

Using sed to insert file content

Asked 11 years, 9 months ago Modified 4 years, 10 months ago Viewed 22k times



I'm trying to insert a file content before a given pattern

11

Here is my code:



```
sed -i "" "/pattern/ {  
i\\  
r $scriptPath/adapters/default/permissions.xml"  
}" "$manifestFile"
```



It adds the path instead of the content of the file.

Any ideas ?

bash sed

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asked Jun 28, 2012 at 10:56



ridan

868 3 11 24

5 Answers

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In order to insert text *before* a pattern, you need to swap the pattern space into the hold space before reading in the file. For example:

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```
sed "/pattern/ {  
h  
r $scriptPath/adapters/default/permissions.xml  
g  
N  
}" "$manifestFile"
```



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edited Jun 28, 2012 at 14:56

answered Jun 28, 2012 at 14:19




Todd A. Jacobs

82.9k 15 143 203

The script has to be double quoted, otherwise `$scriptPath` won't be expanded. Could you please explain why is N needed at the end? – [hipe](#) Jun 28, 2012 at 15:53

@hipe The `r` command only queues the read for insertion into the output stream. It doesn't actually read anything until the end of the cycle or when the next line is read. Without `N` the file wouldn't be

inserted until after the pattern space was printed, making it function as an append rather than an insert. It's *very* non-intuitive. – [Todd A. Jacobs](#) Jun 28, 2012 at 16:07

2 Seems sed is very picky with the 'r' command. According to linuxtopia.org/online_books/linux_tool_guides/the_sed_faq/...: "Any additional characters before or after the filename are interpreted as part of the filename." I tried `r someFile.txt # insert content of ...` and it failed silently. – [vscharf](#) Apr 15, 2014 at 13:42 

3 This works fine as long as `pattern` is *not* on the last line. – [don_crissti](#) Mar 30, 2015 at 18:01

Hi, Todd and @vscharf, I found "h" & "g" are ommitable. I wrote this one-liner(stackoverflow.com/a/56182135/26736). Thanks ! – [benok](#) May 17, 2019 at 8:26



Just remove `i\.`

5

Example:



```
$ cat 1.txt
abc
pattern
def
```



```
$ echo hello > 2.txt

$ sed -i '/pattern/r 2.txt' 1.txt

$ cat 1.txt
abc
pattern
hello
def
```

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answered Jun 28, 2012 at 11:02



[Igor Chubin](#)

63.1k 13 124 146

3 It inserts after the pattern. How to insert the content before it ? – [ridan](#) Jun 28, 2012 at 11:09



I tried Todd's answer and it works great,

3

but I found "h" & "g" commands are ommitable.



Thanks to [this faq](#) (found from @vscharf's [comments](#)), Todd's answer can be this one liner.



```
sed -i -e '/pattern/ {r $file" -e 'N}' $manifestFile
```



Edit: If you need here-doc version, please check [this](#).

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edited May 17, 2019 at 8:29

answered May 17, 2019 at 8:02



[benok](#)

688 1 6 22


-
- 2 this doesn't work if the match is on the last line or if consecutive lines should match... – [Sundeeep](#)
Apr 4, 2020 at 8:26
-





I got something like this using awk. Looks ugly but did the trick in my test:

1

command:



```
cat test.txt | awk '
/pattern/ {
    line = $0;
    while ((getline < "insert.txt") > 0) {print};
    print line;
    next
}
{print}'
```



test.txt:

```
$ cat test.txt
some stuff
pattern
some other stuff
```

insert.txt:

```
$ cat insert.txt
this is inserted file
this is inserted file
```

output:

```
some stuff
this is inserted file
this is inserted file
pattern
some other stuff
```

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answered Jun 28, 2012 at 11:27



[bcelary](#)

1,837 1 17 17



CodeGnome's solution don't work, if the pattern is on the last line.. So I used 3 commands.

0



```
sed -i '/pattern/ i\
    INSERTION_MARKER
    ' $manifestFile
sed -i '/INSERTION_MARKER/r $scriptPath/adapters/default/permissions.xml'
```





```
$manifestFile  
sed -i 's/INSERTION_MARKER//' $manifestFile
```

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answered Jun 11, 2015 at 5:04

[Sinhyeok](#)

46 4

i found it most straightforward to use vim for this: `vim "$fileToEdit" <<< ' :$-1
r' "$fileToInsert" '$'\n:wq'` – [Sam](#) May 8, 2019 at 14:32
