Debathena Landing Page

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> ⚠ **Debathena as a release is not longer available**
> As of 2022:
>
> - The Debathena cluster release (based on Ubuntu 14.04) no longer functions and the clusters have been shuttered since the pandemic.
> - The athena.dialup service is running Ubuntu 18.04 with a custom list of vendor packages.
> - Community members are often successful at installing vendor packages such as OpenAFS on Ubuntu 20.04 to obtain Athena-like functionality.

On this page:

What is Debathena?

Debathena is Athena's latest client software. It is the technology powering [Athena Workstations] running Ubuntu Linux, as well as hundreds of Debian and Ubuntu desktops and laptops across MIT, by providing Athena workstation software via Debian packages and repositories.

On your personal computer, installing Debathena will give you easy access to the software and files in Athena AFS lockers, as well as to standard Athena commands and utilities. You can also install the set of packages for a private workstation or server with Athena accounts, or choose any set of of packages in between.

Debathena was created by SIPB , MIT's student computing group, and is now a collaboration between SIPB and IS&T , the central IT department. Since 2009, Debathena has been the standard Athena release, powering the [Athena Workstations] in Athena clusters and Athena Quickstations as well as IS&T's athena.dialup service.

Benefits and Key Features

- Provides a vast collection of third-party software, including MATLAB, Maple, and Mathematica.
- Easy access to the AFS filesystem for personal and group file storage.
- Public computer labs (Athena clusters) located throughout the MIT campus.
- Debathena is the current version of Athena.

How to Obtain

To download the Athena software, visit the IS&T Athena page.

Before installing Debathena

1. **Choose a metapackage to install**
   Debathena provides various levels of Athena functionality through different metapackages, and each metapackage comes with different

levels of support. Some metapackages are better suited for certain hardware configurations than others. If you are unsure of which metapackage to install, see Which Debathena metapackage should I install?

2. **Become familiar with the command line**
   The primary mode of interaction with Debathena, including its installation, is via the command line (shell). If you are not already familiar with the command line, there are several resources available:
   a. Unix for Mac OS X Users tutorial offered by LinkedIn Learning . MIT faculty, students, staff and affiliates have full access to the course materials. See LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com) Landing Page for more details.
   b. Working with the Command Line
3. **Become familiar with Athena**
   Athena is MIT's UNIX-based campus-wide academic computing facility. If you don't know how to use Athena, we recommend reading Getting Started with Athena.
4. **Subscribe to our announcement list**
   Before installing Debathena, please subscribe to our announcement list, so that we can send you announcements about changes in the project and important security upgrades. This list is very low-traffic, receiving 2-3 messages per semester at most. You can subscribe using WebMoira (authentication required).

Installing Debathena

- Advanced installation options
- How do I install Debathena manually?
- How do I install Debathena on my personal computer?
- instructions from SIPB's Debathena webpage

How to Use

- Getting Started with Athena

Troubleshooting and FAQ's

- Debathena Troubleshooting and FAQ's
- Emacs Troubleshooting and FAQs
- Printing from Athena Troubleshooting and FAQs

Certificates on Athena

- [archive:Certificate test page]
- Why do I keep being prompted to identify myself with a certificate on Athena?
- Why does Athena Firefox (web browser) say that SSL is disabled?

Customizations

- Dotfiles for Bash
- Dotfiles for Tcsh
- Dotfiles on Athena
- How can I get a new copy of my dotfiles?
- How do I set an environment variable on Athena?
- What is the login sequence and dotfile sequence on Debathena machines?

Desktop

- How can I get another Terminal window?
- How do I take a screenshot on Athena?
- How do I skip the initial Terminal window that appears at login?
- [archive:Obtaining an Athena Workstation]
- When I try to reboot or shutdown my Athena machine, I get "org.freedesktop.ConsoleKit.Manager.NotPrivileged Authorization is required"

Internet and Web Browsing

- How can I get started with a web.mit.edu website?
- Why are the contents of my home directory visible on the web?
- Why does Firefox say that it's already running?

Miscellaneous

- How can I connect to the Athena dialup servers?
- How can I edit a Microsoft Word document on Athena?

See Also

- Horizon Virtual Desktops and Computer Labs Landing Page
- Certificates Landing Page
- Emacs Landing Page
- Pharos Printing Landing Page
- What Runs Where on Athena: Help Info

Have Questions or Still Need Help?

- Contact the IS&T Service Desk