

# 1.9 Documentation for Servers

- Introduction
- In a delivery oriented world, systems often get built without documentation. This happens, especially in smaller IT organizations. Here's the gist (this can be written better),
- Server Information Template
- Server Log
- System Dashboard
  - Start-up
- Medium to Large Business
- Enterprise Class
- Enterprise Government

## Introduction

In a delivery oriented world, systems often get built without documentation. This happens, especially in smaller IT organizations. Here's the gist (this can be written better),

- Wait too long and you are constantly catching up.
- Use a Knowledge Management System
- This Section Provides a Good Template to Organize Your Information
- Don't Wait to Get Your Template Perfect Before Documenting

Without proper server documentation, management of a server becomes more onerous and difficult. The documentation should describe what the server is used for, who owns it, the SLAs, and the software and versions it is running. Having a common template makes it easier to fill in the particular attributes of a server. I envision some sort of automated task that would run on every server to collect the requisite details and send them to a common space where the information is aggregated and a server documentation page is automatically generated. It would solved the current problem of missing or outdated information whenever server documentation is prepared manually. It would guarantee consistency and facilitate currency and correctness. The server documentaion page would also describe the applications, ownership, SLAs and any other pertinent information necessary for it's proper maintenance.

## Server Information Template

Descriptor	Description
Server Name	the physical name of the server (not the domain name)
Environment	eg. Test, Pre-Prod, Prod, Backup
IP Addresses	
Operating System	
Operating System Version	latest release and patch level
SLA	
Restart Schedule	
Software1	ie. Apache Web server
Software1 Version	ie version #
Software1 Instance	multi-instance support, 0,1,2?
SoftwareX	ie. Apache Tomcat server
SoftwareX Version	
Business Continuity	<a href="#">Disaster Recovery Procedure</a>
Server Log	Links to log of server changes.

Hand in hand with the collection of server details, automation could be enhanced to gather status about the the software that is installed on the server such as it's state (running or not running). This information would be sent to a system dashboard where that the information is refreshed on a periodically to provide the foundations of server monitoring. Here is some information that could be collected:

HTTP errors, number of running HTTP processes, web server state, database connections, inbound/outbound network connections etc, etc. to name but a few.

## Server Log

Changes to servers should be kept in a central log. Make sure to get going on this right away. For example, this server itself uses a [very simple almost free-form server log](#). Roderick, put a template down here.

## System Dashboard

At a minimal you should have a system dashboard to describe your systems. Listed here are different dashboards with varying amount of details. New data is added as the business grows and at the same time, data is removed and assumed as processes are established.

### Start-up

Server Name	Backups Established	SSL Expiry	Services
RGH1V00APP	No	2015-03-01	Apache 2.x Web Server Tomcat 6.0.35 HSQLDB 2.2.8

Server Name should link to the actual change log file for the server.

## Medium to Large Business

...

## Enterprise Class

...

## Enterprise Government

...