M242
Maintaining Portable Clients in Large Deployments

Rob Roy

Macintosh Technologist
rob.roy@sheridaninstitute.ca
Sheridan College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning
Oakville, Ontario
Canada

Sheridan College

- 4200 students in School of the Arts

- Largest arts school in Canada

- 2nd largest arts school in North America

Macintosh Statistics

- 13 computer labs + 2 new this summer

- 500 iBooks

- over 900+ machines.

- 2 year leasing strategy for iBooks, 3 year for desktop machines.

Imaging Many Portables

- 500 iBooks for deployment in September

- 4 different images

- NetBoot / *NetRestore*

- Portable NetBoot server with a fast AFP connection off an X-Serve

AFP Image Server

Netboot Server

Client   Client   Client   Client
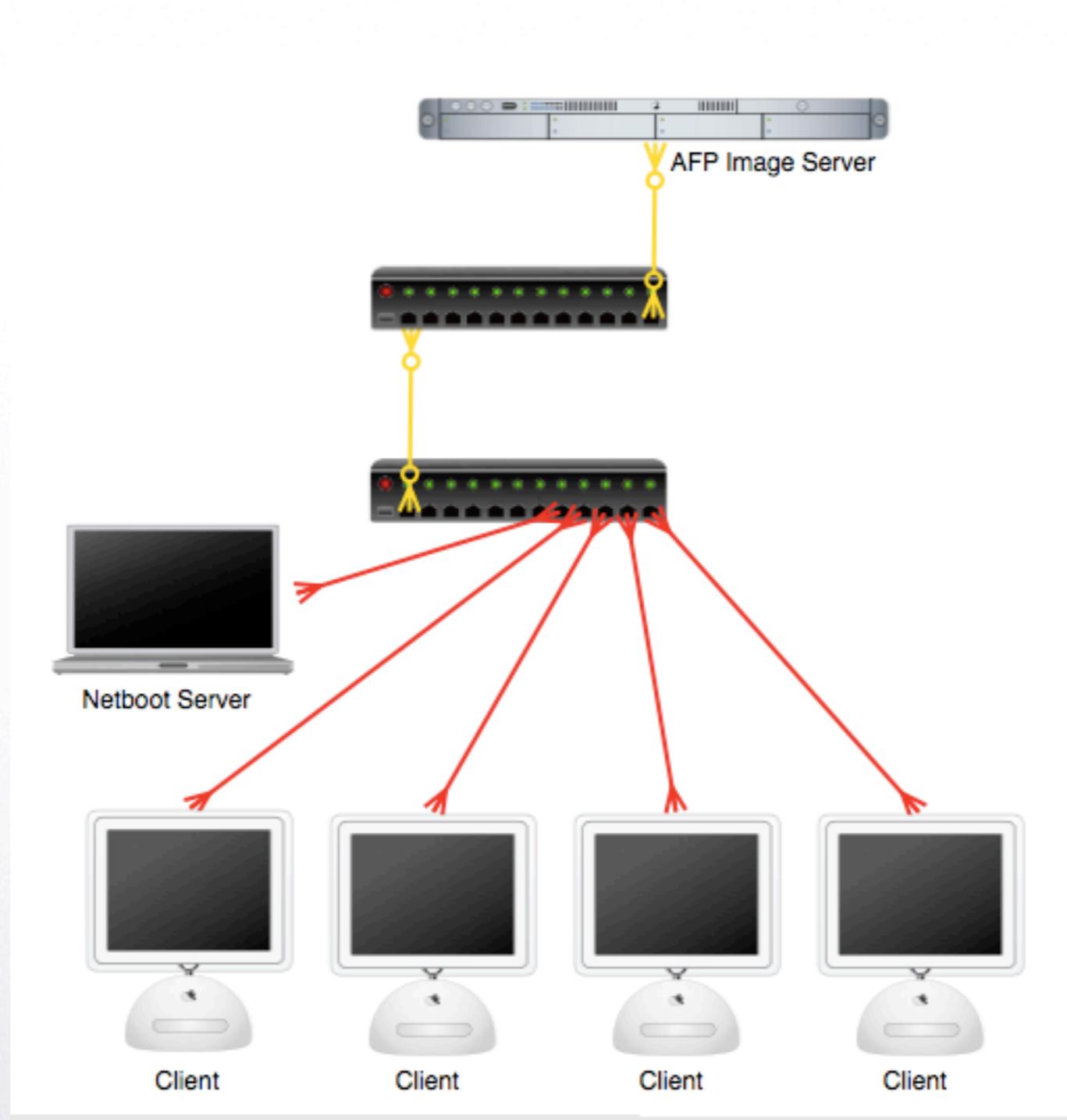
Imaging One Portable

- Pocket drive / *BootCD*

- Command line *ASR*

- Use *NetRestore* locally

NetBoot over subnets

- Looked at Bombich's *NBAS*

- Read related articles on Bombich.com

- Wrote an applescript to do the work

DEMO

A NetRestore Trick

- Remote preferences

- Parameters.plist

- Configurations.plist

- Web enabled folder

- AFP enabled folder

Remote Database Integration

If you have NetRestore PHPServices installed on Mac OS X Server, NetRestore can retrieve machine settings from the server and automatically populate the preferences, configuration, and post-action settings.

URL to the web page used to retrieve system information:

Example: https://xserve.example.com/nr/netrestore.php

Administrative Group: Group Password:

Remote Preferences

URL or local path to NetRestore preferences (parameters.plist)

URL or local path to NetRestore configurations (configurations.plist)

Cancel   Save

iimage

- iimage uno for one off imaging

- NetBoots machine over subnets into *NetRestore* setup

- Ability to choose image to restore

DEMO

Remobilizer

- An Applescript Studio application.

- Backs up a home folder as well as items chosen from the root drive level.

- Images machine with selected image.

- Restores home folder and other items on top of the fresh image.

Remobilizer

- The *Remobilizer* runs off an external drive.

- The drive boots the hardware and runs as superuser.

- The external drive houses the images and backups used by the application.

Remobilizer

- Special backups are done:

  - CUPS

    - Printers

  - System Configuration

    - Network settings (home PPPoE)

Remobilizer

- Designed as a time saver

- Simple to use

- Can be left with IT department

DEMO

Auto Keycheckout

- Applescript that uses GUI scripting

- Since OS X, Sassafras no longer supports applescripting of their applications

- The script runs as a login item and deletes itself upon completion
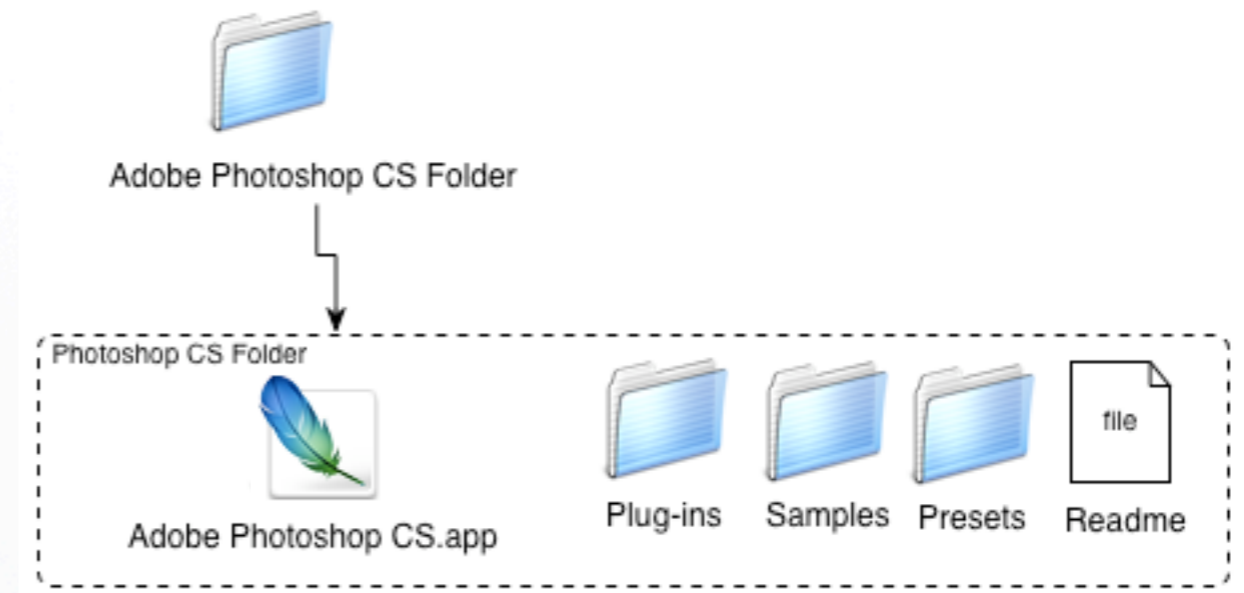
DEMO

Poison Pill

- Poison Pill is a set of three applescripts.

- The script set hides the licensed application within an applescript bundle, and will not launch the real application without a special parameter that is embedded in NVRAM.
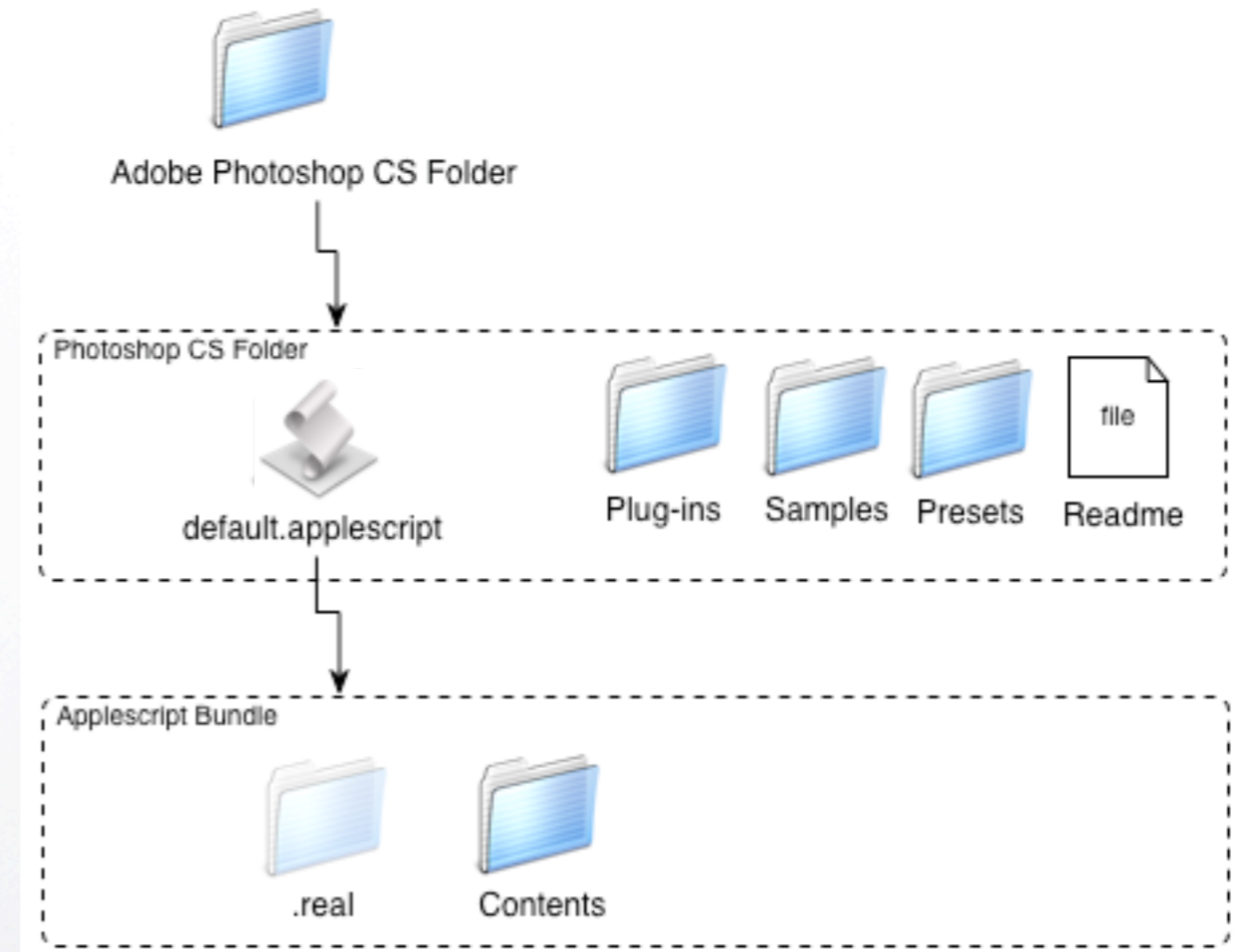
Poison Pill

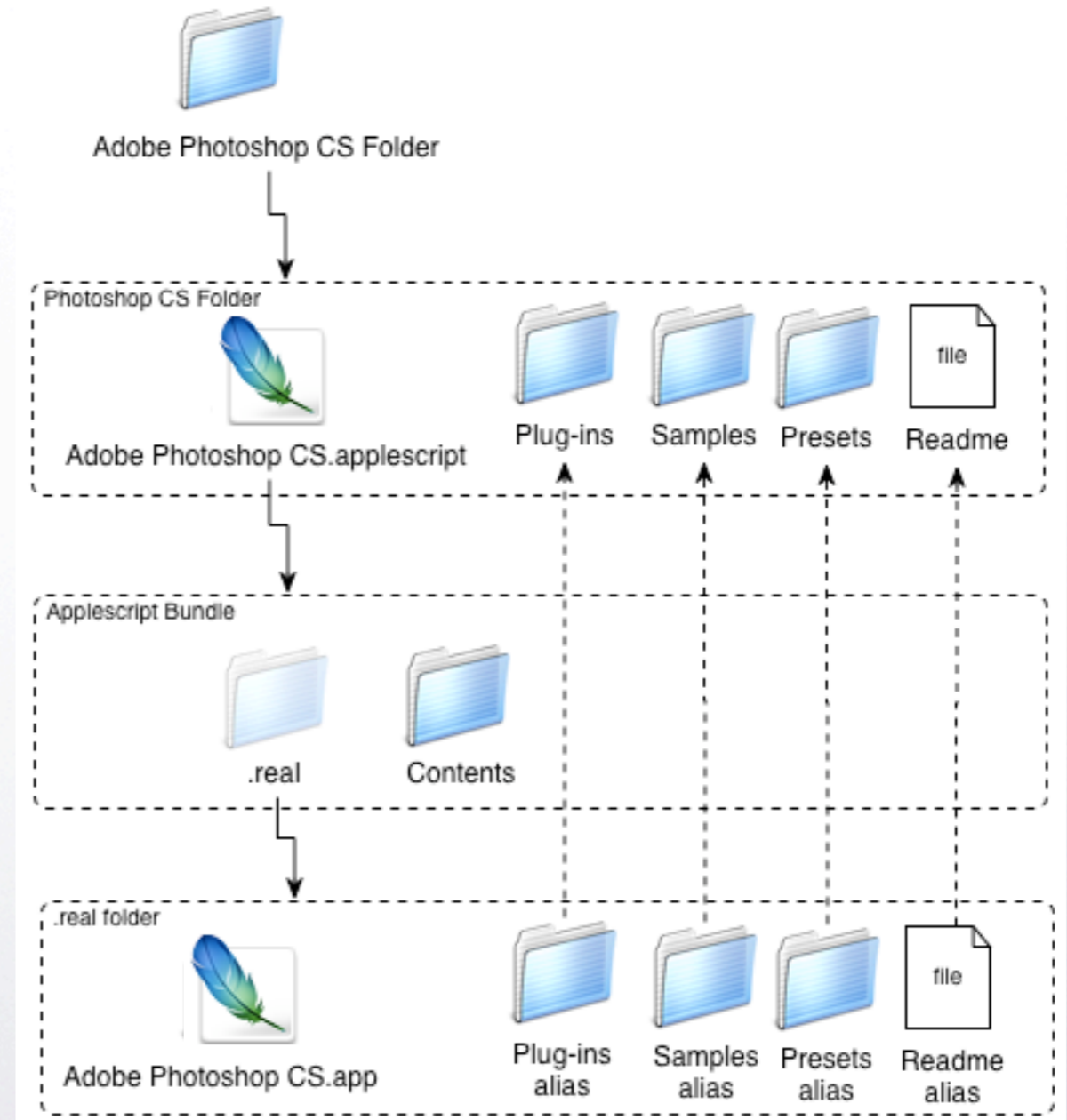- This is the folder structure for a basic application.

Poison Pill

- The *Secure Application* applescript creates a hidden folder in the bundle called *real*.

Poison Pill

- Inside the *.real* folder resides the licensed application and aliases to the original accessories.

- The user can therefore add new items as before.

Poison Pill

- When the applescript bundle is double clicked, the script checks for a special parameter in NVRAM. If found, the licensed application is launched as normal.

- If the parameter is not found, a warning dialog is displayed prompting the user to go see the Mactech deptartment.

DEMO

Resources

- http://homepage.mac.com/cocolicious/CocoaByCoco/Menu10.html

- http://www.sheridaninstitute.ca

- rob.roy@sheridaninstitute.ca

Q & A