



Coming up to speed on Chef

Josh Mesilane - base2Services
@zindello



Who am I?

- Sysadmin of 10 years
- Linux Sysadmin - Started out as Wintel support
- Like to know how things work
- Never used Chef prior to base2Services
- Believe in the best tool for the job
- NOT! A ruby dev!
- Too many hobbies to count




Who are base2Services

- Challenge Accepted!
- Cloud Engineers
- Ongoing Cloud Support
- 24x7 Technical Support Team
- Help Build/Migrate Applications to/in the Cloud
- Maintain a cost-effective infrastructure implementation



What this talk is/isnt

- Is - My personal experience
- Isn't - Deep technical dive
- Is - High level overview
- Isn't - Chef vs Puppet “religious” debate



Previously - Puppet

- Big Puppet Community in Melbourne
- Environment based
- Manifests that do “stuff”
- Factor for “facts” (variables)
- Asynchronous processing
- Lots of custom conditions



Now - Chef

- Cookbooks/Recipes/Data Bags/Attributes/Files/Templates
- Roles & Environments
- OHai!
- Ruby



Differences/similarities

Similarities

- Both build automation tools
- Both have concepts of environments
- Both Ruby Based
- Dependency based

Differences

- Puppet is Async, Chef is Sync
- Chef is more ruby-centric
- Puppet has a single entry point
- Chef has multiple entry points
- Chef DSL based
- Puppet Markup-Language



What does this mean

- Cookbooks are a Collection of Recipes
- Recipes Procedural instructions to do “stuff”
- Data Bags contain global environment based variables
- Attributes contain constant variables*
- Files/Templates - Static files or .erb templates
- Roles & Environments
- OHai - Under the hood - transparent (Similar to Facter)
- Ruby



Puppet Gripes

- Puppet Dependency Hell!
- Run order can change - *Async*
- Build-Your-Own manifest/puppetmaster management
- Community Modules don't always do what you want them to
- Documentation isn't always complete
- Easy to get lost



Chef Gripes

- Very strict structure
- Verbose debugging is very, very verbose
- Chef Server UI not so great

What do I prefer and why?

- Chef
- More concise documentation
- Easy to use tools (berkshelf, knife, etc)
- Better community support/cookbooks
- Synchronous
- Confident with the product after just 6 weeks



Things I found cool about Chef

- berkshelf
- knife
- data bags
- Chef uses Chef to install Chef!
- Synchronous
- Concepts of both environments and roles



In Summary

- I'll use whatever is required to get the job done
- Both very good, flexible tools with large community backing
- base2Services want you!
- base2Services want to help you!



Comments

- Yell, scream, harass, heckle - do your thing!