

# Introduction to CentOS and its history

**Topics :** [Centos Server](#)

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CentOS, which stands for Community Enterprise Operating System, is a Linux distribution known for its stability, reliability, and long-term support. It is based on the source code of Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) and aims to provide a free and open-source alternative to RHEL, while maintaining compatibility with its upstream source.

## History:

### 1. Origins in RHEL:

- CentOS traces its roots back to RHEL, which is developed and maintained by Red Hat, Inc.
- RHEL is a commercial Linux distribution known for its stability and support, primarily targeted at enterprise customers.
- Red Hat releases the source code of RHEL under the GNU General Public License (GPL), allowing anyone to redistribute and modify it.

### 2. Creation of CentOS:

- CentOS was created in 2004 by a small group of developers led by Gregory Kurtzer, who aimed to provide a freely available alternative to RHEL.
- The CentOS project takes the freely available source code of RHEL, removes Red Hat's trademarks and branding, and rebuilds it to create a compatible distribution.
- The goal of CentOS is to provide a stable and community-supported operating system suitable for use in production environments.

### 3. Versioning and Release Cycle:

- CentOS follows a versioning scheme that mirrors RHEL's version numbers. For example, CentOS 7 corresponds to RHEL 7.
- CentOS typically lags behind RHEL releases by a few months due to the time required to rebuild and test the distribution.
- CentOS releases updates and security patches regularly, ensuring ongoing support and stability.

### 4. Popularity and Adoption:

- CentOS has gained significant popularity among users and organizations seeking a reliable and cost-effective Linux distribution.
- It is widely used for web hosting, server deployments, virtualization, and various other

applications where stability and long-term support are essential.

- Many businesses and enterprises rely on CentOS for their critical infrastructure needs, thanks to its compatibility with RHEL and its reputation for stability.

#### 5. Acquisition by Red Hat:

- In 2014, Red Hat announced its acquisition of CentOS, with plans to integrate CentOS more closely into its ecosystem.
- As part of this integration, Red Hat introduced CentOS Stream, a rolling-release version of CentOS that serves as a testing ground for future RHEL releases.
- Despite the acquisition, CentOS continues to be maintained as a separate project with a focus on community-driven development and support.

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