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T. Narten
J. Johnson
IBM
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Definition of the UUID-based DHCPv6 Unique Identifier (DUID-UUID)
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Abstract

This document defines a new DHCPv6 Unique Identifier (DUID) type, called DUID-UUID. DUID-UUIDs are derived from the already standardized UUID format. DUID-UUID makes it possible for devices to use UUIDs to identify themselves to DHC servers and vice versa. UUIDs are globally unique and readily available on many systems, making them convenient identifiers to leverage within DHCP.

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1. Introduction

DHCP Unique Identifiers (DUIDs) are used in DHCPv6 to identify clients and servers. This document defines a new DHCP Unique Identifier (DUID) type that embeds a Universally Unique Identifier (UUID) [[RFC4122](#)]. UUIDs are already in wide spread use and serve as an existing identifier that could be leveraged by DHCPv6. For example, x86 based systems ship with an embedded UUID in firmware that is readily available to the software running on the device.

Although DUIDs are new to DHCPv6, identifying clients in DHCP via a UUID is not. DHCPv4 [[RFC2132](#)] defines a Client Machine Identifier Option (option 97) that embeds a UUID (aka GUID) [[RFC4578](#)]. This document extends that capability to DHCPv6.

Terminology specific to IPv6 and DHCPv6 are used in the same way as is defined in the "Terminology" sections of [[RFC3315](#)].

2. Background

In DHCPv6, clients identify themselves to servers via DHCP Unique Identifiers (DUIDs) [[RFC3315](#)]. DUIDs are identifiers that DHCP servers treat as opaque objects with no internal structure. DUIDs are intended to be globally unique, with no two devices using the same DUID. Three DUIDs types have been defined previously:

DUID-LLT - the Link-Layer address of one of the device's network interfaces, concatenated with a timestamp

DUID-EN - an Enterprise Number plus additional information specific to the enterprise

DUID-LL - the Link-Layer address of one of the device's network interfaces

DUIDs are intended to remain constant over time, so that they can be used as permanent identifiers for a device. In the case of DUID-LLTs, they are intended to be generated once, and then stored in stable storage and reused from that point forward.

One issue that has arisen concerns devices that employ multi-step network boot loading. An initial step (typically run out of firmware) loads a small image that in turn loads a second image, and so forth, until the actual target system is loaded. Each step in the booting process may invoke DHCP. In some operational environments, it is important that each step in the sequence use the same DUID, so that the server knows it is getting requests from the same device and

can return the proper configuration information (including the pointer to the correct image to load).

Unfortunately, none of the previously defined DUIDs are ideal for multi-step network booting. The DUID-LLT and DUID-LL identifiers that a given device may use are not guaranteed to remain constant across each booting step. Even if the different stages used DUID-LL or DUID-LLT, on devices with multiple interfaces, there is no way to guarantee that the same interface (and hence DUID) will be selected. Finally, in the case of DUID-LLT, even if the same interface were chosen, it can be difficult to ensure that each stage uses the same timestamp value. While a DUID-EN could be defined and used, such usage is proprietary by definition.

This document defines a new DUID type, based on the Universally Unique Identifier (UUID) [[RFC4122](#)]. UUIDs are already used in practice and serve as an existing identifier that could be leveraged by DHCP. In some environments, a UUID-based DUID is preferable to the other existing DUID types.

It should be noted that use of a DUID-UUID will not by itself solve all the network boot problems described in this document. Given the availability of a suitable DUID-UUID, implementations will still need to take steps to ensure that all boot stages use the same DUID-UUID as appropriate. Given that DHCP has already defined multiple DUID types, the question of which of several DUIDs to select from already exists -- and defining a new DUID type doesn't by itself help. It is believed, however, that network boot services can be configured to use a DUID-UUID and that other software can do so as

well. Ensuring this happens in general is beyond the scope of this document.

3. UUID Considerations

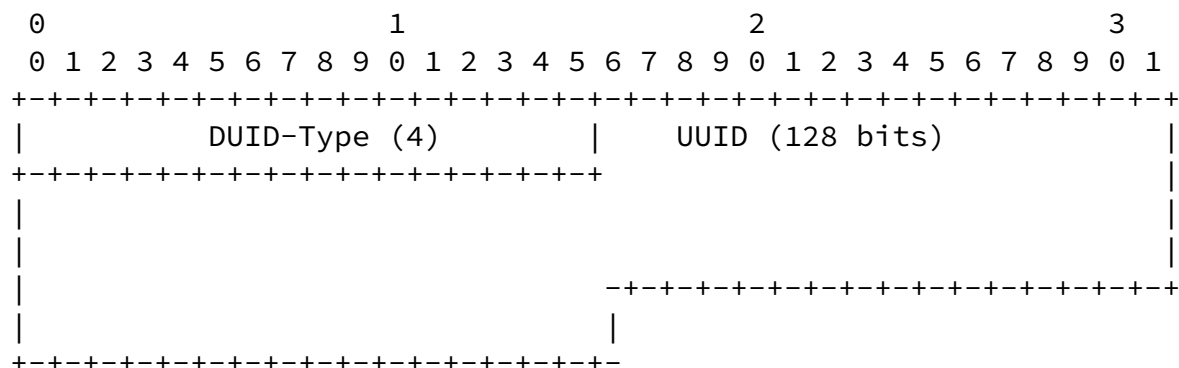
Although many UUIDs are in use today, not all UUIDs meet DHCP's requirements (see [Section 9 of \[RFC3315\]](#)). DHCP UUIDs should be persistent across system restarts, across system reconfiguration events, system software and operating system upgrades or reinstallation, and be easily available to any part of the boot process that requires access to the DHCP UUID. For example, UUIDs used in Microsoft's Component Object Module (COM), and for labeling partitions in filesystems, are likely not appropriate as they may not be accessible to firmware boot loaders, and can change over time.

Implementations of this specification using DUID-UUID must select a UUID that is persistent across system restart and reconfiguration events, and that is available to all DHCP protocol agents that may

need to identify themselves. For instance, a UUID that is part of the system firmware, or managed by the system firmware, satisfies this requirement.

4. DUID-UUID Format

The DUID-UUID is carried within Client Identifier or Server Identifier options. It has the following format:



DUID-UUID format.

Figure 1

DUID-Type - DUID-UUID (4) - (16 bits)

UUID - An [RFC4122](#) UUID (128 bits)

5. Acknowledgements

This document was inspired by a discussion on the DHC mailing list in November, 2009 on the topic of netboot for IPv6. Specifically, some scenarios were described where it was difficult to do something in DHCPv6 that had worked well in DHCPv4.

We would like to thank the following individuals in particular for their specific comments and suggestions on this draft: Thomas Huth, Andre Kostur, Suresh Krishnan, Ted Lemon, Bernie Volz & Vincent Zimmer.

6. IANA Considerations

IANA has assigned the value 4 for use by the DHCPv6 DUID-UUID type. [TO BE REMOVED UPON PUBLICATION: IANA should update the registry entry for the DUID-UUID DUID-Type and mark the assignment permanent.]

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7. Security Considerations

DHCP traffic between a client and server is sent in the clear. An eavesdropper residing on the path between the client and server could see DHCP traffic and obtain the UUID for a particular machine. This may raise some privacy issues, but is not a new issue brought on by the use of DUID type defined in this document.

8. References

8.1. Normative References

[RFC2132] Alexander, S. and R. Droms, "DHCP Options and BOOTP Vendor Extensions", [RFC 2132](#), March 1997.

[RFC3315] Droms, R., Bound, J., Volz, B., Lemon, T., Perkins, C., and M. Carney, "Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol for IPv6 (DHCPv6)", [RFC 3315](#), July 2003.

[RFC4122] Leach, P., Mealling, M., and R. Salz, "A Universally Unique Identifier (UUID) URN Namespace", [RFC 4122](#), July 2005.

[8.2.](#) Informative References

[RFC4578] Johnston, M. and S. Venaas, "Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) Options for the Intel Preboot eXecution Environment (PXE)", [RFC 4578](#), November 2006.

Authors' Addresses

Thomas Narten
IBM

Email: narten@us.ibm.com

Jarrold B. Johnson
IBM

Email: jarrod.b.johnson@gmail.com