simultaneously to multiple servers. Each thread is for a single server; pushing several package files out to a single server uses only one thread.

Package files for more Sun Cobalt products available

The user can now view packages on a BlueLinQ server for a greater number of Sun Cobalt products, including the Sun Cobalt Qube™ 2, the Sun Cobalt RaQ™ 2, RaQ 3 and RaQ 4, and the Sun Cobalt CacheRaQ™ 4. Previously, to see these package files, the user had to FTP them manually to the control station.

Dependency checking

When the user launches an “Install a Package File” task, the control station first performs dependency checks on the selected server to ensure that the selected package file(s) can be installed.

This operation verifies three things:

- whether other package files are required before the selected package file can be installed.
If yes, and if these required package files are available to the control station, they are installed in the correct order; the selected package file is installed afterward.
- whether the selected package files are obsolete for that server
- whether the selected package files have already been installed on the server



Note: The dependency-checking feature on the control station does not work on the following products:

- Sun Cobalt Qube 2
- Sun Cobalt RaQ 2 / RaQ 3 / RaQ 4
- Sun Cobalt CacheRaQ 4

The Sun Cobalt Control Station does not perform dependency checking on package files for these products because the dependency information is not contained in the meta-data of the package file.

For package files that contain dependency data, the “Need Packages” report presents more accurately what is needed. For package files that do not contain dependency data, the “Need Packages” report presents the differences between the list of installed packages on a managed server and the full list of package files available on the Package Management screen.

Remove package files from a managed server

If the meta-data of an installed package file specifies that the file can be “removed”, the user can remove the package file from the managed appliances. Not all package files have this “remove” option.

UnPublish feature

The user can make a “published” package file no longer viewable to BlueLinQ-enabled clients or other control stations.

AutoLoad feature

Certain Sun Cobalt server appliances can be configured to point at a particular server and, upon booting, load a software payload that has been stored on that server. The Sun Cobalt Control Station can act as an AutoLoad server for these server appliances.



Note: The server does not need to be managed by the Sun Cobalt Control Station in order to download an AutoLoad bundle.



Note: The AutoLoad feature is invoked from the remote server. The remote server contacts the control station and pulls down the bundle of package files. The remote server has complete control of what it does with these package files. The control station does not push AutoLoad bundles to a remote server; it simply contains the meta-data for each package file that makes up the AutoLoad bundle, and the locations from where the package file(s) can be downloaded.



Note: You may see this feature listed as “AutoUpdate” in certain Sun Cobalt server appliances.

The user can create package-file bundles in the Software Management control module.

A software bundle is assigned a *token name* by which the bundle is identified. When the remote server makes a request, this token is entered by the administrator through the LCD console (or in the user-interface component, if available) on the remote server.

The connection can take place over an open http:// channel or a secure https:// channel. This is defined at the remote server making the request.

Enhancements to uploading a package file

The user can now select more than one package file to upload at a time.

When the user selects **Upload** on the Package Management screen, a dialog box appears. In this box, the user can choose to download a single package file or multiple package files.

Enhancements to the BlueLinQ server

The enhancements include a “Software available” notification and a “Proxy settings for each BlueLinQ server” feature.

The notification allows the user to specify a polling interval by which the control station checks all of the configured BlueLinQ servers for new software package files. A new screen is added to the **Settings** task to specify the interval.

For each BlueLinQ server configured in the **Settings** table, the user can specify the proxy settings for that particular BlueLinQ server. (Previously, the BlueLinQ servers all used the same proxy settings.)

Package-file filtering

The user can view a select set of package files in the Package Management screens.

Filtering is based on the type of product. When the user chooses a product(s) in the selector window of the Package Management screen, the next screen displays only those package files valid for that product or products.

Health Monitoring module

Ping Polling

A new “I’m Alive” ping poller has been added. This feature allows the control station to verify that the agent is still running on a managed server and that the server can be accessed over the network. This is a fast polling mechanism; it does not acquire the health status of any of the monitored components or services.

The user configures the “I’m Alive” polling interval on the **Settings** screen.

Improvements to the polling feature

The main poller now offers better performance and shorter polling intervals.

Disable Events

The control station notifies each managed server not to send events.

Using the “Disable Events” feature disables the sending of all events from all managed servers. You cannot select the type of events that a managed server will not send, nor can you select the managed server(s) on which to disable the sending of events.

Improvements to Event Receiver

The Event receiver was enhanced so that the control station can receive more events simultaneously.

Event data merged

This enhancement applies to the Health Monitoring module.

The events for each of the services are merged into a single event message. Thus, only one event is returned to the control station for all of the services on a managed server. Previously, a separate event was sent for each service.

Inventory and Performance modules

Add Polling

The user can now poll the inventory and performance attributes. This polling uses the Scheduler to execute the commands.

OS Update 2.0

Update method

Update 2.0 is downloaded from a BlueLinQ server and then installed by the user. The installation then occurs and a task is present in the task list. All control modules are updated and as each managed server is accessed, the agent is updated. If a server is not accessible, the user can try to update the agent at a later time.

Support for Sun LX50 Linux-based general-purpose server

The Sun Cobalt Control Station can now manage the Sun LX50 Linux-based general-purpose server.



Note: The Sun Cobalt Control Station agent is pre-installed on the Sun LX50 server but you must first activate the agent on the server.

See “Enabling the agent on a Sun Cobalt general-purpose server” in the PDF entitled *Administrator Manual*.



Note: The Health Monitoring module monitors only the following services on the Sun LX50 server:

- DNS Server
- Email Server
- FTP Server
- MySQL Server
- SSH Server
- Telnet Server
- Web Server

RPM packages

The Software Management control module can now push RPM packages out to the Sun LX50 server.



Note: The Sun LX50 server does not ship with BlueLinQ client-side components. The Sun LX50 server cannot query a BlueLinQ server for new software or software updates.