

**bigfix***Keep your computer secure*

- *Automates operating system and other security updates*
- *Centralizes patching responsibility*
- *Speeds patch availability and improves reliability*
- *Releases patches only after testing*

**WHAT IS BIGFIX?** BigFix Enterprise Suite is a commercial software package and accompanying service that enables the centralized management of operating system patch distribution in a large-scale installation, such as Stanford's computing environment. The service, which IT Services began deploying campuswide in April 2004, allows system administrators to manage the testing and distribution of critical security updates more reliably than in the past.

The software program has two distinct components: a client and a server. The client software is installed on computers that are to be managed, while the server allows system administrators to monitor those computers and enables the deployment of patches to them. BigFix at Stanford currently supports Windows PCs and Mac OS X.

**WHY SHOULD I USE IT?** Internet-based attacks upon individual desktop and laptop computers are a worldwide problem that is continuing to grow very rapidly. The serious damage Stanford endured in August 2003 with the Windows-only Blaster worm, as well as newly discovered vulnerabilities in all operating systems, underscores the importance of keeping operating systems up-to-date by installing security patches as soon as they become available. Failure to keep all systems patched can place everyone on the network at risk.

To help ensure computer safety, BigFix:

- *Automates operating system and other security updates* — Stanford's BigFix server communicates with each client computer to determine its patch status, and will automatically apply any appropriate operating system and other security updates after they have been approved and deployed by the BigFix system administrators.
- *Centralizes patching responsibility* — Until the BigFix service became available, it was the responsibility of desktop or laptop computer users to install critical patches and maintain their antivirus software. Even people who are doing a good job of keeping their computers updated sometimes miss important patches.
- *Speeds patch availability and improves reliability* — The BigFix service will install critical security patches as soon as they're made available and tested and approved for campus use. By supplementing Windows' Automatic Updates and Mac OS X's Software Update service, BigFix ensures that necessary updates will always be reliably installed.
- *Releases patches only after testing* — Release of patches occurs only after broad campuswide testing in a rigorous — but rapid — process.

**WHAT DOES IT COST?** The BigFix client software and service is provided free of charge to the Stanford community.

**HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE?** For additional information about BigFix, including a link to the software download, see the web site: <http://patching.stanford.edu>.

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