

Welcome to SoftLayer

first 48 hours

Welcome to SoftLayer. This document will outline your first 48 hours as a customer and hopefully answer all initial questions. Dedicated server administration is a challenging task and our goal is to mitigate any obstacles in your path and to assist you in easy server administration. Our responsibility is to deliver enterprise grade network, hardware, software, security, and management tools to act as your virtual datacenter and to enable your hosting experience. All we ask is for you to become familiar with the SoftLayer approach, practice and use the customer portal, and oversee day-to-day server administration and management. We're here to assist you and to act as your hands and eyes in managing your server. If you need help, our administrators are always available. Thank you for your time and your continued business.

Sincerely,
Lance Crosby, President and CEO

Contact Information

Support

support@SoftLayer.com
1.866.403.7638
1.214.442.0603

Sales

sales@SoftLayer.com
1.866.398.7638
1.214.442.0602

Accounting

accounting@SoftLayer.com
1.214.442.0604

Important Addresses

Web Site

www.SoftLayer.com

Portal

<https://manage.SoftLayer.com>

VPN Address - Dallas

<https://vpn.dal01.SoftLayer.com>

VPN Address - Seattle

<https://vpn.sea01.SoftLayer.com>

VPN Address - Washington, DC

<https://vpn.wdc01.SoftLayer.com>

Emergency Notification

<https://status.SoftLayer.com>

Name-Servers

ns1.SoftLayer.com
66.228.118.8

ns2.SoftLayer.com
66.228.119.9

DNS Resolvers

rs1.SoftLayer.com
10.0.80.11

rs2.SoftLayer.com
10.0.80.12

Plesk Control Panel URL

<https://x.x.x.x:8443>

cPanel Control Panel URL

<http://x.x.x.x:2086>
<https://x.x.x.x:2087>

Networking Infrastructure

Cisco 6509-E Border Routers
Cisco 6509-E Distribution Routers
Sup 720 - 3BXL Engines
Cisco 3560-E Public Access Switch
Cisco 3560-E Private Access Switch

How to Get Started

Once your server is delivered, your welcome email will include instructions on where to find your initial server credentials. It is important to understand your management tools including terminal services (Windows), SSH (Red Hat), server control panel (Plesk / cPanel / Helm), the customer portal, and our private network connection including the VPN gateway and IPMI control. But remember, we're here to assist you.

Become familiar with your management tools and ask for assistance when needed.

Portal Overview

SoftLayer developers have built an extensive customer management portal to compliment your direct server management tools. Inside the customer portal, you will find seven working categories (administrative, support, security, hardware, Public network, Private network and sales). Within each category, you will find a myriad of related tools and features. After your initial service order, you should spend one to two initial hours familiarizing yourself with the customer portal to fully understand the power of the SoftLayer approach. Learn how to manage your server directly, over the private network, via the IPMI tools, and how the portal integrates into your server administration to offer a complete hosting solution. Advanced users: you can now integrate portal features into your own customer portal or server control panel using our API. For more information, go to the SoftLayer Developer Network at <http://sldn.softlayer.com>.

Support Guidelines

Serving as your safety net, our technical support team is available onsite 24/7/365 and will serve as your virtual hands and eyes. Our support methodology utilizes the "emergency room" approach where problems are graded for severity and responded to accordingly. Service outages of any type always receive top priority followed by service-degrading factors and general questions about server management. This ensures every customer will receive the best support during the appropriate situation. Server administration and management are your responsibility, but we are here to offer general assistance. If you find you are in need of technical assistance, server administration tickets can be opened for a \$3 charge to assist you across most technical disciplines.

Technical Resources

There are many technical resources at your fingertips inside the portal. You will find extensive Flash tutorials on Plesk, cPanel, Helm and IPMI View that cover every possible feature inside these software packages.

An extensive searchable frequently asked questions (FAQ) are also available for common issues and resolutions.

You will also find posts from our technical staff and verified solutions from other SoftLayer customers who may have encountered the same perplexing issue as you. Ticket generation is always available for assistance from our technical team and we highly recommend other outside resources. Google groups, PHP forums, database forums, and product vendors offer invaluable assistance.

Bandwidth Providers - Dallas, TX

2 x 10G Verio
Public Network
10G Level3
Public Network
10G Internap
Public Network
10G Global Crossing
Public Network
10G SAVVIS
Public Network
1 x GigE Cogent
Private Network

Bandwidth Providers - Seattle, WA

10G Internap
Public Network
10G Qwest - Q1 2008
Public Network
1 x GigE XO Communications
Private Network

Bandwidth Providers - Washington, DC

2 x 10G Internap
Public Network
1 x GigE AboveNet
Private Network

Upgrade Ports - Public and Private

Choice of 10Mbps, 100Mbps or 1000Mbps

Network Protection

Tipping Point IDS / IPS & DDOS
Arbor Network Peakflow
Cisco Netflow Analysis

Dual and Quad Core Processors

Intel Xeon 3000 Series
Intel Xeon 5100 Series
Intel Xeon 5300 Series
Intel Xeon 5300 Series
AMD Opteron 1000 Series
AMD Opteron 2000 Series
AMD Opteron 8000 Series

Single Core Processors

Intel Dual Xeon & AMD Dual Opteron

Applications

MySQL
MS SQL Express
MS SQL Workgroup
MS SQL Standard
MS SQL Enterprise

OS and Control Panels

Microsoft Windows Server
Red Hat ES Server
Fedora Server
CentOS Server
Ubuntu Server
FreeBSD Server
Debian Server
cPanel / WHM / Fantastico

Adding Portal Users

Inside the customer management portal, you will find a section under the administrative category to add additional users and set permissions for portal access. This section will not add users to your server, only to the portal. By allowing other administrators access to the portal, they will be allowed access to the technical resources and the information to properly manage your environment.

Adding Server Users

You must log into your server via the original username and password and add additional users through the user administration panel. Adding users to your server will NOT automatically add users to the portal (and vice versa).

Tracking Usernames / Passwords

You will have several usernames and passwords (server, customer portal, NAS, VPN, and other potential services). Inside the customer portal, you will find password management made easy by our password tracking features. Once passwords are modified, you can update your secure password files inside the portal for other administrators and technical support to access. Failure to keep current usernames and password on file inside the portal will slow the support process from SoftLayer as technicians wait for updated information. The portal does NOT automatically update your server password or other third party applications. The customer portal is your password repository for administrative purposes.

Billing and Invoices

Your first day of service is also your anniversary billing date. You will be billed monthly on your anniversary date for all services. If you upgrade or add new services, your anniversary date will remain the same and new services will be pro-rated to your next anniversary date. All invoices (historical, current, future) are available online under the accounting sections inside the customer portal.

Adding New Services / Upgrading Existing Services

Add new services at any time inside the customer portal under the administrative tab. Upgrade your current server, purchase a new server or add additional services to any plan. Almost all SoftLayer servers are fully upgradable including processors, RAM and hard drives. This allows for fast upgrades without the need for data migration or IP changes. Contact sales for more information.

Server Control and Access

Depending on the type of services purchased, there are several different ways to log into your server for the first time. For successful access, always use your server IP address and server username / password found in the customer portal after the initial login. Using your domain name in lieu of your IP address will probably not work unless you have made DNS modifications to point your domain name at your server. As a general rule, use your server IP address for the first 14 days while your domain name propagates throughout the Internet.

No Server Control Panel: If you did not purchase a server control panel software (Plesk / cPanel / Helm), you will most likely log into your server with Terminal Services (Windows) or SSH (Red Hat).

If you are unfamiliar with either product, please see our knowledge base inside the customer portal for specific instructions.

Server Control Panel: If you purchased Plesk, cPanel or Helm with your server, you should ALWAYS use the control panel to administer your server. Both software control panels have specific administration ports and URLs for server access. If you need specific instructions, log into the customer portal and refer to the Flash tutorials or the knowledge base for detailed instructions. Administration of your server from a command line or not utilizing the server control software may break control panel feature sets requiring a reload.

Remote Reboot

Through the customer portal, you have remote reboot access to your server. This remote reboot will allow you to reset the server or do a complete power off / power on. Available 24/7, this feature is located under the hardware category inside the portal.

Remote Console and KVM over IP

Console or KVM over IP access to your server is available for advanced administrative control. Instructions are found inside the portal within the Private network category under the SSL VPN link. Console access also requires utilizing the SSL, PPTP, or IPSEC VPN gateway and connecting directly to your IPMI management card.

OS Reloads

This feature will reload your OS to the original specs and will allow you to start over or change your server configuration including OS, control panels, database software and security software. OS reloads and configuration changes occur real-time and will format your server and reload a fresh OS. Depending on the applications and complexity of your server, the average time for an automated OS reload is 30 minutes to two hours.

DNS and Name-Servers

Name-servers are top-level authoritative servers for your domain name and “inform” Internet users where to find your domain name. Once found, domain name servers “inform” Internet users to the IP in which your domain resolves. Customers have the option of running their own name-servers or utilize a third party (like your domain registrar or SoftLayer). Customers must also decide to manage their own DNS servers or utilize a third party (like your domain name registrar or SoftLayer).

Name-Servers

Yes, I want to run my own name-servers: You will need to register your domain name as a name-server with your domain name registrar to run your own name-servers. This is usually free of charge and is only an administrative step. To register your domain name as a name-server you will need two names and two IP addresses. Most people elect to use something like ns1.domain.com and ns2.domain.com as well as two IP addresses assigned by SoftLayer. This allows you to manage your own name-servers on your own server.

No, I do not want to run my own name-servers: Most people elect not to run their own name-servers and use third parties for this service. You can use your domain registrar or SoftLayer as your name-server provider. We highly recommend using SoftLayer because this allows us to further troubleshoot routing or domain issues that may arise. If you wish for SoftLayer to be your authoritative name-server provider, log into your domain registrar and change your name servers to ns1.SoftLayer.com (66.228.118.8) and ns2.SoftLayer.com (66.228.119.9). Do not perform this until you are ready for your domain name to be live on your server at SoftLayer.

DNS Management

Yes, I want to manage my own DNS: You will need to install a DNS system on your server to run and manage your own DNS servers. By using a control panel like Plesk or cPanel with this built-in feature, you can manage add / remove / modify domain names on your server at any time. This is common among resellers and hosting companies that seek complete control.

No, I do not want to run my own DNS: Most companies and individuals elect not to run their own DNS due to overhead on the server and lack of redundancy. The easiest method is to allow SoftLayer to run DNS services for your domain name(s) by adding your domains inside our customer portal. This will also allow you to manage your domains 24/7 through our easy to use graphical interface. You can also manage your domain outside of SoftLayer by allowing your domain registrar to run DNS services or other unrelated third parties. Make sure your domain name is pointed at the proper IP address on your server. Once a modification is made, DNS propagation can take up to seven days to point to a new IP address.

The SoftLayer Difference

Our network-within-the-network design offers the ultimate in control of your outsourced hosting environment. We've broken it down into two distinct areas:

Public Network: Our Cisco driven redundant network offers carrier grade Internet connectivity to multi-home backbone carriers: AboveNet, Global Crossing, Internap, SAVVIS, Qwest and Verio. This network is capable of gigabit speeds from the server to the Internet and includes network IDS, IPS, and DDOS mitigation services. You can also find bandwidth graphs and alerts inside this customer portal.

Private Network: A SoftLayer exclusive, the Private network is broken down into three functional areas. The goal of the Private network is to facilitate complete control over server management while adding convenient and secure services.

Backend Customer Network – Server to Server: The first functional component of the Private network is the server-to-server connectivity. If you have two or more servers with SoftLayer, these servers can communicate over a private connection at up to gigabit speeds on the same secure VLAN. Bandwidth is unlimited.

Backend Service Network – Server to Services: The second functional component of our Private network is the server-to-services connectivity. Your private VLAN and all connected servers have access to NAS, FTP, DNS Resolvers, OS Update Servers, and more over the server backend network. This allows for fast, secure connections with unlimited bandwidth.

Management Network – VPN to the Backend: The final functional component of the Private network is the management connectivity. True out-of-band management is possible through a distinct stand-alone third carrier over our SSL, PPTP or IPSEC VPN gateway. Simply launch a web browser, type in the VPN address and you will be dropped into your private server backend VLAN. Use terminal services or SSH to gain access to your server over the private IP address or use the console software supplied in the customer portal to console directly into your server. Our VPN to the backend is an advanced method of server management and will give you control when your server has crashed, powered off, or any other state. You can also upload/download server files to and from your server over the secure VPN and without using your server bandwidth allotment because bandwidth is unlimited.

