AIX 3.2.4 and Beyond

Special Notices

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> **Note:** The information in this document has **not** been verified for AIX 4.1.

About this Document

This document is intended to clarify the changes, benefits, and realities of the AIX fix strategy introduced in AIX 3.2.4. This document will be updated as new information becomes available and may also reference other documents as appropriate. You may especially want to obtain the following documents from the IBM Fax Information Service, depending upon the level of AIX you will be installing.

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AIX 3.2.4 Installation Tips       2121
AIX 3.2.4 Known Problems          2125

AIX 3.2.5 Installation Tips       2505
AIX 3.2.5 Known Problems          2504
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What's Changed

AIX 3.2 introduced a selective fix strategy that was designed to allow a single fix to be applied to a Licensed Program Product (LPP) or Optional Program Product (OPP). In theory, each fix generated one installp image. When it was determined that a fix had dependencies on other fixes, even in other LPPs or OPPs, those fixes were included with the order, but other fixes, even for the same LPP or OPP, were not necessarily included. This strategy had the following problems:

- The dependencies among fixes soon caused installation time and complexity to rise beyond expectations.
- There was no way to make sure that you had the latest level of an LPP or OPP.

- There was no way to obtain an accumulation of all fixes known to date.

To resolve these problems, the fix strategy has been changed to include a Preventive Maintenance Package (PMP), and the LPPs and OPPs have been divided into subsystems, each of which is less likely to have dependencies on the others. This strategy has the following advantages:

- There will be a single fix for each subsystem, and that fix will contain all of the fixes to date for the subsystem, tested as a unit.
- Any given file will be replaced only once during the installation process.
- The boot image will be built only once during the installation process.
- Approximately four times per year an updated PMP will be available that contains all available fixes tested as a unit. Customers can now maintain their systems in a proactive mode as opposed to a reactive mode.
- The total number of subsystems is far fewer than the number of fixes, so the complexity, time, and disk space requirements for applying fixes is greatly reduced.
- It will now be possible to determine the level of each individual subsystem and the level of the system as a whole.

Terminology

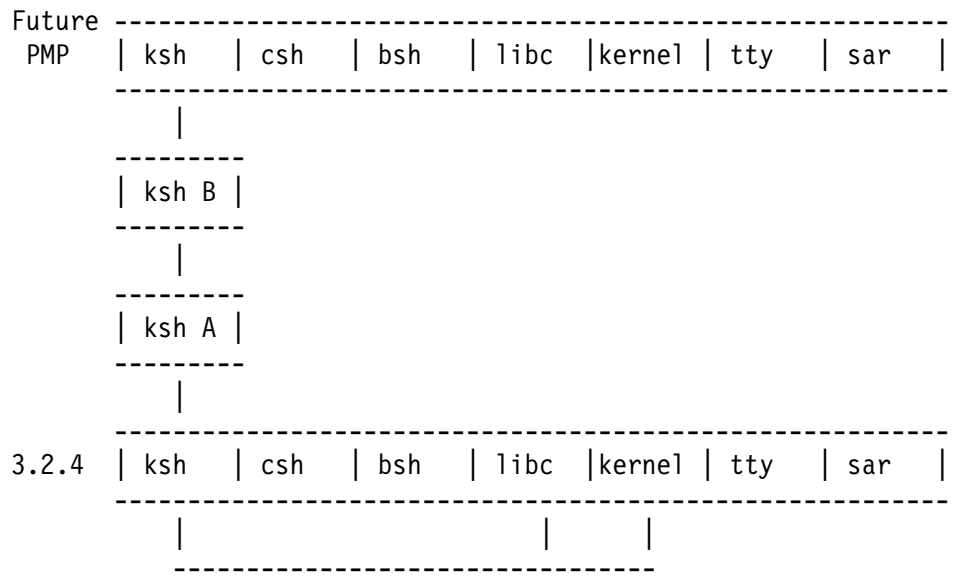
AIX 3.2.4 and later updates are available in two forms.

Preventive Maintenance Package (PMP): This media is available from the AIX Support Center, and contains cumulative service updates, as well as selective enhancements to enable new hardware.

Release Update Package: This media is available from IBM Software Manufacturing and Delivery by calling 800-879-2755 and contains cumulative service updates, selective enhancements, as well as new products that you order.

For the purpose of this document, the terms 3.2.4 Update and 3.2.5 Update will be used to describe the PMP and Release Update Packages interchangably.

Life After 3.2.4



The simplified example above illustrates how the change in fix strategy affects fixes after 3.2.4.

- In the 3.2.4 Update, LPPs and OPPs are divided into subsystems. Some subsystems have dependencies on other subsystems and therefore will be installed together. The example shows that the the ksh subsystem requires the libc and kernel subsystems.
- When a "ksh A" fix becomes available after 3.2.4, it will require the ksh subsystem at the 3.2.4 level, which will retain its requirements for the libc and kernel subsystems.
- When a "ksh B" fix becomes available after "ksh A", it will replace "ksh A" but still require the ksh subsystem at the 3.2.4 level, which will retain its requirements for the libc and kernel subsystems.
- Preventive Maintenance Packages after 3.2.4 will contain all of the subsystem fixes in 3.2.4 and all of the fixes that became available after 3.2.4, and therefore will not require any previous fixes.

In some instances, a fix ordered after the latest PMP may have requisites on many subsystems within the PMP. If the latest PMP is already installed on your system, only the changed portion of the subsystem will need to be shipped and installed. Otherwise, even though a majority of the latest PMP may have to be installed, lslpp -m will not indicate that the PMP is installed, and future fix installation will remain cumbersome. For these reasons, installation of the total update package is highly recommended.

Reader's Comments

Please fax this form to (512) 823-4009, attention "AIXServ Information". You may also e-mail comments to: elizabet@austin.ibm.com. These comments should include the same customer information requested below.

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