Oracle® Solaris 11 System Administration covers every skill required to effectively install and administer the Oracle® Solaris 11.1 operating system in production environments. It features dozens of step-by-step “learn by example” procedures, demonstrating how to apply complex solutions in real-world data center environments. Author Bill Calkins has administered and taught Oracle Solaris and its predecessors for more than twenty years. He also helped develop the newest Oracle Certified Associate (OCA) and Oracle Certified Professional (OCP) exams, which raise the bar for Solaris certification. This guide covers every new 1Z0-821 exam topic in detail and also covers many 1Z0-822 exam topics. Calkins also reviews the changes that system administrators will face when upgrading to Solaris 11.1 and presents new ways to perform familiar tasks on both SPARC and x86 hardware. You’ll learn how to Install the Solaris 11 Operating Environment with Live Media or Text Interactive installers Install, manage, and update software with the Image Packaging System and IPS repositories Understand, customize, and troubleshoot SPARC and x86 boot processes from system power-up to loading the OS (including coverage of ILOM, OpenBoot, and GRUB 2) Administer and create services through the service management facility (SMF) Configure system messaging using SMF notifications, syslog and rsyslog Configure and administer ZFS storage pools, including ZFS on the boot drive, local disks, LUNs, and a SAN Configure and manage ZFS file systems: encryption, redundancy, snapshots, clones, network sharing, monitoring, device replacement, and legacy UFS migration Create, migrate, contain, and administer zones, including solaris10 branded and immutable zones Use RBAC to create custom rights profiles and grant special privileges Manage and monitor system process scheduler (including FSS process schedulers and proc tools) Configure Solaris networking and network services, including Reactive and Fixed Network Configurations, VNICs, and Virtual Networking A companion website (unixed.com/solaris11book.html) includes new 1Z0-821 and 1Z0-822 study strategies and self-assessment exams.
From the perspective of presenting a top-down, very contemporary, articulate, complete, and thoroughly well-produced book, this reference gives you a handy all-in-one guide to system administration on Oracle Solaris 11.1. All the major and important system administration activities and procedures, as well as some minor facts which might seem trivial at first, but are actually very important, are covered in a clear and cogent way. If you had to wade through the huge volume of documentation provided by Oracle that comes with the software (or use your Google-Fu), just to find out the details of some small fact or technique, you would realize how powerful this book really is. It will make your life with Solaris easier, like it did mine. Just a few examples: there is a section on dealing with removable media such as USB devices, drives, thumb drives. There is excellent coverage of Secure Shell, how to start it up, manage it, etc.. Those are practical and contemporary subjects that a modern UNIX System Administration book must cover. Also, there is extensive coverage of how to add packages to your base system via the command line, which is a very critical, practical System Administration topic! A tremendous added benefit- ZFS is covered and explained completely and beautifully! Even if this book cost 3 times what it is charging, you must have it.

Robert M. Koretsky

UNIX: The Textbook
Edited 4/7/14-
A big benefit of using Solaris 11.1 instead of OpenIndiana (May the Computer Gods forgive me for espousing a commercial system over a freeware system) is that the IPS GUI Package Manager on Solaris 11.1 has access to more packages that actually can be installed on your system.
book is intended as a fairly comprehensive introduction to System Administration of the Oracle Solaris 11 Operating Environment (OE). Calkins is quite experienced with the subject matter and has taught the material for several years and participated in the development of the Solaris Certification examinations. The book reflects this in a no nonsense approach that is concise and to the point. It is densely written and the tone is quite matter of fact. At 690 pages this volume is a handy desktop guide to the Solaris 11 OE. It is also quite useful for developers or those managing their own desktop versions of this OE. The book begins with preparations for installation and then goes directly into the details of installing the OE using both the text mode and interactive live installer on both X86 and SPARC systems. Use of the Automated Installer is not covered. Subsequent chapters introduce managing and updating software using the Solaris IPS. IPS is a package management system as one would expect to find in a modern Unix or Linux operating system.

I have bought this book to get a more structured introduction to Solaris administration (compared to the "read man pages on demand" approach). The first chapter may be a little scary because the author presents a few commands without further explanation, such as prtconf, and svcs. The images above those commands show screenshots of the installation process, i.e., are totally unrelated. Without my prior knowledge of Solaris 10 (and some hours of playing with Solaris 11), I would definitely be worried about the chapters that follow. The organisation of the content is IMHO not optimal - at least in some cases. "Advanced" topics like Boot Environments (BE) are mentioned in one paragraph and are then used to explain how the package management works. The actual BE topic follows after that. Again, without my previous knowledge, I would have had no idea how it works and what it is good for (for example the BE backup when installing packages). Despite the negatives mentioned earlier, the explanations are good and easy to follow, especially compared to the Oracle Books, which focus on experienced readers. Important commands and their options are explained with examples, which are easy to reproduce. Furthermore, the examples animate to play with the system - a very important criterion for such a book! I was surprised how much time I can spend with the pkg command without getting bored (package management has been one of the topics I didn't like in previous Solaris versions!)... very positive! The book contains minor (copy and paste) errors, e.g., in section "Search for a Software Package", it states "Use the pkg search command to... The syntax for the pkg info command is as follows: pkg search ...".

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