



Recent Changes to the CentOS Project

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What is/was CentOS

- CentOS is an operating system based on RHEL (Red Hat Enterprise Linux)
- Builds downstream copies based on the RHEL source code (with Red Hat branding removed)
- Popular in enterprise deployments where the company doesn't want to pay for RHEL licenses



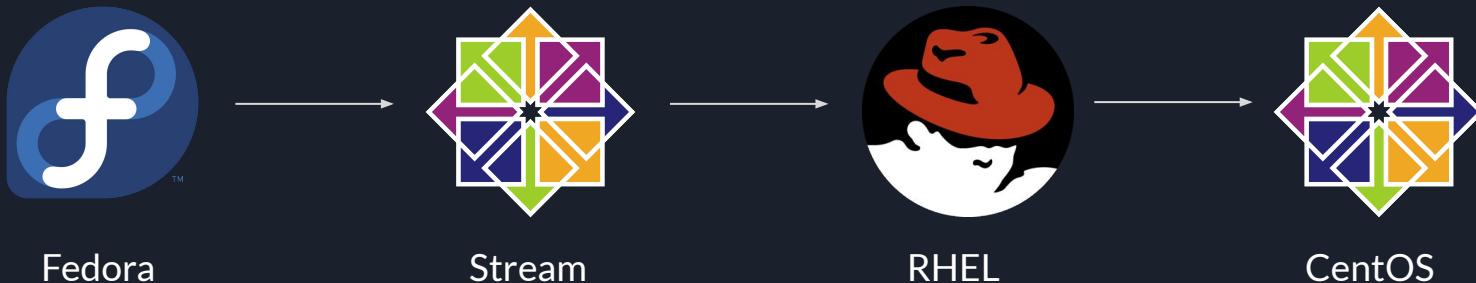
What is CentOS Stream?

- Upstream of RHEL
- Meant to be a semi-“rolling” release of RHEL*
- Considered by many to be too close to a beta version of RHEL
- According to Red Hat, meant to make porting to the next version of RHEL simpler

*Probably a bad choice of wording on RH's part

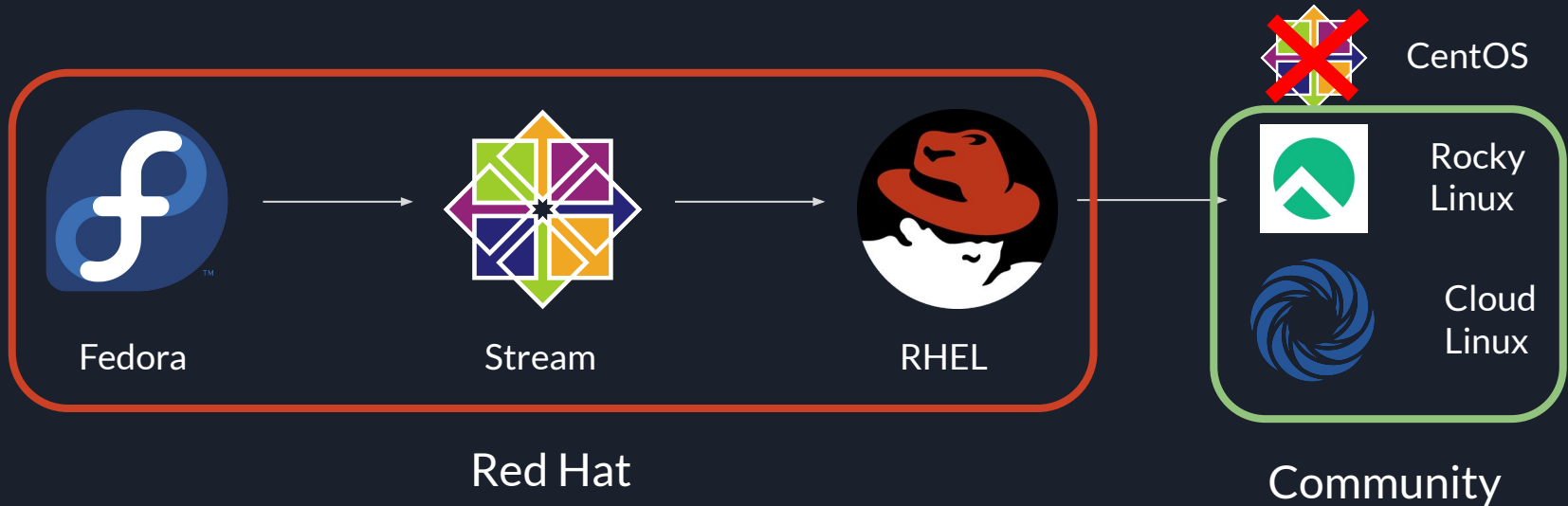
“Upstreaming” and “Downstreaming”

Traditional Red Hat OS Development Pipeline



- Fedora works with upstream projects like Gnome, Pipewire, etc. Fedora gets the newest stuff
- The next version of RHEL is built using CentOS Stream as the base
- Code is frozen except security fixes and put into RHEL
- CentOS is built from the RHEL repository

The New ~~World Order~~ Development Pipeline



- Red Hat only works on Fedora, Stream, and RHEL
- Community Derivatives like Rocky Linux and Cloud Linux can take on new process



What has Red Hat changed?

- Red Hat will no longer officially maintain CentOS
- Opens development of RHEL to the community in the form of CentOS Stream
- Red Hat reduced the lifespan of CentOS before the EOL
- Is making Red Hat Enterprise Linux licenses easier to obtain
 - Granting “developer” licenses for systems testing
- Red Hat will continue to host the code on git.centos.org



The Conspiracy Theories

- This was a decision from IBM
 - No, this was made internally by Red Hat and was in the works long before the merger
- This was a ploy to get more people to pay for RHEL
 - More likely an attempt to reduce development costs and make life easier for developers
- Red Hat will try to kill upstart CentOS replacements
 - Red Hat has vocally supported these projects
 - More importantly, Red Hat continues to encourage people to build on the RHEL source code, like CentOS did
- Red Hat wants everyone switching to containers running on UBI
 - That one may be true...
- Red Hat needs better PR
 - Definitely true



New Replacements

- Rocky Linux
 - Made by a founder of the CentOS project
 - <https://github.com/rocky-linux/rocky>
- Cloud Linux
 - Meant for cloud deployments
 - Founded by a cloud services company
 - <https://www.cloudlinux.com/>



Sources

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- <https://blog.centos.org/2020/12/future-is-centos-stream/>
- <https://github.com/rocky-linux/rocky>
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- Carl George (engineer at Red Hat, <https://twitter.com/carlwgeorge>)
- <https://linuxunplugged.com/>
- <https://linuxactionnews.com/>