C News for NEXTSTEP

NeGeN/NiNe/R&A distribution [1.3]
(version: CNews 22-feb-93+R&A enhancements 1.0, nntp 1.5.11; NewsConfig 1.3)
May 1995

For more info contact: <negen-connect@negen.twi.tudelft.nl>

This is the binary distribution of C News for NEXTSTEP, as brought to you by
NeGeN/NiNe (the Dutch NEXTSTEP user group) and R&A.   It contains an enhanced
version of the standard c-news software, plus the server portion of nntp, which is needed
by most newsreaders to access the news article database.   Also included is
NewsConfig.app, an easy to use application that allows you to quickly setup your news
site.

This README file contains some (hopefully helpful) hints to assist you with the installation
of the news software, and helps you to create a configuration that is right for your system.

C News is distributed as a set of NEXTSTEP Installer packages aptly named
CNewsTools-*version*.*arch*.b.pkg that contains the c-news and nntp software and
documentation, and **CNewsConfig-*version*.*arch*.b.pkg** containing the configuration
program *NewsConfig.app*.

IMPORTANT*: you **must** install these packages as "root".*   This is because some
executables must be installed as setuid news, and also because some system
configuration files must be edited in the configuration process.   If you don't know how to
become "root", you'll have to ask your system administrator to install this package.   (If you

are your own system administrator and you still don't know how to become "root", you have a serious problem:-)

FEATURES

The news software has been enhanced by R&A and provides the following features over the standard c-news distribution:

- · automatic signature appendage to posted articles (now fully configurable).
- · automatic removal of empty directories in the article database to save space (configurable).
- · newsbatches can be compressed with gzip for smaller batches, thus faster transmission (use this only if the other side supports this too).
- · mail generated by news now carry subjects to classify them more easily.
- · better handling of `checkgroups` control messages (using NLnet's scripts).
- · the `newgroup` and `rmgroup` control messages and the `addgroup` and `delgroup` scripts now update the newsgroup description database `newsgroups`.
- · `rmgroup` now checks the sender's permissions, like `newgroup` already did (permissions are determined from the description in `newgroupperm`)
- · `inews` is fixed so that canceling articles from NewsGrazer works.

and of course:

- · the server portion of nntp has been included (the *client* portion has been omitted since this is just a *very* primitive newsreader...)
- · the *NewsConfig* application makes setting up your news site very simple indeed.

INSTALLATION

The installation of **CNewsTools** puts the news executables in the directory /usr/local/lib/newsbin, and the accompanying manual pages in the directory /usr/local/man.   It also creates a new minimal news configuration in the directory /usr/local/lib/news if it does not yet exist.   It won't remove or overwrite an existing news configuration, so it is always safe to delete and reinstall this package.   Note that this minimal configuration in itself is not enough to get your news system up and running; you have to complete the configuration yourself, e.g. by running *NewsConfig.app* from the **CNewsConfig** package (see below).

The installation creates a user and group called ``news'' in the local Netinfo domain if these do not yet exist, and, if neither a user nor a mail alias called ``usenet'' exist, asks you whether you want to create it as a user or as a mail alias.   Either way, ``usenet'' will receive administrative mail from the news system.   If you create it as a user, it will also be the owner of the news software in /usr/local/lib/newsbin (except for those binaries that are setuid news).

You are also asked if you want to inhibit news processing during business hours (8:30am ± 5pm).   This may be a good idea if you intend to receive a lot of news and you want to shift the extra CPU load of processing it to quieter hours.   In practice, though, for a news flow of   about 1MB per day or less the CPU hit is negligible.

The installation updates some system files, i.e. /etc/inetd.conf, /etc/crontab.local and /etc/rc.local, with entries to support C News.   These entries are bracketed with:

> ## Entries for CNews, added at *date* by NeGeN distribution *revision*:
>
> ...
> ## End of CNews entries.

so a subsequent installation knows how to find and update them.

A backup is made of every file that has been changed during the installation.

NewsConfig.app is installed (in /LocalAdmin by default) by unpacking the **CNewsConfig** package.   No surprises here[3].

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[3] You may, however, want to obtain the latest `active` and `newsgroups` files from your news provider
   and put these inside the app wrapper, before you start the actual configuration.   This way you'll get the
   latest and greatest newsgroup information.   This isn't *mandatory*, however; if you don't do this
   NewsConfig uses the active and newsgroups files that come with it (which are taken from NLnet).

CONFIGURATION

The easiest way to get your news site up and running is to use *NewsConfig.app*.   The application offers on-line help that should guide you through the configuration of   your news system.   it is a simple tool, meant to setup your news site in such a way that it can receive news, from a single newsfeed, quickly and easily.   It does **not** address the more arcane aspects of C News configuration, like: multiple newsfeeds, expire control, send batch control, mailpaths, `newgroup/rmgroup` authentication, `checkgroups` authentication and nntp access control. These are explained in more detail in the section ``Advanced News Configuration'' of *NewsConfig*'s on-line help.   Reasonable (we hope) defaults are established for these aspects when you install **CNewsTools** for the first time. Also keep in mind that it only sets up *your* end of the news system;   you'll almost certainly

have to contact your news provider to actually *get* any news.

Of course, if you're brave (or you know what you're doing), you can also configure C News the hard way, by reading manpages and editing the configuration files by hand.   Some people may even <shudder> prefer it that way.

Release History

1.3 ± May 20, 1995
  · *The nntp executables in CNewsTools, which were accidentally compiled only for HPPA and Sparc architectures in the previous release, are now quad-fat.*
1.2 ± May 5, 1995
  · *CNewsTools has been recompiled quad-fat;*
  · *CNewsConfig has been updated with recent (May 4, 1995)* `active` *and* `newsgroups` *lists from NLnet, and has been recompiled quad-fat.*
1.1 ± March, 1995
  · *First public release.*

From the original C News READMEs

This is the 20 Feb 1993 Performance Release of C News, a minor update to the 2 May 1992 P.R. that just fixes some installation problems and a couple of annoying bugs.   Everything that was in the "known.problems" file on UUNET as of 17 Feb 1993 has been fixed, in particular, as well as a couple of things that were noticed after those fixes went out.

This release is more or less a halfway step to what we've
been calling the "cleanup release".   Its main claims to fame are
(a) major modifications to improve performance for big-league
sites with a lot of outgoing feeds, and (b) a reimplemented and
much improved ihave/sendme subsystem.   A number of changes planned
for the cleanup release have also been started, although many of
them are not yet finished.   This release may have some rough
edges yet: due to various complications, including Henry being
seriously ill at an inconvenient time, it's not as well-polished
as we usually prefer.

[...]

C News is a reimplementation of the transport and storage subsystems of the
news software -- basically, everything except news readers.   We supply a
simple news reader [...which is not included in the NeGeN distribution].
For regular news users,
there are several more sophisticated readers widely available, and all should
work with C News.   We use Larry Wall's "rn" ourselves; we have not included
it because this distribution is already rather big.

[...lengthy comparison between C News and B News omitted...]

For general background and information on running a news system, we highly
recommend the Nutshell Handbook:

"Managing UUCP and Usenet", by Tim O'Reilly and Grace Todino,
O'Reilly & Associates, 1989, ISBN 0-937175-48-X.   This latest
edition covers C News as well as B News.   It's not perfect but
it's lots better than nothing.   Inquiries to nuts@ora.com or
uunet!ora!nuts.

C News has been tested pretty thoroughly.   We're also thoroughly sick of
it and make no promises that there will ever be another release.   We may,

repeat *may*, provide updates via some appropriate newsgroup (currently
the best choice is "news.software.b", although there is some sentiment for
folding all the subgroups there into just "news.software"; we oppose
creation of "news.software.c" because we don't think there will be enough
traffic to justify a whole newsgroup).

If you've found a problem, we definitely do want to hear about it.   But,
we *do not* want to see 2000 lines of diff listing!   What we want to see
is a concise human-readable description of what the problem is and how,
if at all, you solved it.   If we want the diff listing, we will ask.
Similarly, we are interested in hearing about changes and improvements,
but want to see terse descriptions first.

If you want us to consider changes/fixes/etc, send them to us, don't just
post them to the net.   We don't necessarily read all possibly-relevant
groups.   Only postings from us are officially part of C News.

To send comments, complaints, problem reports, etc., do *not* mail to
Geoff or Henry personally, but to:

    c-news@zoo.toronto.edu
aka   c-news@zoo.utoronto.ca
aka   utzoo!c-news

(Note that this has changed, c-news used to be on utstat.)

The current C News distribution can currently always be retrieved by
anonymous ftp from ftp.cs.toronto.edu in file pub/c-news/c-news.Z (a shell
archive) or pub/c-news/c-news.tar.Z (a tar archive) and the complete set
of patches can also be found on ftp.cs.toronto.edu in the directory
pub/c-news/patches.   FTP during our peak hours (12h00-17h00 Eastern) is
not encouraged.

                         Geoff Collyer

Henry Spencer

From the original NNTP README

NNTP README   July 4, 1990   (NNTP 1.5.10) [1.5.11 actually]

INTRODUCTION

    This package contains everything (well, most of it, I hope) that
you'll need to implement a remote news server running the NNTP protocol.

[...]

INTRODUCTION TO NNTP INSTALLATION

    First, figure out what you are trying to do (this is good
advice under most circumstances, and it is especially apropos here).
NNTP can be used for two things: (1) Remote news reading, where news
is stored on one machine and read from remote machines across a
high-speed local area network such as Ethernet, and (2) News transfer,
where news is transmitted to NNTP servers on remote machines over
either local or long-haul networks.

    NNTP "server" machines are machines that have a full installation
of USENET news on them.   An NNTP process, the "server", allows remote
sites to connect to the server machine and read or transfer news.
The server machine DOES NOT NEED "reader client" software such as
"rrn".   It MAY NEED "transmission client" software such as "nntpxmit"
if you want to use NNTP to transfer news.

    NNTP "client" machines do not have a full installation of USENET
news on them.   They get their news from an NNTP server machine across

the network.   They DO have NNTP "reader clients" such as "rrn" installed
on them.

[...]

IF YOU HAVE PROBLEMS

     You can get to me via electronic mail at the following addresses:

   Internet: nntp@tmc.edu
   UUCP: ...!bcm!nntp
   Telephone (work):(713) 798-6042

     I'm very interested in learning what hacks need to be made to
nntpd to get it to work on various systems, and certainly, if there are
outright bugs, please let me know.   Bug reports and fixes for nntp are
posted to the newsgroup "news.software.nntp".   Announcements of new
versions of nntp software are posted there, too.