

# Patching Your MPE System

*an Allegro Consultants Whitepaper*

Patch management on any computer is critical. It seems like hardly a week goes by without the dreaded yellow patch shield appearing on my Windows PC. As much as I dislike having to reboot my PC, I know that those critical patches need to be installed.

It's probably safe to say that your MPE server is much more important than a PC and yet often the notion of "install and forget" is commonly encountered. This paper will discuss the importance of patching an MPE system. It will also outline what needs to be done in order to successfully patch your server.

On MPE, the reason for patching is generally defect repair. MPE's stability is renowned and yet it still has bugs in it (shocking, I know!). ALL patches available from HP today have been thoroughly tested for many years and on many systems around the world. In our opinion, placing these patches on your system at this point is seldom risky. In fact, the risky behavior is NOT patching! You are likely destined to finding old (and already fixed) bugs all over again and contribute to lost production time. Following patching, end users will never know that anything changed on the system with the possible exception that the "system is working again". MPE engineers were very careful to try to preserve existing user/application interaction – so the fear of "everything will break" is probably unfounded. ☺

When possible, we recommend that patches be installed on a pre-production (test or development) system first. By doing this, you can assure yourself that indeed patching will "do no harm." It will also give you a sense of how long the process will take. It's an excellent "dress rehearsal" so that you can remind yourself of what needs to be done. But what if you only have one MPE system? Now it's time to talk to your support vendors. Ask if they know of any patch-related instability. Ask to rent time on one of their systems (similar to a DR test (you **do** have a DR plan for your MPE system, yes?)) to test your applications on a patched system.

The basic steps to patching an MPE server are:

- Make and test a new CSLT tape.  
In the extraordinarily unlikely event that you have to back out the patches, you will need this CSLT tape. You, of course, have established procedures – that you're routinely using – to make CSLTs, right?
- Acquire the patches from HP.  
All that it take is a phone call – HP support or not – to get them.
- Decide which patching tool – AUTOPAT or Patch/iX – you'll use.  
(Hint: it's probably Patch/iX. ☺)
- Since the patching process will probably create a system update tape, you can run the patching tool ahead of your scheduled downtime.
- When "Patching Day" arrives, take the system down so you can update from tape.  
In many cases, when the system comes back up, you're done.

When your company has its MPE software support through Allegro, we'll gladly assist you through this process (you **do** have support with Allegro, right? ☺).