

## The SmartNet G2 Platform

Written by Your SmartNet Team

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SmartNet is pleased to announce that testing and deployment of its new Linux platform, SmartNet G2, is entering its final stages. For existing customers, this means that a whole host of new services will be available to SmartNet's loyal customers over the basic, more restrictive services that SmartNet used to offer.

When Sovenix took over SmartNet from its previous host company back in October of 2008, we were presented with a platform that ran on machines built in the 1990's, using Linux distributions from that time period. Our immediate goal was to transfer those servers to new systems, and while that transfer was admittedly a bit rocky, we at least created a more stable environment. The existing servers haven't been rebooted since they were first deployed back then. But we knew that the aged platform would not suffice to bring SmartNet into the 21st century, so we set about designing the next generation in servers for SmartNet -- G2.

SmartNet G2 is powered by the latest stable release of the CentOS distribution, offering our users the most modern Linux base virtually equal to Red Hat Enterprise Linux. Functions such as web servers, database servers, emails servers and shell access have been divided out into separate servers adapted to each of these functions. New Kerberos authentication and encrypted LDAP directory services allow us to achieve centralized management of your user accounts while distributing these servers across our data center to provide higher availability and scalability. Whether you connect to a graphical Linux desktop, an SSH shell, Telnet or FTP, your user credentials remain the same and your home directory is always available -- on server storage that allows us to do away with restrictive quotas and move SmartNet to Sovenix's traditional "reasonable use" policy for space and bandwidth.

Gone is the "chroot" jail that caused you to rewrite your web scripts and applications. New security paradigms allow us to bring you back to the root of the file system and leverage your access to temporary directories, all installed binaries, cron jobs, etc. while referencing your home directory from its true base location.

Gone is the absence of development tools that were dropped from the old platform because of security concerns. SmartNet G2 brings the ability to develop C/C++, Python and other applications, including PHP for your web site, and the ability to use MySQL database services.

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New will be your ability connect to our mail servers using SSL to help protect your privacy. New will be access to backup images of your home directory. New will be the concept of Linux Virtual Server hosting, where we can give you your own personal Linux sandbox if you need absolute privacy and separation from our shared network. New will be the ability to connect to your shell account via a Gnome or KDE desktop. New will be web hosting services such as Joomla and WordPress, now that we can run PHP securely.

**Migration.** If you're eager to take advantage of SmartNet G2 *now*, talk to your personal Account Technician today about migrating your home directory and login credentials to the new platform. SmartNet G2 is up and running right now, but we are holding off migrating user home directories and email until later this spring. If your web site runs under your own domain name, you can move your web site now. But email and personal web sites (~username) are an all-or-nothing thing and won't be moved until the official migration occurs. Talk to your personal Account Technician if you also have any concerns about how the migration might affect your current web site or email setup.

We're excited about the new SmartNet G2 platform and what it can offer our customers. We hope that you'll find our efforts to enhance SmartNet pay off for you and your own customers.