

# How to sync files to the nodes

## 07/20/09

<a href="#">1.Overview.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">2.The synclist file.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">2.1.The Format of synclist file.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">2.2.An example of synclist file.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">2.3.The location of synclist file for updatenode and install process.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<a href="#">3.Run xdcpc command to perform Syncing File action.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">4.Run the Syncing File action in the installation process.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">5.Run the Syncing File action in the creating diskless image process.....</a>	<a href="#">5</a>
<a href="#">6.Run the Syncing File action in the updatenode process.....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">7.Run the Syncing File action periodically .....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>

## 1.Overview

Sync files to the nodes is a feature of xCAT used to distribute specific files from the management node to the new-installing or installed nodes. Generally, the specific files are usually the system configuration files for the nodes in the /etc/directory, like /etc/hosts, /etc/resolve.conf; it could be the application programs configuration files for the nodes. In general, you can sync any file you wish to the nodes. The advantages of this function are: it can parallel sync files to the nodes or nodegroup for the installed nodes; it can automatically sync files to the newly-installing node after the installation. Additionally, this feature also supports the flexible format to define the sync'd files in a configuration file, called 'synclist'.

The synclist file can be a common one for a group of nodes using the same profile or osimage, or can be the special one for a particular node. Since the location of the synclist file will be figured out automatically in the Syncing File process, the common synclist should be put in a given location for Linux nodes or specified by the osimage.synclists attribute for the AIX nodes, The special synclist file for a certain node only can be accepted in the 'xdcpc -F synclist' command.

xdcpc command supplies the basic Syncing File function. If the '-F synclist' option is specified in the xdcpc command, it syncs files configured in the synclist to the nodes. If the '-i PATH' option is specified with '-F synclist', it syncs files to the root image located in the PATH directory. (Note: the '-i PATH' option is only supported for Linux nodes)

xdcpc supports hierarchy where service nodes are used. If a node is serviced by a service node, xdcpc will first sync the files to the service node before syncing files to the compute node. It will then sync the files from service node to the compute node.

Since 'updatenode -F' calls the xdcpc to handle the Syncing File function, the 'updatenode -F' also supports the hierarchy.

For the new-installing nodes, the Syncing File action happens when performing the postscripts for the nodes. A special postscript named 'syncfiles' will be performed, if the user configured the 'syncfiles' as the value of the postscripts.postscript attribute. The syncfiles postscript is used to initiate the Syncing File process from the node.

The postscript 'syncfiles' is located in the /install/postscripts/. When running, it sends a message to the xcatd on the management node or service node, then the xcatd figures out the corresponding synclist file for the node and calls the xdcpc command to sync files in the synclist to the node.

For the installed nodes, the Syncing File action happens when performing the 'updatenode -F' or 'xdcp -F synclist' command to update the nodes. If performing the 'updatenode -F', the updatenode command figures out the location of the synclist files for all the nodes and classify the nodes which using same synclist file and then calls the 'xdcp -F synclist' to sync files to the nodes.

## 2.The synclist file

### 2.1.The Format of synclist file

The synclist file contains the configuration entries that specify where the files should be synced to. In the synclist file, each line is an entry which describes the location of the source files and the destination location for the files on the target node.

The basic entry format looks like following:

```
path_of_src_file1 -> path_of_dst_file1
path_of_src_file1 path_of_src_file2 ... -> path_of_dst_directory
```

The path\_of\_src\_file\* should be the full path of the source file on the Management Node. The path\_of\_dst\_file\* should be the full path of the destination file on target node. The path\_of\_dst\_directory should be the full path of the destination directory. Since the synclist file is for common purpose, the target node need not be configured in it.

The following formats are supported:

- 1) sync file /etc/file1 to the directory /etc on the node with the same file name  
/etc/file1 -> /etc
- 2) sync file /etc/file2 to the file /etc/file2 on the node (with same file name)  
/etc/file2 -> /etc/file2
- 3) sync file /etc/file2 to the file /etc/file3 on the node (with different file name)  
/etc/file2 -> /etc/file3
- 4) sync the multiple files /etc/file1, /etc/file2, /etc/file3, ... to the directory /tmp/etc (/tmp/etc must be a directory when multiple files are sync'd at one time). If the directory does not exist, xdcp will create it.  
/etc/file1 /etc/file2 /etc/file3 -> /tmp/etc

Don't try to sync files to the read only directory on the target node.

*Note: comment lines are NOT supported now.*

### 2.2.An example of synclist file

Assume a user wants to sync files to a node as following, the corresponding entries should be added in the synclist file.

- 1) Sync the file /etc/common\_hosts to the two places on the target node: put one to the /etc/hosts, the other to the /tmp/etc/hosts.

The configuration entries should be added:

```
/etc/common_hosts -> /etc/hosts
/etc/common_hosts -> /tmp/etc/hosts
```

- 2) Sync the files in the directory/tmp/prog1 to the directory /prog1 on the target node, and the

postfix '.tmpl' needs to be removed on the target node. (directory /tmp/prog1/ contains two files: conf1.tmpl and conf2.tmpl)

The configuration entries should be:

```
/tmp/prog1/conf1.tmpl -> /prog1/conf1
```

```
/tmp/prog1/conf2.tmpl -> /prog1/conf2
```

3) Sync the files in the directory /tmp/prog2 to the directory /prog2 with same name on the target node. (directory /tmp/prog2 contains two files: conf1 and conf2)

The configuration entries should be:

```
/tmp/prog2/conf1 /tmp/prog2/conf2 -> /prog2
```

4) Sample synclist file setup

```
/etc/common_hosts -> /etc/hosts
```

```
/etc/common_hosts -> /tmp/etc/hosts
```

```
/tmp/prog1/conf1.tmpl -> /prog1/conf1
```

```
/tmp/prog1/conf2.tmpl -> /prog1/conf2
```

```
/tmp/prog2/conf1 /tmp/prog2/conf2 -> /prog2
```

If the above synclist is performed by the updatenode/xdcp commands, or performed in the node installation process, the following files will exist on the target node with the following contents.

```
/etc/hosts (It has the same content with /etc/common_hosts on the MN)
```

```
/tmp/etc/hosts (It has the same content with /etc/common_hosts on the MN)
```

```
/prog1/conf1 (It has the same content with /tmp/prog1/conf1.tmpl on the MN)
```

```
/prog1/conf2 (It has the same content with /tmp/prog1/conf2.tmpl on the MN)
```

```
/prog2/conf1 (It has the same content with /tmp/prog2/conf1 on the MN)
```

```
/prog2/conf2 (It has the same content with /tmp/prog2/conf2 on the MN)
```

### **2.3. The location of synclist file for updatenode and install process**

For Linux and AIX nodes, xCAT uses different approach to figure out the location of the common synclist file, so the method for each platform will be introduced respectively.

#### **[Linux]**

In the installation process or updatenode process, xCAT needs to figure out the location of the synclist file automatically, so the synclist should be put into the specified place with the proper name.

The path of the synclist should be following format:

```
/install/custom/<inst_type>/<distro>/<profile>.<os>.<arch>.synclist
```

```
<inst_type>: "install", "netboot"
```

```
<distro>: "rh", "centos", "fedora", "sles"
```

```
<profile>, <os> and <arch> are what you set for the node
```

For example:

1) The location of synclist file for the diskfull installation of sles11 with 'compute' as the profile

```
/install/custom/install/sles/compute.sles11.synclist
```

2) The location of synclist file for the diskless netboot of sles11 with 'service' as the profile

```
/install/custom/netboot/sles/service.sles11.synclist
```

#### **[AIX]**

For the AIX platform, the common synclist file is created base on the definition of nim image. The

nim images are defined in the 'osimage' table, and the attribute of osimage.synclists is used to identify the location of the common synclist for the nodes which use this nim image to install/netboot the system.

For example:

If you want to sync files to the node 'node1' which uses the '61cosi' nim image as its profile (The profile attribute is set the osimage for an AIX node), you need to do following things to set the synclist.

1) Create a synclist file in any directory. For example: /tmp/61cosi.AIX.synclist  
2) Set the full path of the synclist file in the attribute osimage.synclists for the nim image '61cosi' in the osimage table.

```
chdef -t osimage -o 61cosi synclists=/tmp/61cosi.AIX.synclist
```

### 3.Run xdcp command to perform Syncing File action

xdcp command supplies two options '-F' and '-i' to support the Syncing File function.

- -F|--File rsync input file
- Specifies the full path to the synclist file that will be used to build the rsync command
- -i|--rootimg install image for Linux
- Specifies the full path to the install image on the local node.

By default, if the -F option is specified, the 'rsync' command is used to perform the syncing file function. For the rsync in xdcp, only the ssh remote shell is supported for rsync.

xdcp uses the '-Lupotz' as the default flags to call the rsync command. More flags for rsync command can be specified by adding '-o' flag to the call to xdcp.

Refer to section 2.1 and 2.2 for how to create the synclist file.

For example:

1) Using '-F' option to sync files which created in the /install/custom/commonsynfiles/compute.synclist to the node group named 'compute'.

```
xdcp compute -F /install/custom/commonsynfiles/compute.synclist
```

2) For Linux node, using '-i' option with '-F' to sync files which created in the /install/custom/install/sles11/compute.synclist to the root image in the directory /install/netboot/sles11/ppc64/compute/rootimg

```
xdcp -i /install/netboot/sles11/ppc64/compute/rootimg -F /install/custom/install/sles11/compute.synclist
```

### 4.Run the Syncing File action in the installation process

#### [Diskfull installation]

If the 'syncfiles' postscript is added to the postscripts.postscript attribute for a node or nodegroup in the postscripts table, at end of the installation process, the 'syncfiles' will be run to initiate the Syncing File action.

The 'syncfiles' postscript sends message to the xcatd, then the xcatd initiates the Syncing File action. The xcatd figures out the location of synclist firstly, then calls the 'xdcp node -F synclist' to perform

the Syncing File action.

User need to do following things to make the Syncing File function working in the installation process:

- 1) Add the postscript 'synclist' to the postscripts.postscripts for the node or nodegroup.
- 2) Create the synclist file with the entries indicating which files should be synced. (Section 2.1 and 2.2 is a good example for how to create the synclist file.)
- 3) [Linux]Put the synclist into the proper location (refer to Linux part of section 2.3).
- 4) [AIX]Set the full path of synclist file as the value of the osimage.synclists attribute (refer to AIX part of section 2.3).

### **[Diskless Installation]**

The commands packimage (for Linux) and mkdsklsnode (for AIX) will have already synced files to the root image directories, after the netboot. Because of this, the sync'd files will appear on the booted node, so the syncfiles postscript is not needed to be run during the diskless netboot process. The Syncing File action will not run the syncfile postscript for the diskless netboot process, even if you specified the syncfiles postscript in the postscripts table, because the files have already been synced to the nodes by packimage and mkdsklsnode.

See Run the Syncing File action in the creating diskless image process for more information.

*Note: Presently, the mkdsklsnode is not ready to sync files to the nim image.*

## **5.Run the Syncing File action in the creating diskless image process**

For the Linux and AIX nodes, the different approaches are used to create the diskless image, so the Syncing File action will be performed differently for them.

### **[Linux]**

For Linux nodes, the packimage command is used to prepare the root image files and package the root image. The Syncing File action is performed here.

Steps to make the Syncing File working in the packimage command:

- 1) Prepare the synclist file and put it into the location which described in the Linux part of section 2.3.
- 2) Run the packimage as normal.

### **[AIX] (not ready)**

For AIX nodes, the mkdsklsnode command is used to allocate the nim resources for the nim image. The Syncing file action is performed here.

Steps to make the Syncing File working in the mkdsklsnode command:

- 1) Prepare the synclist file and set the full path of the synclist to the osimage.synclists attribute (refer to AIX part of section 2.3).
- 2) Run the mkdsklsnode command as normal.

## 6.Run the Syncing File action in the updatenode process

If run updatenode command with -F option, it syncs files which configured in the synclist to the nodes. updatenode does not sync images, use xdcp -i -F option to sync Linux images.

Steps to make the Syncing File working in the 'updatenode -F' command:

- 1) Create the synclist file with the entries indicating which files should be synced. (Section 2.1 and 2.2 is a good example for how to create the synclist file.)
- 2) [Linux]Put the synclist into the proper location (refer to Linux part of section 2.3).
- 3) [AIX]Set the full path of synclist file as the value of the osimage.synclists attribute (refer to AIX part of section 2.3).
- 4) Run the 'updatenode node -F' command to initiate the Syncing File action.

*Note: Since Syncing File action can be initiated by the 'updatenode -F' flag, the 'updatenode -P' does NOT support to re-run the 'syncfiles' postscript, even if you specify the 'syncfiles' postscript in the updatenode command line or set the 'syncfiles' in the postscripts.postscripts attribute.*

## 7.Run the Syncing File action periodically

If the admins want to run the Syncing File action automatically or periodically, the 'xdcp -F', 'xdcp -i -F' and 'updatenode -F' commands can be used in the script, crontab or FAM directly.

For example:

- 1) Use the cron daemon to sync files in the /install/custom/install/sles/compute.sles11.synclist to the nodegroup 'compute' every 10 minutes by the xdcp command.

```
*/10 * * * * root /opt/xcat/bin/xdcp compute -F /install/custom/install/sles/compute.sles11.synclist
```

- 2) Use the cron daemon to sync files for the nodegroup 'compute' every 10 minutes by updatenode command.

```
*/10 * * * * root /opt/xcat/bin/updatenode compute -F
```