

DevOps World

Jenkins World



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Featured Speaker

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Automating Jenkins (re)installation: some thoughts, tips, and tricks



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Once upon a time....

Automating Jenkins (re)installation: some thoughts, tips, and tricks

Presentation available at: <https://jmMeessen.github.io/slides/jw-eu-2019>

Hello !!

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Who are you?

What is configuration Management?





Pet versus Cattle



Automation, automation, automation!

- Reduces toil and frees precious time
- Repeatable
- Best emergency/repair tool
- Best way to avoid any malicious modification

In Source Control

- Visibility
- Peer review
- History
- Versioned \Rightarrow Revertable

Why should CI/CD systems be
handled as a Pet ?

Automation objectives

- Configure Jenkins
 - efficiently
 - repeatably
 - consistantly

Use cases

- **Provision** (bootstrap) new CI/CD cluster 
- **Update** the system
 - ex: add a new master, change a setting, add a plugin

Other automation objectives

- Properly document the system
- Peer-review mechanism for configuration changes
 - Keep the audit/compliance people happy
- Easily manage very large CI/CD cluster
- support CI/CD power users
 - behind the scene warranty for creativity

Configuration Management philosophies

Golden Image

- in the early days (90s and Y2K)
- on CDs  or Tapes 
 - a lot of work to maintain
 - messy
 - "one size fits nobody"

Configuration Scripting

- Scripts solved a lot of these problems
 - added
 - readability
 - versioning
- At first ad hoc (bash) scripting
- then Chef, Puppet, Ansible, etc.

Golden Image revisited

- EC2 AMIs (Packer)
- Docker/Containers 

 - Golden Image new momentum
 - very short start time
 - image definition description files (dockerfiles)
 - particularly adapted to the Cloud scheduler (ex K8S)

But no silver bullet

- reality lies between
 - generalization (general purpose images)
 - need for fine grained customizations to adapt to the local constraints

Jenkins configuration vectors



Direct file System manipulation

- classical way to configure a system
- copying/updating files on the file system (JENKINS_HOME)
- Typical Ansible modules.
 - copy
 - template
 - lineinfile
 - xml

File system vector: Pro

- easy/natural for tools like Ansible

File system vector: Con

- lot of reverse engineering required
- stability of configuration is not guaranteed.
 - particularly plugins configuration

Command Line Interfaces

- two types
 - REST API
 - Jenkins CLI

REST API

- using HTTP requests to GET, PUT, POST and DELETE data.

```
curl -X POST "<jenkinsURL>/testProject/build" --user jmm:<password|token>
```

Documentation is 

REST API - CSRF protection

- be aware of CSRF protection (should be on, isn't it?)
 - session hijacking
 - requires a token or "crumb" when using password
 - not required when using an API Token
 - since new token format

REST API

- To learn more: 
- <https://wiki.jenkins.io/display/JENKINS/Remote+access+API>
- <https://wiki.jenkins.io/display/JENKINS/Authenticating+scripted+clients>

Jenkins CLI

- Traditional way, via the `jenkins-cli.jar`
- To list the very functions list (dependant of installed plugin):
 - view it in "Manage Jenkins → Jenkins CLI"
 - or simply use "help" CLI command.

Jenkins CLI - Classic

```
java -jar jenkins-cli.jar -http -s $JENKINS_URL -auth $USERNAME:$API_token command ...
```

Much better 😊 :

```
java -jar jenkins-cli.jar -http -s $JENKINS_URL -auth @FILE command ...
```

Can use file permission, easy to configure with Ansible

Jenkins CLI - SSH

- A simple SSH client can also be used.
- Requires to enable the built-in SSH server and assign a port
 - watch your firewalls and reverse proxy

```
ssh -l jmm -i ~/.ssh/id_rsa -p 10200 my-jenkins-server help
```



Can solve some of the bootstrapping problem

Jenkins CLI - More details

- <https://jenkins.io/doc/book/managing/cli/>

Summary

- Rich set of API
- Easy to use in Ansible for example
- Initial user and credential is a tough problem to solve
 - SSH authentication can be automated
- CLI does a better job at controlling parameter
- CLI makes synchronous calls
- CLI commands are better documented 
- Parsing results is tricky 

Recommendation

- Use CLI
- Use CLI with SSH if you can (networking)
- Consider executing commands from target host (localhost).

Groovy Scripts

- Richest way to configure Jenkins
 - Taps into Jenkins' native language
- Need developer skills 😎
- Documentation not easy to find
 - See this *Knowledge Base article* on how to access the javadocs
- Make them idempotent ! 💪

How to use Groovy Script

- via the script console
- at startup, as init-script
 - placed in \$JENKINS_HOME/init.groovy.d/
 - executed in lexical order
- via the CLI

Groovy Scripts from the CLI

```
cat my_script.groovy | {{ CLI_command }} groovy =
```

Docker Container

- Can automate the configuration of some parts
 - ex: pre-loading plugins
- But does not solve all the problems
- a little out of the scope of this presentation

Jenkins Configuration as Code

- First developed in OSS realm
- Dev for CloudBees product is ongoing
- Declarative method, yaml based
- Loaded on reboot or with a CLI command

JCasC Example (LDAP cfg)

```
jenkins:
  securityRealm:
    ldap:
      configurations:
        - inhibitInferRootDN: false
          managerDN: "uid=idm,ou=Administrators,dc=example,dc=com"
          managerPasswordSecret: "{{ ldap_admin_passw }}"
          rootDN: "dc=example,dc=com"
          server: "ldap://{{ full_agent_docker_dns_name }}:389"
        disableMailAddressResolver: false
        disableRolePrefixing: true
        groupIdStrategy: "caseInsensitive"
        userIdStrategy: "caseInsensitive"
```

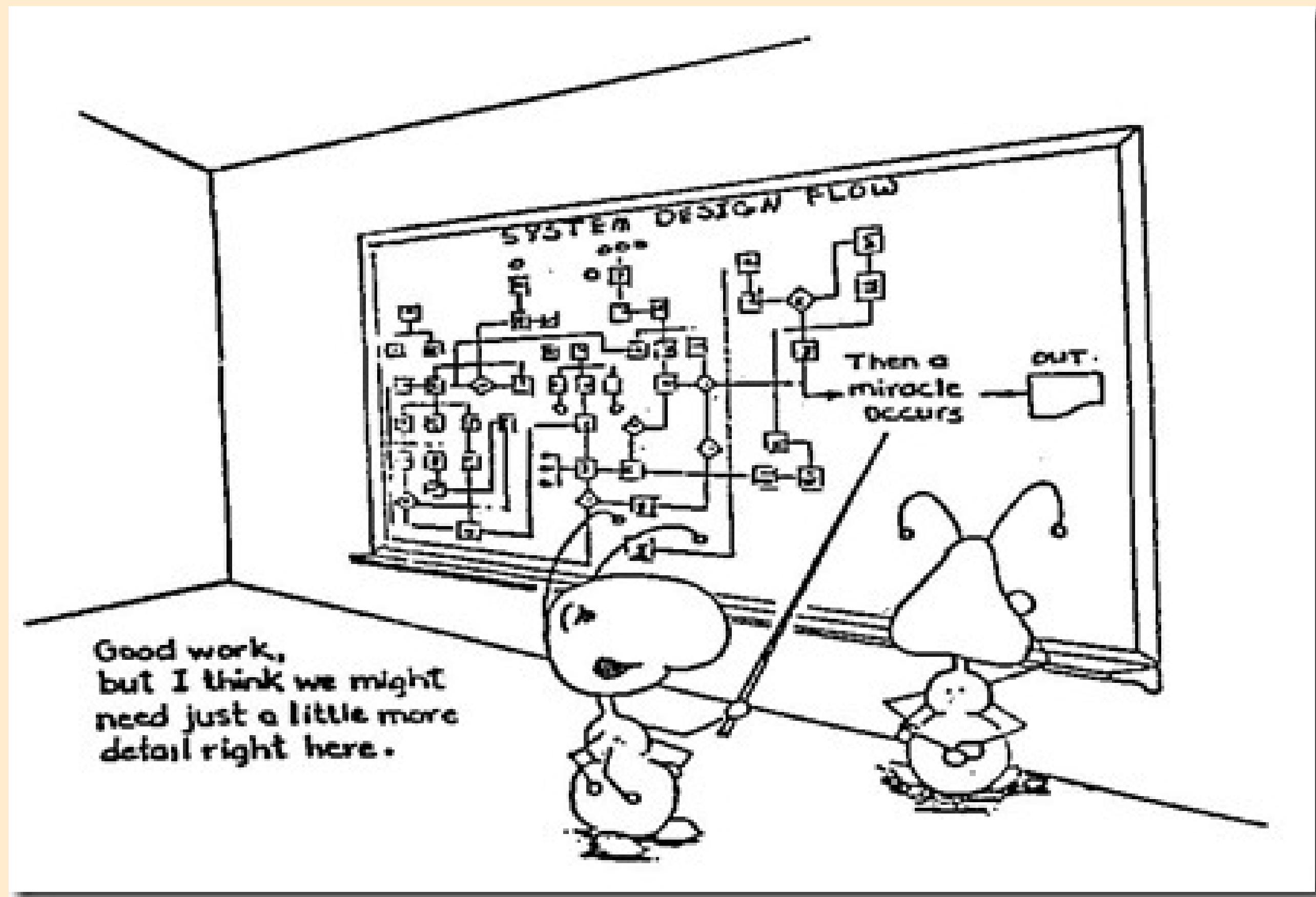
JCasC Example (JNLP agent)

```
jenkins:
  nodes:
    - permanent:
        labelString: "jnlp"
        mode: NORMAL
        name: "jnlp-agent"
        remoteFS: "/home/jenkins"
        launcher:
          jnlp:
            workDirSettings:
              disabled: true
            nodeDescription: "Agent that initiates its own connection to Jenkins"
            retentionStrategy: "always"
  numExecutors: 0
```

Current Status

- In technical preview for CloudBees products
 - Masters configuration already works
 - CloudBees functionality actively been worked on
 - Waiting for RBAC support 😊
- Centralized CasC management from CJOC

And in Real Life?



My opinion

- Practice is still "sedimentary config layer"
- No easy way to solve bootstrapping problem
- Very often requires manual operations
- Poorly documented / tooled
- Not fit for the volatile K8S world

**But Cloudbees is actively working
on it**

Bootstrap strategy

- see example on https://github.com/jmMeessen/captains_aws_cjp
1. Install jenkins configuration file (startup option)
 1. JAVA_ARGS → -Djenkins.install.runSetupWizard=false
 2. Proceed with installation via package manager (apt-get)
 3. Create init.groovy.d directory
 4. Replace the instanceID with know one (secret.key)

Bootstrap strategy (cont.)

1. Add "init groovy scripts" in directory
 1. Initial security settings
 2. License loading script
 3. Set-URL, JNLP, and SSHD Port configuration scripts
 4. Create Cfg-Management user, generate key and load public key
2. Restart CJOC to activate scripts
3. Use CLI to install plugins
4. Use CLI to execute groovy to create Client Master

Bootstrap strategy (cont.)

1. Configure Client Master in same principle
 1. Add to JAVA_ARGS the connection info
 2. Configure security and initial users via init scripts
 3. Install default plugins
2. Configure JCacC environment
3. Copy definition in adequate directory
4. Use CLI to force the load of configuration

BONUS - how to retrieve a token

```
# First thing we do is obtain a crumb from cjoc, this allows us to call the rest API with
JENKINS_CRUMB=$( \ 
    curl --user $USERNAME:$PASSWORD \
        --silent "$URL/cjoc/crumbIssuer/api/xml?xpath=concat(//crumbRequestField,\":\",/ \
)
# Get the JSON payload from the generateNewToken API
JENKINS_TOKENS_JSON=$( \ 
    curl --header "$JENKINS_CRUMB" \
        --user $USERNAME:$PASSWORD \
        --silent "$URL/cjoc/user/$USERNAME/descriptorByName/jenkins.security.ApiTokenPro \
        --data "newTokenName=$USERNAME" \
)
# Pulls the token out of the JSON payload.
TOKEN=$(echo $JENKINS_TOKENS_JSON | jq -r ".token")
```

Some thoughts

Thoughts (1)

- AUTOMATE! (especially in a Cloud World)
- "CasC" is the way to go ... in the near future ;-)
- Plugins installation
- Bootstrapping is not solved yet.
 - But not a reason not to start now

Thoughts (2)

- Exercise your system
 - the less used, the more painful
 - configuration "drift" is your enemy
 - all config changes must be done via source & automation
 - Cut the access to that administration UI 

And a last one 😊

- Self-Service portals...
 - very 2010
 - why not ask for a configuration PR?

Thank You !



 @jm_meessen

 jmMeessen

Slides: <https://jmMeessen.github.io/slides/jw-eu-2019>



Source on : <https://github.com/jmMeessen/slides/tree/jw-eu-2019>