

# SUSE Rancher - Getting Started



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# Preface

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview and procedure of implementing SUSE (https://www.suse.com) ® offerings for SUSE Rancher (https://rancher.com/products/rancher/) , as a multi-cluster container management platform for organizations that deploy containerized workloads, orchestrated by Kubernetes. SUSE Rancher makes it easy to deploy, manage, and use Kubernetes everywhere, meet IT requirements, and empower DevOps teams.



# 1 Introduction

On the digital transformation journey to a full cloud native landscape, utilization of microservices becomes the main approach with the dominant technology for such container orchestration being Kubernetes <sup>1</sup> With its large community of developers and abundant features and capabilities, Kubernetes has become the defacto standard and is included across most container-as-a-service platforms. With all of these technologies in place, both developer and operation teams can effectively deploy, manage and deliver functionality to their end users in a resilient and agile manner.

## 1.1 Motivation

While any developer or organization may simply start with a single, Kubernetes-based deployment, it is very common for that number of cluster instances to rapidly grow. While each of these may have specific focus areas, it becomes imperative to figure out how to use, manage, maintain and replicate all of these instances over time.

This is where SUSE Rancher leads the industry, being able to manage access, usage, infrastructure and applications across clusters, that are Cloud Native Computing Foundation ( CNCF  $^2$  ) conformant  $^3$ , anywhere across edge, on-premise data centers, or cloud service providers. SUSE Rancher optimizes creating and managing Kubernetes clusters like:

- Rancher Kubernetes Engine ( RKE (https://rancher.com/products/rke/) ▶ )
- Lightweight edge-centric K3s (https://rancher.com/products/k3s/) 

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- other Kubernetes clusters that are based upon CNCF certified <sup>4</sup> Kubernetes distributions or installers

and deployed across various supported (https://rancher.com/support-maintenance-terms) **→** infrastructure elements.

1 Motivation

<sup>1</sup> https://kubernetes.io/ <a>
<a>▶</a>

<sup>2</sup> https://www.cncf.io/ ₽

<sup>3</sup> https://www.cncf.io/certification/software-conformance 

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<sup>4</sup> https://www.cncf.io/certification/cka/ ₽

# 1.2 Scope

The scope of this document is to provide a simplified, *getting started* approach for SUSE Rancher. This can be done in a variety of solution stack, architectural scenarios as a fundamental component of a managing multiple Kubernetes ecosystems.

# 1.3 Audience

This document is intended for IT decision makers, architects, system administrators and technicians who are implementing a flexible, software-defined Kubernetes management platform. One should still be familiar with the traditional IT infrastructure pillars — networking, computing and storage — along with the local use cases for sizing, scaling and limitations within each pillars' environments.

2 Scope

# 2 Architectural overview

This section outlines the overall elements of the SUSE Rancher solution, along with the suggested target platforms and components.

# 2.1 Solution architecture

The figure below illustrates the high-level architecture of the SUSE Rancher installation that manages multiple downstream Kubernetes clusters:



FIGURE 2.1: ARCHITECTURE OVERVIEW - SUSE RANCHER

#### **Authentication Proxy**

A user is authenticated via SUSE Rancher and then, if authorized, can access both the SUSE Rancher environment and the downstream clusters and workloads.

## **API Server**

This provides the programmatic interface backend for a user, utilizing command-line interactions with SUSE Rancher and the managed clusters.

3 Solution architecture

#### **Data Store**

The purpose of this service is to capture the configuration and state of SUSE Rancher and the managed clusters to aid in backup and recovery processes.

#### **Cluster Controller**

Interacting with a cluster agent on the downstream cluster, the cluster controller allows the communication path for users and services to leverage for workloads and cluster management.

Once setup, users can potentially interact with SUSE Rancher through the web-based user interface (UI), the command-line interface (CLI), and programatically through the application programming interface (API). Depending upon the assigned roles, group membership and privileges, a user could:

- manage all clusters, users, roles, projects
- deploy new clusters, import other clusters, or remove existing ones
- manage workloads across respective or labeled clusters
- simply view clusters or workloads, or just benefit from what is running

To aid in planning, training or assessing functionality like in a proof-of-concept deployment, SUSE Rancher can be installed on a single node as described later in this document.



## Tip



## Note

Regardless of the deployment target, SUSE Rancher should always run on a node or cluster that is separate from the downstream clusters that it manages. Running user workloads on this SUSE Rancher cluster or nodes is not advised.

4 Solution architecture

# 3 Component model

This section describes the various components being used to create a SUSE Rancher deployment, in the perspective of top to bottom ordering. Once completed, the SUSE Rancher instance enables the management of multiple Kubernetes clusters.

# 3.1 Component overview

By utilizing:

- Software
  - Multi-cluster Management Server SUSE Rancher

one can create the necessary infrastructure and services. Further details for these components are described in the following sections.

# 3.2 Software - SUSE Rancher

SUSE Rancher is a complete cluster and container management platform built to reside on Kubernetes itself. It addresses these challenges by delivering the following key functions, as shown in the following figure:

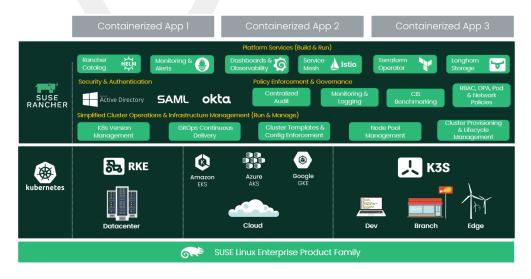


FIGURE 3.1: OVERVIEW OF SUSE RANCHER

Component overview

#### **Certified Kubernetes Distributions**

SUSE Rancher supports management of any certified Kubernetes distribution. That includes:

- for on-premises workloads, a SUSE offering Rancher Kubernetes Engine ( RKE (https://rancher.com/products/rke/) 

  , a certified Kubernetes distribution for both bare-metal and virtualized servers
- for the public cloud, hosted Kubernetes services like
  - Amazon Elastic Kubernetes Service (EKS <sup>1</sup>),
  - Azure Kubernetes Service (AKS<sup>2</sup>) and
  - Google Kubernetes Engine (GKE<sup>3</sup>)
- for development, edge, branch workloads, SUSE offerings like K3s (https://rancher.com/products/k3s/) ▶, a certified lightweight distribution of Kubernetes.

#### Simplified Cluster Operations and Infrastructure Management

SUSE Rancher provides simple, consistent cluster operations including provisioning and templates, configuration and lifecycle version management, along with visibility and diagnostics.

#### Security and Authentication

SUSE Rancher incorporates and leverages various single-signon services, to automate processes and apply a consistent set of user access and security policies for all the managed clusters, no matter where they're running.

#### Policy Enforcement and Governance

SUSE Rancher includes audit and security guideline enforcement, monitoring and logging functions, along with user, network and workload policies distributed across all managed clusters.

Software - SUSE Rancher

<sup>1</sup> https://aws.amazon.com/eks ₽

<sup>2</sup> https://azure.microsoft.com/en-us/overview/kubernetes-on-azure/ ₽

#### **Platform Services**

SUSE Rancher also provides a rich catalog of services for building, deploying and scaling containerized applications, including app packaging, CI/CD, logging, monitoring and service mesh.

As SUSE Rancher can be deployed on a single node, only some prerequisites for the underlying operating system are needed and will be detailed in the deployment section.

7 Software - SUSE Rancher

# 4 Deployment

This section describes the base process steps to deploy SUSE Rancher including the prerequisites for the underlying node's operating system.

# 4.1 Deployment overview

For this documented deployment process, a single node is installed with the operating system supporting a single Kubernetes instance to host SUSE Rancher. For maximum flexibility, these layers are deployed in a manner that would allow expanding this single-node into a highly available, multi-node cluster, by following the steps in the deployment consideration sections.

The deployment stack is represented in the following figure:



Container Runtime Engine

**Linux Operating System** 

FIGURE 4.1: SUSE RANCHER DEPLOYMENT STACK

and details are covered for each layer in the following sections.



Note

The content is ordered and described from the bottom layer up to the top.

## 4.2 SUSE Rancher

The underlying Linux operating system can be:

- A cloud-host virtual machine (VM)
- An on-premise VM or a bare-metal server node

#### Preparation(s)

To meet the SUSE Rancher prerequisites and requirements, SUSE operating system offerings, like SUSE Linux Enterprise Micro (https://www.suse.com/products/micro/) 

and requirements, SUSE operating system offerings, like SUSE Linux Enterprise Micro (https://www.suse.com/products/micro/) 

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- 1. Ensure these services are in place and configured for this node to use:
  - Domain Name Service (DNS) an external network-accessible service to map IP Addresses to hostnames
  - Network Time Protocol (NTP) an external network-accessible service to obtain and synchronize system times to aid in timestamp consistency
  - Software Update Service access to a network-based repository for software update packages. This can be accessed directly from each node via registration to
    - the general, internet-based SUSE Customer Center (https://sc-c.suse.com/login) ✔ (SCC) or
    - an organization's SUSE Manager (https://www.suse.com/products/suse-manager/) infrastructure or



## Note

- 2. Log into the node's operating system, either as root or as a user with sudo privileges.
- 3. Enable the required container runtime engine

sudo transactional-update pkg install docker

9 SUSE Rancher

```
sudo reboot
sudo systemctl enable --now docker.service
```

• Then validate the container runtime engine is working

```
sudo systemctl status docker.service
sudo docker ps --all
```

#### **Deployment Process**

While logged into the node, as root or with sudo privileges, install SUSE Rancher:

1. Run the following installation command

```
sudo docker run -d --restart=unless-stopped -p 80:80 -p 443:443 --
privileged rancher/rancher
```



## Tip

This process deploys an auto-generated, self-signed security certificate for the SUSE Rancher service. Other options are describe in the SUSE Rancher product documentation (https://rancher.com/docs/rancher/v2.x/en/) ...

- 2. Once the previous command completes, from a client system connect via a web browser to the IP address or hostname of the SUSE Rancher node
  - Enter a new admin password



## **Important**

On the second configuration page, ensure the "Server URL" is set to the IP address or hostname of this deployed SUSE Rancher node.

Now other Kubernetes clusters can be deployed, imported and managed from this SUSE Rancher instance.

10 SUSE Rancher

# 5 Summary

Using components and offerings from SUSE and the Rancher portfolio streamlines your ability to quickly and effectively engage in a digital transformation, taking advantage of cloud native resources and disciplines. Using such technology approaches lets you deploy and leverage transformations of your infrastructure into a durable, reliable enterprise-grade environment.

#### Simplify

Simplify and optimize your existing IT environments

Using SUSE Rancher enables you to simplify Kubernetes cluster deployment and management of the the infrastructure components.

#### Modernize

Bring applications and data into modern computing

With SUSE Rancher, the digital transformation to containerized applications can benefit from the ability both to manage many target clusters, for each of the respective user bases and to facilitate the actual workload deployments.

#### Accelerate

Accelerate business transformation through the power of open source software

Given the open source nature of SUSE Rancher and the underlying software components, you can simplify management and make significant IT savings as you scale orchestrated, microservice deployments anywhere you need to and for whatever use cases are needed in an agile and innovative way.

# 6 References

#### WHITE PAPERS

- A Buyer's Guide to Enterprise Kubernetes Management Platforms https://info.rancher.com/enterprise-kubernetes-management-buyers-guide
- How to Build an Enterprise Kubernetes Strategy https://info.rancher.com/how-to-build-enterprise-kubernetes-strategy 

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#### **BOOKS**

Kubernetes Management - https://info.rancher.com/kubernetes-management-for-dum-mies-rancher-and-suse-0-0

#### **TRAINING**

- SUSE https://training.suse.com/ ▶
  - Rancher https://rancher.com/training/

#### **WEBSITES**

- SUSE https://www.suse.com
  - SUSE Customer Center (SCC) https://scc.suse.com/login ▶
  - Products
    - SUSE Rancher https://rancher.com/products/rancher/ ▶ ( documentation (https://rancher.com/docs/rancher/v2.x/en/) ▶ )
    - Rancher Kubernetes Engine ( RKE ) https://rancher.com/products/rke/ 
       ✓ ( documentation (https://rancher.com/docs/rke/latest/en/) 
       ✓ )

    - SUSE Linux Enterprise Micro (SLEMicro) https://www.suse.com/products/micro/ 

      cro/ 

      (documentation (https://documentation.suse.com/sle-micro/5.0/) 

      )
    - SUSE Linux Enterprise Server (SLES) https://www.suse.com/products/server/ ✓ (documentation (https://documentation.suse.com/sles/15-SP2/) ✓ )

## Projects

# Glossary

#### Document Scope

#### **Getting Started**

A guide with the basic steps to quickly and simply deploy the one layer of the referenced component of the SUSE portfolio, with generalized pointers to other required dependency elements.

## Reference Architectures <sup>1</sup>

A guide with the general steps to deploy and validate the structured solution components from both the SUSE and partner portfolios. This provides a shareable template of consistency for consumers to leverage for similar production ready solutions, including design considerations, implementation suggestions and best practices.

#### **Best Practice**

Information that can overlap both the SUSE and partner space. It can either be provided as a standalone guide that provides reliable technical information not covered in other product documentation, based on real-life installation and implementation experiences from subject matter experts or complementary, embedded sections within any of the above documentation types describing considerations and possible steps forward.

<sup>1</sup> link: Reference Architecture (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reference\_architecture) ▶

# A Appendix

The following sections provide a bill of materials listing for each component layer.

# A.1 Compute Platform Bill of Materials

Role	Qty	SKU	Component	Notes
System	1	n/a	• Virtual Machine,	Configuration
			• Single Board Computer (SBC) or	• see instal- lation re-
			Industry Standard	source
			Server	require-
				ments
				(https://
				ranch-
				er.com/docs/
				ranch-
				er/v2.x/
				en/instal-
				lation/re-
				quire-
				ments/#cpu-
				and-mem-
				ory-for-

Role	Qty	SKU	Component	Notes
				ranch-
				er-be-
				fore-v2-4-0) 2

# A.2 Software Bill of Materials

Role	Qty	SKU	Component	Notes	
Operating System	1	874-007864	SUSE Linux Enterprise Micro,	Configuration:  • per node	
			• x86_64,	(up to	
			<ul> <li>Priority Subscription,</li> </ul>	16 cores, stack- able)	
			• 1 Year		
Kubernetes	1	R-0001-PS1	SUSE Rancher,	Configuration:	
Management			• x86-64,	• per in-	
			<ul> <li>Priority Subscription,</li> </ul>	stance, includes up to 3	
			• 1 Year	Kuber-	
				netes	
				nodes	



# Note

For the software components, other durations of support terms are also available.

16 Software Bill of Materials

# A.3 Documentation Configuration / Attributes

This document was built using the following AsciiDoc (https://github.com/asciidoc/asciidoc) and DocBook Authorting and Publishing Suite ( DAPS (https://github.com/openSUSE/daps) 1 attributes:

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