



Automate infrastructure updates in NIM environment

AIX patch management with Ansible

September 6, 2018

Updating AIX at a large scale infrastructure is easier than ever with the use of Ansible. One may either upgrade to latest or specific SP or TL and/or apply recommended security and hiper fixes to all its NIM clients.

Introduction

This article details how to use [Ansible](#) for **patch management automation** on IBM® AIX® systems. The hardware configuration, the installation process and the nominal use case are detailed.

Our development supports a NIM (Network Installation Management) environment in **PUSH mode**. Patch management playbooks are available on [AIXOSS GitHub repository](#).

The [AIXOSS GitHub repository](#) contains Open Source Software ported to AIX. It also contains scripts to use with Open Source software to perform specific AIX tasks. Under “ansible-playbooks”, you will find a library including the Ansible scripts necessary for patch management with Ansible, and typical playbooks. These playbooks can be used as templates for your own purposes.

Ansible is agentless. The Ansible control machine connects to Ansible hosts (the NIM server/master in our case) thru ssh. Python is required on both the Ansible control machine and the Ansible hosts.

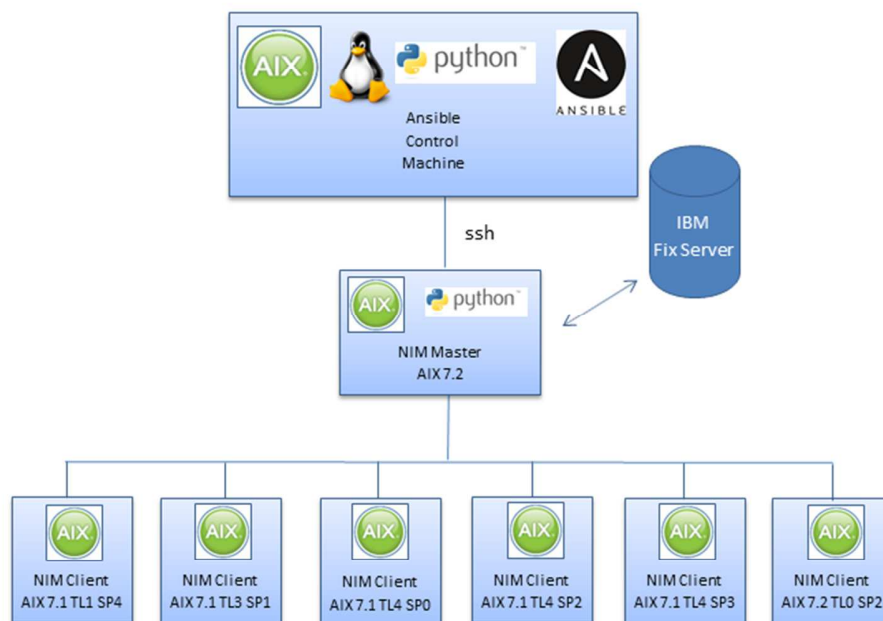
The NIM server must be able to connect to IBM Fix Server in order to download SPs or TLs through **SUMA** (Service Update Management Assistant). It can install those updates on its clients through **NIM** either by NFS or HTTP. The method is described in [Managing AIX Updates Best Practices](#). It is also possible to patch NIM clients with recommended security and High Impact PERvasive (HIPER) fixes through **FLRTVC** ([Fix Level Recommendation Tool Vulnerability Checker](#)).

Configuration

Ansible can run on AIX or Linux machine. To install Ansible on the targeted machine, *Python*, *wget* and *GIT* tools must be installed as a prerequisite.

The NIM master must have access to the internet in order to download fixes and updates through HTTP and FTP protocol. It has several clients which are at different AIX releases and levels. It needs to be at a level at least as high as the highest level client.

The diagram below describes the hardware configuration for this use case.



We use `fattony01.aus.stglabs.ibm.com (9.3.78.42)` as NIM server in the examples below. Our NIM clients are: `quimby01` to `quimby012`.



We assume that a “/home/users” directory exists on the Ansible Control Machine. This directory will be our home directory.

Ansible installation on the Control machine using pip

AIX system:

```
$ wget --no-check-certificate https://bootstrap.pypa.io/get-pip.py
$ python get-pip.py
....
$ pip install ansible
....
```

Linux system

```
$ sudo easy_install pip
...
$ sudo pip install ansible
```

Ansible installation on the Control machine using yum

AIX system:

```
$ wget --no-check-certificate https://ftp.software.ibm.com/aix/freeSoftware/aixtoolbox/INSTALLP/rpm.rte
....
$ install -d. -acgXY rpm.rte
....
$ wget --no-check-certificate
https://ftp.software.ibm.com/aix/freeSoftware/aixtoolbox/ezinstall/ppc/yum_bundle_v1.tar
....
$ tar xf yum_bundle_v1.tar
....
$ rpm -ivh *.rpm
....
$ yum install ansible
....
```



Linux system

```
$ sudo yum install ansible
```

Ansible installation on the Control machine using git

Using git to install Ansible allows you to benefit from the latest functionalities.

```
$ cd /home/users

$ git clone git://github.com/ansible/ansible.git --recursive
....
$ cd ansible
....
$ git pull --rebase
....
$ git submodule update -init --recursive
....
```

Ansible configuration

1) Set up the environment

```
$ source hacking/env-setup
....
$ ansible --version
....
```

2) Create the Ansible configuration file `ansible.cfg` under `/etc/ansible` to disable ssh interactive check for the known hosts.

```
$ mkdir /etc/ansible

$ cd /etc/ansible
```



```
$ cat > ansible.cfg
[default]
Host_key_checking = False
<Ctrl-D>
```

- 3) Create the `/etc/ansible/hosts` file to declare the hosts managed by Ansible.
We declare one host with ip address : 9.3.78.42. We call it “nimserver” for ease of use by Ansible and portability to execute with other NIM servers.

```
$ cat > /etc/ansible/hosts
[nimserver]
9.3.78.42
<Ctrl-D>
```

- 4) Create ssh keys for the Control machine and copy them to the NIM server.

```
$ ssh-keygen -t rsa
...
$ ssh-copy-id root@fattony01.aus.stglabs.ibm.com
...
```

- 5) Verify your configuration using ping through Ansible.

```
$ ansible all -m ping
9.3.78.42 | SUCCESS => {
  "changed": false,
  "ping": "pong"
}
```

- 6) Create a directory for playbooks.

```
$ mkdir playbooks
```

- 7) Create your first playbook in yaml format to automate tasks.

```
$ cd playbooks
```

```
$ cat > lsnim.yml
```

```
- name: "My Playbook"
```

```
hosts: nimserver
```

```
gather_facts: no
```

```
tasks:
```

```
- name: "List the NIM clients of your NIM server"
```

```
command: "/usr/sbin/lsnim -t standalone"
```

```
register: output
```

```
- debug: var=output.stdout_lines
```

```
<Ctrl-D>
```

This task executes on « nimserver » defined before in /etc/ansible/hosts

Environment variables will not be set before execution of the task

The task runs a « lsnim » command

We record the task output in the « output » variable

The debug task displays the stdout registered in the « output » variable

8) Verify the syntax of your playbook.

```
$ ansible-playbook --syntax-check lsnim.yml
```

```
playbook: lsnim.yml
```

9) Execute your playbook.

```
$ ansible-playbook lsnim.yml
```

```
PLAY [My playbook] *****
```

```
TASK [List the NIM clients] *****
changed: [9.3.78.42]
```

```
TASK [debug] *****
```

```
ok: [9.3.78.42] => {
```

```
  "output.stdout_lines": [
```

```
    "quimby11      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby12      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby07      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby08      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby06      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby05      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby01      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby02      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby03      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby04      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby09      machines      standalone",
```

```
    "quimby10      machines      standalone"
```



```
]
}

PLAY RECAP *****
9.3.78.42      : ok=2    changed=1    unreachable=0    failed=0
...
```

To learn more, watch the video:

<https://youtu.be/-OPsBTDH7PM>



Download AIX Patch Management Playbooks from AIXOSS GitHub

In order to take advantage of the [AIXOSS GitHub repository](#):

```
$ /home/users/ansible

$ git clone git://github.com/aioxoss/ansible-playbooks -recursive
...
$ cd ansible-playbooks

$ ls
library                                playbook_aix_suma_targets_list.yml
playbook_aix_flrtvc.yml                playbook_aix_suma_targets_range.yml
playbook_aix_nim_check.yml             playbook_aix_suma_targets_star.yml
playbook_aix_nim_reboot.yml            playbook_aix_suma.yml
playbook_aix_suma_nim.yml              README.md
playbook_aix_suma_targets_all.yml

$ ls library
aix_flrtvc.py  aix_nim.py  aix_suma.py

$
```


Update by SUMA example

1) Create a playbook to check the status of the NIM clients and run it.

```
$ cd /home/user/ansible/ansible-playbooks
```

```
$ cat > playbook_aix_nim_check.yml
```

```
- name: "NIM on AIX"
  hosts: all
  gather_facts: no
```

```
tasks:
```

```
- name: "AIX NIM"
```

```
  aix_nim:
```

```
    action: 'check'
```

```
    description: 'NIM check'
```

```
    register: nim_output
```

```
- debug: var=nim_output
```

```
<Ctrl-D>
```

```
$ ansible-playbook playbook_aix_nim_check.yml
```

```
PLAY [NIM on AIX] *****k
```

```
TASK [AIX NIM] *****
```

```
ok: [9.3.78.42]
```

```
TASK [debug] *****
```

```
ok: [9.3.78.42] => {
```

```
  "nim_output": {
```

```
    "changed": false,
```

```
    "debug_output": [
```

```
      "exec command:['lsnim', '-t', 'lpp_source', '-l']",
```

```
      "exec command Error:"
```

```
    ],
```

```
    "msg": "NIM check completed successfully",
```

```
    "nim_output": [
```

```
      "check update status:",
```

```
      [
```

```
        "",
```

```
        "",
```

```
        "+-----+-----+-----+-----+",
```

```
        "| machine |   oslevel   |         Cstate         |",
```

```
        "+-----+-----+-----+-----+",
```

```
        "| quimby01 | 7100-03-01-1341 | ready for a NIM operation |",
```

```
        "| quimby10 | 7100-04-01-1543 | ready for a NIM operation |",
```

```
        "| quimby09 | 7100-03-04-1441 | ready for a NIM operation |",
```

Task to execute: « aix_nim »

« action » is a required argument for the «aix_nim» task. Possible values are: "check", "update" and "reboot"



Note quimby04 level:
7100-04-02-1614

2) Create a playbook to build a NIM resource on the NIM Master using SUMA and run it.

The "aix_suma" task creates a resource on the NIM server from the fix repository. It gathers all the fixes necessary to update the targets from their current level to the level specified.

« action » is a required argument for the «aix_suma» task. Possible values are: "download" and "preview". These 2 actions have 3 required arguments: "oslevel", "location" and "targets".

```
$ cat > playbook_aix_suma_demo.yml
```

```
- name: "SUMA on AIX"
  hosts: all
  gather_facts: no
```

```
tasks:
```

```
- name: "Downloading latest SP for latest release"
```

```
  aix_suma:
```

```
    oslevel: 'Latest'
```

```
    location: '/export/extra'
```

```
    targets: "quimby0[3:4]"
```

```
    action: 'download'
```

```
  ignore_errors: 'True'
```

```
  register: output
```

```
- debug: var=output
```

```
<Ctrl-D>
```

```
$ ansible-playbook playbook_aix_suma_test.yml
```

```
PLAY [SUMA on AIX] *****
```

```
TASK [Downloading latest SP for latest release] *****
```

```
ok: [9.3.78.42]
```

```
TASK [debug] *****
```

```
ok: [9.3.78.42] => {
```

```
  "output": {
```

```
    "changed": false,
```

```
    "lpp_source_name": "",
```

```
    "msg": "Suma download completed successfully",
```

```
    "suma_output": [
```

```
      "SUMA - Target list: ['quimby03', 'quimby04']",
```

```
      "SUMA - Command:/usr/sbin/suma -x -a RqType=SP -a Action=Preview -a RqName=7100-
```

```
04-04-1717 -a FilterML=7100-04 -a DLTarget=/export/extra/7100-04-04-1717-lpp_source -a
```

```
DisplayName="download request for oslevel Latest",
```

```
      "Preview summary : 0 to download, 0 failed, 400 skipped"
```

```
      "NIM command:/usr/sbin/nim -o define -t lpp_source -a server=master -a
```

```
location=/export/extra/7100-04-04-1717-lpp_source -a packages=all 7100-04-04-1717-lpp_source
```

```
",
```

```
      "NIM operation succeeded - output:Preparing to copy install images (this will
take several minutes)...\\n\\nNow checking for missing install images...\\n\\nAll required
install images have been found. This lpp_source is now ready.\\n"
```

```
    ],
```

```
    "target_list": []
```

Default value: the latest Service Pack (SP) available for the highest release. A Service Pack level (SP) or Technical Level (TL) can also be specified.

where the NIM resource will be created on the NIM.

NIM clients for which the NIM resource will be created.*

```

    }
  }

PLAY RECAP *****
9.3.78.42                : ok=2    changed=0    unreachable=0    failed=0

```

* Star convention (e.g. quimby*) will apply the action to all the NIM clients of the NIM Master with a name starting by “quimby”.

Range of machines (e.g. quimby0[3:4]) will apply the action to quimby03, and quimby04 if they are NIM clients of the NIM Master.

NIM clients can also be listed (e.g. “quimby01, quimby06”).

Warning: SUMA will define the lowest SP and TL level of the targets and will build a NIM resource to bring these targets to the SP or TL specified in “oslevel”. Trying then to use this resource on targets with a lower SP or TL will result in a failure.

3) Create a playbook to update the NIM clients and run it.

```

$ cat > playbook_aix_nim_demo.yml
- name: "NIM on AIX"
  hosts: all
  gather_facts: no

  tasks:
    name: "AIX NIM"
    aix_nim:
      action: 'update'
      force: 'false'
      async: 'false'
      targets: "quimby0[3:4]"
      lpp_source: 'latest_sp'
      description: 'playbook_aix_nim_update'

```

```

      register: nim_output
    - debug: var=nim_output
  <Ctrl-D>

```

```

$ ansible-playbook playbook_aix_nim_demo.yml

```

```

PLAY [NIM on AIX]

```

```

*****

```

```

TASK [AIX NIM]

```

```

*****

```

```

changed: [9.3.78.42]

```

Required arguments for update: “lpp_source”, and “targets”.

NIM clients to update.

Resource to use to update the NIM clients

Task to execute: “aix_nim”

Optional argument: if set to ‘False’: ensure that a machine will be completely installed before installing the following one



Trademarks

```

        "NIM - Finish updating quimby04 synchronously."
    ]
}
}

PLAY RECAP
*****
****
9.3.78.42                : ok=2    changed=1    unreachable=0    failed=0

```

4) Run the playbook `playbook_aix_nim_check` to verify that quimbu03 and quimby04 have been updated.

```

$ ansible-playbook playbook_aix_nim_check.yml
PLAY [NIM on AIX] *****

TASK [AIX NIM] *****
ok: [9.3.78.42]

TASK [debug] *****
ok: [9.3.78.42] => {
  "nim_output": {
    "changed": false,
    "debug_output": [
      "exec command:['lsnim', '-t', 'lpp_source', '-l']",
      "exec command Error:"
    ],
    "msg": "NIM check completed successfully",
    "nim_output": [
      "check update status:",
      [
        "",
        "+-----+-----+-----+",
        "| machine |  oslevel  |          Cstate          |",
        "+-----+-----+-----+",
        "| quimby01 | 7100-03-01-1341 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby10 | 7100-04-01-1543 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby09 | 7100-03-04-1441 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby08 | 7100-03-01-1341 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby02 | 7100-03-01-1341 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby03 | 7100-04-04-1717 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby11 | 7100-04-01-1543 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby12 | 7200-01-00-0000 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby07 | 7200-01-00-0000 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby06 | 7200-00-02-1614 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby05 | 7100-04-03-1642 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| quimby04 | 7100-04-04-1717 | ready for a NIM operation |",
        "| master  | 7200-01-00-0000 | ready for a NIM operation |",

```

Note quimby03 level:
7100-04-04-1717

Note quimby04 level :
7100-04-04-1717



```
    ]
  ]
}
}

PLAY RECAP *****
9.3.78.42          : ok=2    changed=0    unreachable=0    failed=0
```

5) Once you have updated your machines, run `playbook_aix_nim_reboot.yml` to reboot the updated machines.

```
$ cat > playbook_aix_nim_reboot.yml
- name: "NIM reboot on AIX"
  hosts: all
  gather_facts: no

  tasks:
    - name: "AIX NIM"
      aix_nim:
        action: 'reboot'
        targets: "quimby0[3:4]"
        description: 'NIM reboot'

      register: nim_output
    - debug: var=nim_output
<Ctrl-D>

$ ansible-playbook playbook_aix_nim_reboot.yml
PLAY [NIM reboot on AIX] *****

TASK [AIX NIM] *****
changed: [9.3.78.42]

TASK [debug] *****
ok: [9.3.78.42] => {
  "nim_output": {
    "changed": true,
    "debug_output": [
      "exec command:['lsnim', '-t', 'lpp_source', '-l']",
      "exec command Error:"
    ],
    "msg": "NIM reboot completed successfully",
    "nim_output": [
      "NIM - Command:nim -o reboot quimby03 quimby04"
    ]
  }
}
```



```
}  
  
PLAY RECAP *****  
9.3.78.42      : ok=2    changed=1    unreachable=0    failed=0
```

To learn more, watch the video:

https://youtu.be/J_mtUHzo5Io

Patch by FLRTVC example

1) Create a playbook and run it

Apar type of the fixes to check or download.

“sec” : for corrections to security threats;
“hiper” for corrections to High Impact PErvasive threats.

“all” specifies both types of apar and is the default (this is the value in this example since the line is commented)

```

$ cd /home/user/ansible/playbooks

$ cat > playbook_aix_flrtvc_demo.yml
- name: "FLRTVC on AIX playbook"
  hosts: fattony01
  gather_facts: no

  tasks:
    - name: "FLRTVC"
      aix_flrtvc:
        targets: quimby0[3:4]
        path: /tmp/flrtvc-ansible
        #apar: sec
        #csv: /tmp/apar.csv
        #check_only: False
        #download_only: False
        #force: False
        #clean: True

      register: result
      - debug: var=result
    <Ctrl-D>

```

Task to execute: « aix_flrtvc »

Working directory for flrtvc ; will contain flrtvc reports

Path to the csv file describing the fixes if already transferred from the fix server

By default, the aix_flrtvc task will check the state of the target, download the missing fixes, and update the targets. “check_only: True” will only perform the check; “download_only: True” will check the targets and download the fixes (no update)

By default, do not remove currently installed fixes before running flrtvc

By default, do not remove the working directory at the end of execution

```

$ ansible-playbook playbook_aix_flrtvc_demo.yml
PLAY [FLRTVC on AIX playbook] *****

TASK [FLRTVC] *****
ok: [fattony01]

TASK [debug] *****
ok: [fattony01] => {
  "result": {
    "changed": false,
    "meta": {

```



```
"quimby03": {
  "0.report": [
    "Fileset|Current Version|Type|EFix Installed|Abstract|Unsafe Versions|APARs|Bulletin
URL|Download URL|CVSS Base Score|Reboot Required|Last Update|Fixed In",
    ...
  "1.parse": [
    "ftp://aix.software.ibm.com/aix/efixes/security/bellmail_fix.tar",
    "https://aix.software.ibm.com/aix/efixes/security/bind_fix11.tar",
    ...
  ],
  "2.discover": [
    "bellmail_fix/IV91006s8a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "bellmail_fix/IV91007s7a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "bellmail_fix/IV91008s3a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "bellmail_fix/IV91010s2a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "bellmail_fix/IV91011s1a.161125.epkg.Z",
    ...
    ...
  ],
  "3.download": [
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/bellmail_fix/IV91006s8a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/bellmail_fix/IV91007s7a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/bellmail_fix/IV91008s3a.161125.epkg.Z",
    ...
    ...
  ],
  "4.check": [
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/bellmail_fix/IV91008s3a.161125.epkg.Z",
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/bind_fix11/IV81281m0b.160331.epkg.Z",
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/bind_fix11/IV81281m1a.160315.epkg.Z",
    "/flrtvc-ansible/work/tardir/tcpdump_fix2/IV94726s4c.170417.epkg.Z",
    ...
    ...
  "5.install": [
    "",
    "Initializing log /var/adm/ras/emgr.log ...",
    ...

    "EPKG NUMBER      LABEL                OPERATION            RESULT              ",
    "=====            =====            =====            =====            ",
    "1                  IV94726s4c          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "2                  IV93363m3a          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "3                  IV92240m3a          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "4                  IV91951m3a          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "5                  IV91487s1a          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "6                  IV91255m1b          INSTALL              FAILURE              ",
    "7                  IV91008s3a          INSTALL              FAILURE              ",
    "8                  IV90915s1a          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "9                  IV90451s0a          INSTALL              SUCCESS              ",
    "10                 IV90451s0a          INSTALL              FAILURE              ,
```



```
"11          IV89829m1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"12          IV89737s2a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"13          IV88007s0a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"14          IV87640s2a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"15          IV87420m0a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"16          IV84947m1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"17          IV84458s1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"18          IV83994m1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"19          IV81493s1a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"20          IV81493s1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"21          IV81459s1b      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"22          IV81303s1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"23          IV81303s1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"24          IV81281m1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"25          IV81281m0b      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"26          IV80586s1a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"27          IV80191s1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"28          IV79944s1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"29          IV79262m1a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"ATTENTION: system reboot is required. Please see the \"Reboot Processing\",
\"sections in the output above or in the /var/adm/ras/emgr.log file.\",
\"Return Status: FAILURE\",
\"0042-001 nim: processing error encountered on \"master\":\",
\"  0042-001 m_cust: processing error encountered on \"quimby03\":\",
\"  0042-175 c_script: An unexpected result was returned by the
\"fattony01.aus.stglabs.ibm.com:/export/nim/scripts/quimby03.script\" command\",
\",
\"0042-175 c_installp: An unexpected result was returned by the \"/usr/sbin/installp\"
command\",
\",
\"See the log file:\",
\"/t/var/adm/ras/nim.installp\",
\"for details or use the \"showlog\" operation.\",
...
],
\"5.install\": [
\",
\"Initializing log /var/adm/ras/emgr.log ...\",
...

\"EPKG NUMBER      LABEL          OPERATION          RESULT          \",
\"=====          =====          =====          =====          \",
\"1          IV94726s4c      INSTALL          SUCCESS          \",
\"2          IV93845s3b      INSTALL          SUCCESS          \",
\"3          IV93363m3a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          \",
\"4          IV92240m3a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          \",
\"5          IV91951m3a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          \",
\"6          IV91487s3a      INSTALL          FAILURE          \",
\"7          IV91431s3a      INSTALL          FAILURE          \",
\"8          IV91255m3c      INSTALL          FAILURE          \",
\"9          IV91019s3a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          \",
```



```
"10          IV91008s3a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"11          IV90915s3a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"12          IV90451s0a      INSTALL          SUCCESS          ",
"13          IV90451s0a      INSTALL          FAILURE          ",
"ATTENTION: system reboot is required. Please see the \"Reboot Processing\",
\"sections in the output above or in the /var/adm/ras/emgr.log file.",
"Return Status: FAILURE",
"0042-001 nim: processing error encountered on \"master\":",
"  0042-001 m_cust: processing error encountered on \"quimby04\":",
"  0042-175 c_script: An unexpected result was returned by the
\"fattony01.aus.stglabs.ibm.com:/export/nim/scripts/quimby04.script\" command:",
"",
"0042-175 c_installp: An unexpected result was returned by the \"/usr/sbin/installp\"
command:",
"See the log file:",
"\t/var/adm/ras/nim.installp",
"for details or use the \"showlog\" operation.",
"",
"",
""
]
},
"msg": "exit successfully"
}
}

PLAY RECAP *****
fattony01          : ok=2    changed=0    unreachable=0    failed=0
```

To learn more, watch the video:

https://youtu.be/95BvMB_U8A8