

Understanding the CentOS release cycle

Topics : [Centos Server](#)

Written on [March 05, 2024](#)

The CentOS release cycle is closely tied to its upstream source, Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL), as CentOS is essentially a community-supported rebuild of RHEL. Here's an overview of the CentOS release cycle:

1. RHEL Release:

- The CentOS release cycle begins with the release of a new version of RHEL by Red Hat.
- RHEL typically follows a major release cycle, with new major versions being released every few years. For example, RHEL 7, RHEL 8, etc.

2. Rebuild Process:

- After the release of a new version of RHEL, the CentOS development team starts the process of rebuilding the source code to create a compatible CentOS release.
- The rebuild process involves removing Red Hat's trademarks and branding, as well as any proprietary components, and then rebuilding the source code to create a distribution that is functionally equivalent to RHEL.

3. Testing and Quality Assurance:

- Once the rebuild process is complete, the CentOS team conducts extensive testing and quality assurance to ensure that the distribution is stable and reliable.
- This testing phase helps identify and address any issues or compatibility issues that may have arisen during the rebuild process.

4. Release of CentOS:

- After thorough testing and quality assurance, the CentOS team releases the new version of CentOS to the public.
- CentOS releases typically coincide with the corresponding RHEL release, but they may lag behind by a few weeks or months due to the time required for the rebuild process and testing.

5. Updates and Maintenance:

- After the initial release, CentOS continues to receive updates and maintenance releases to address security vulnerabilities, bug fixes, and other issues.
- These updates are provided through the CentOS repositories and are made available to users via the package management system (yum or dnf).

6. Long-Term Support:

- CentOS versions receive long-term support, with updates and security patches being provided for several years after the initial release.
- The exact duration of support varies depending on the version, but CentOS typically provides support for at least 7-10 years for each major release.

7. End of Life (EOL):

- Eventually, each CentOS release reaches its end-of-life (EOL) and is no longer supported by the CentOS project.
- Users are encouraged to upgrade to a newer version of CentOS or migrate to an alternative distribution to continue receiving updates and support.

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