Integrate Chef with Embotics vCommander to Provision and Manage Chef nodes

by **Helen Abbott**, on Dec 22, 2015 8:00:00 AM

Integrate Chef with Embotics® vCommander™ to provision and manage Chef nodes

If you use Chef as your IT automation platform, you can seamlessly integrate Chef with Embotics® vCommander™ to provision and manage Chef nodes. With vCommander, you can predefine your Chef node configuration right in the service catalog. Requested VMs can be automatically deployed and configured as Chef nodes.

Multi-tenant support

You can integrate multiple Chef servers or multiple Chef organizations with vCommander, depending on how you're using Chef. This multi-tenant support extends throughout vCommander's automated provisioning, including the service catalog, request forms, workflows and workflow variables. For example, if you have one Chef organization for Linux and one for Windows, you can add both of these as separate integrations, so that vCommander is aware of the two distinct sets of users, cookbooks, recipes and roles. You can set the Chef organization in the service catalog blueprint, which means that you can easily configure the service definition for use by a specific tenant.

Synchronize with Chef to retrieve roles, recipes and environments

When you integrate a Chef server or a Chef organization, vCommander synchronizes with Chef to retrieve all of the configured roles, recipes and environments. Synchronization also matches any VMs

currently managed by vCommander to nodes registered with the Chef server. The synchronization task runs every night by default, but you can run it manually, and edit the synchronization schedule.

Integrating with Chef retrieves roles, recipes, environments and nodes

Configure Chef information in the service catalog

You can specify the default Chef organization, environment, recipes and roles for a component in the service catalog blueprint. Workflow variables allow you to return the specified values.

Configure default Chef information in the vCommander service catalog blueprint

Allow users to configure Chef information when requesting VMs

If you want to allow users to specify Chef roles and/or recipes when requesting a new service, you can configure this in the service catalog blueprint as well. You can then use the form selections as input to a VM completion workflow or command workflow.
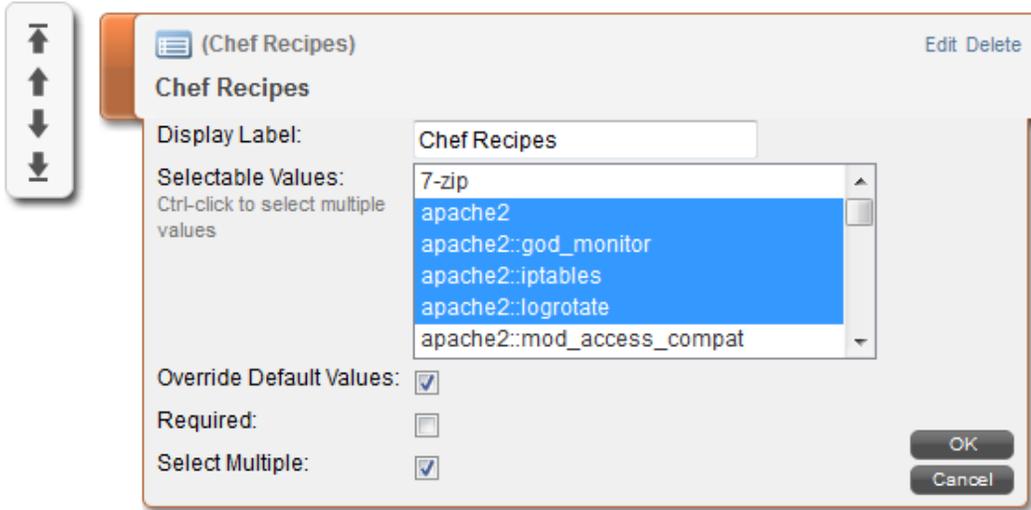
Allow users to specify Chef roles and recipes on the request form

If you want to allow requesters to select the Chef environment on the form, you can create a list-type custom attribute and add it to the blueprint form.
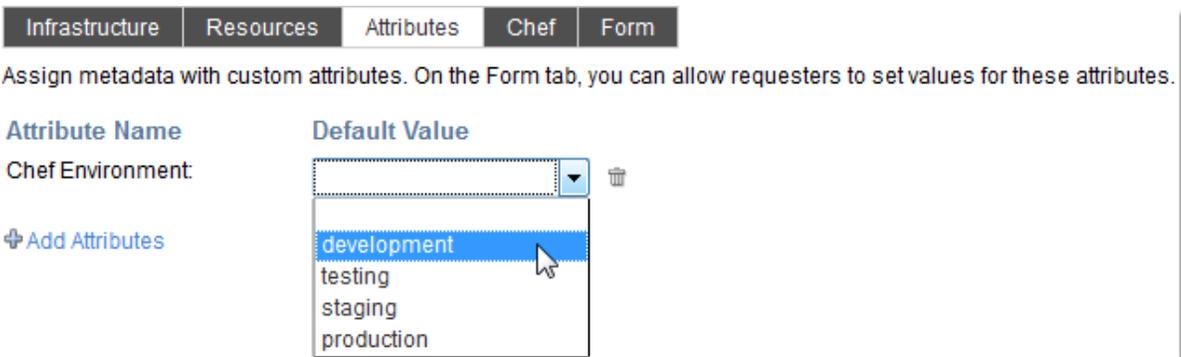
Allow users to specify the Chef environment for new VMs

Example completion workflow provided

vCommander includes two example Chef workflows for you to customize — one for Linux and one for Windows. These example workflows create the Chef node, install and configure the Chef client on the VM, and configure the Chef server. And once you've customized a completion workflow, you can copy it and make modifications for other operating systems.

Create a Chef node with a completion workflow

View Chef node configuration

When vCommander identifies a VM as a Chef node, a Chef tab is added to the Guest OS Details pane for the VM.

Service Portal users can view the configuration for a Chef node

Automatically decommission Chef nodes

You can easily configure a decommissioning completion workflow that configures the Chef server to delete the Chef node, powers off the node and deletes the node from disk. You can also create a command workflow that can be run on individual VMs, using these same steps.

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