

Going live, servers and DNS for a Newfangled Site

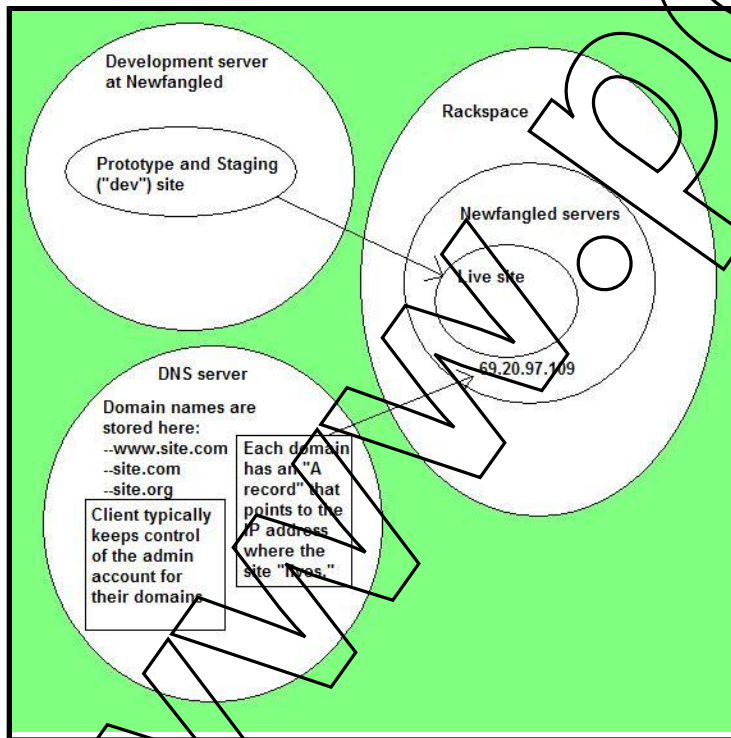
by Steve G, October 2009

While building a Newfangled site, the team has been looking at first the prototype and then the actual site on our development server, housed here at Newfangled Web Factory. When we go live, we will move the complete site and all the content to two servers (one webserver, one for the databases) dedicated to us at Rackspace. We've contracted with Rackspace for its Zero-Downtime Network and Tier 1, SAS70-certified data centers. We also use Rackspace's premium Rackwatch system to monitor all of the major systems running on the server. If our servers have an issue with one of these systems at 3 a.m. on December 25th, for example, someone from Rackspace will be physically present to immediately notify us and remedy the situation.

With Newfangled sites the DNS settings are typically left to the control of the client. Each domain (or url, like www.yoursite.com) that a client has registered has an "A record" that will need to be pointed to the Newfangled Live Server's IP address AFTER we have moved the dev site to the live server. Before going live, the Project Management Team always makes sure that the right person on the client's side has access to the DNS administration account and is ready for the call to change the A record.

The staging site will remain on our server here at Newfangled, and we will use it to preview any work that we do on the site. Note that as soon as you make a content change on the live site, the live and staging sites' content will not be the same again. When we make an upgrade, only the functionality will be transferred over from the staging site to the live site, not content- so after going live the content on the live site is the only content that matters.

Below is a diagram to clarify.



Below are some specifications for our hosting setup.

Hosting

Newfangled hosts it's customer's sites on shared servers and networking equipment that is managed by Rackspace. Newfangled handles the day-to-day operations and Rackspace is responsible for all the hardware and network connections. Rackspace guarantees 100% uptime on the network and 1 hour hardware replacement for the server.

For more details:

http://www.rackspace.com/solutions/managed_hosting/index.php

Backups

Daily backups are done using a third party system from i365.com (formerly evault.com). The i365 system remotely backs up the Newfangled web server to their remote storage facility and using AES-256 encryption end to end. Seven days of backups of the site's files and database are kept.

Platform

We are using two server's to host Newfangled sites: dedicated web and database servers.

Web Server Specs

- HP DL585 G2
- Quad Socket Dual Core Opteron 8216 2.4 GHz
- 8 GB memory
- Raid 1 - 2x10Krpm, 73GB, OS
- Raid 5 - 3x10Krpm, 270GB, Sites
- Red Hat Linux ES 4
- PHP 5.2.8
- Apache 2.0.52

Database Server Specs

- HP DL585 G2
- Dual Socket Dual Core Opteron 8216 2.4 GHz
- 4 GB HP RAM
- Raid 5 - 4x10Krpm, 400GB, database
- Red Hat Linux ES 4
- Mysql 4.1.22

Server Networking

- Cisco 2960 Gigabit switch
- Cisco PIX 506e Firewall