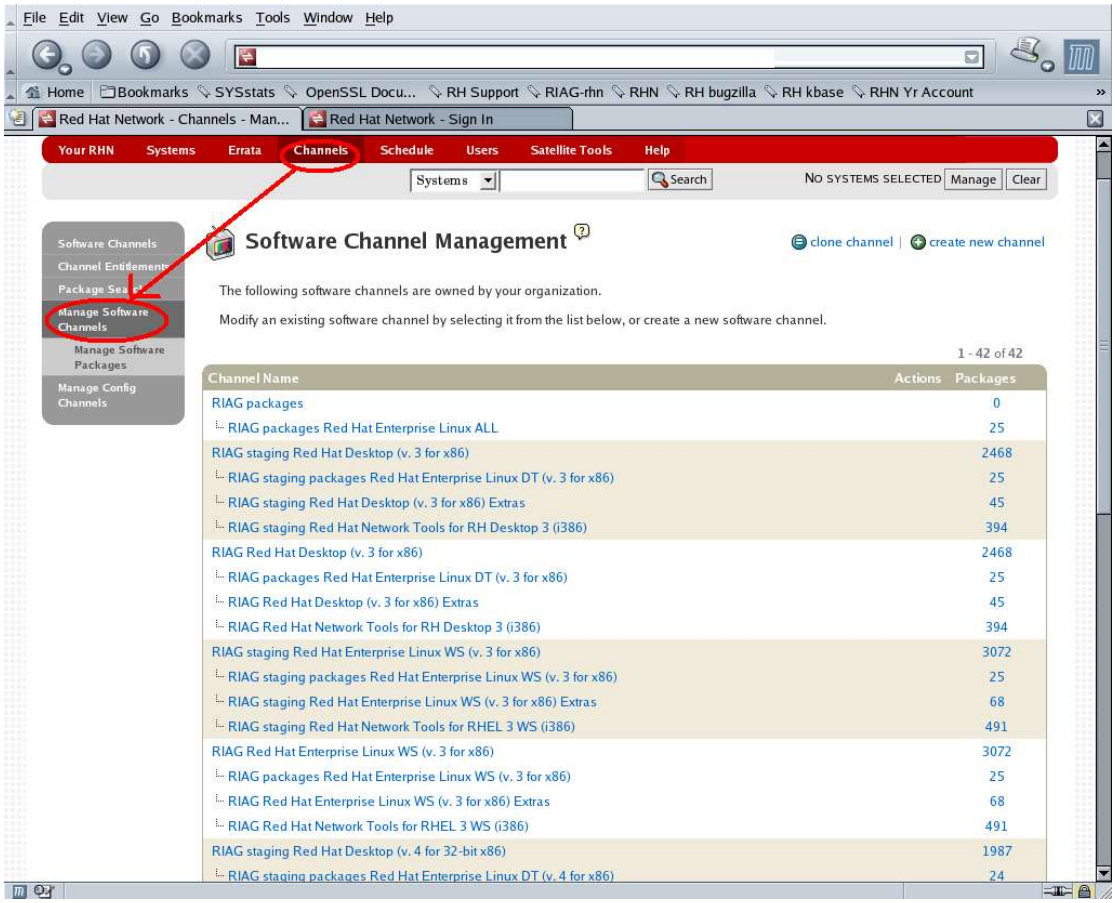
Detailed description of the problem

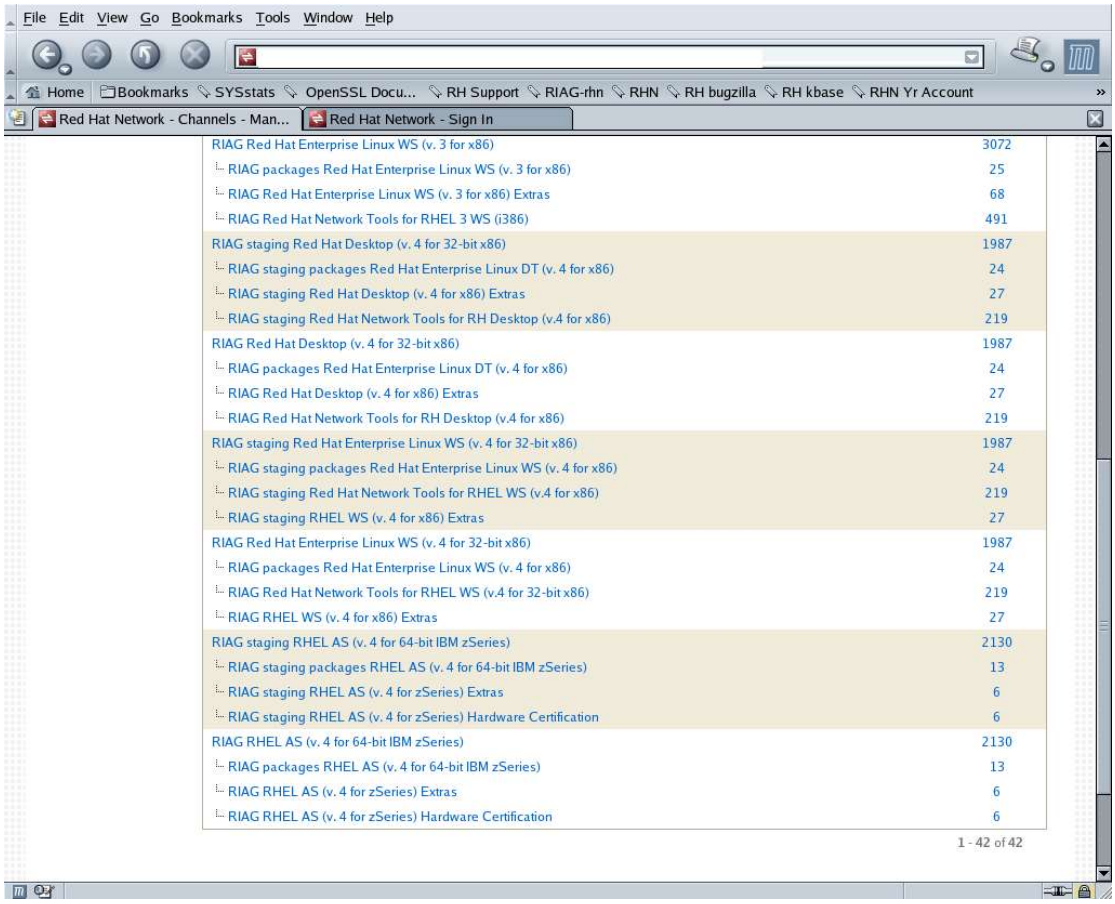
See our channel structure. All our machines are in custom channels, so we have the ultimative control over what is available to them. Additionally we use a two-staging strategy; test systems are in a staging channel to where we apply errata and new packages first and test things out. Production machines are in production channels.

Our custom channels are named after the original Red Hat channels they are clones of. For example:

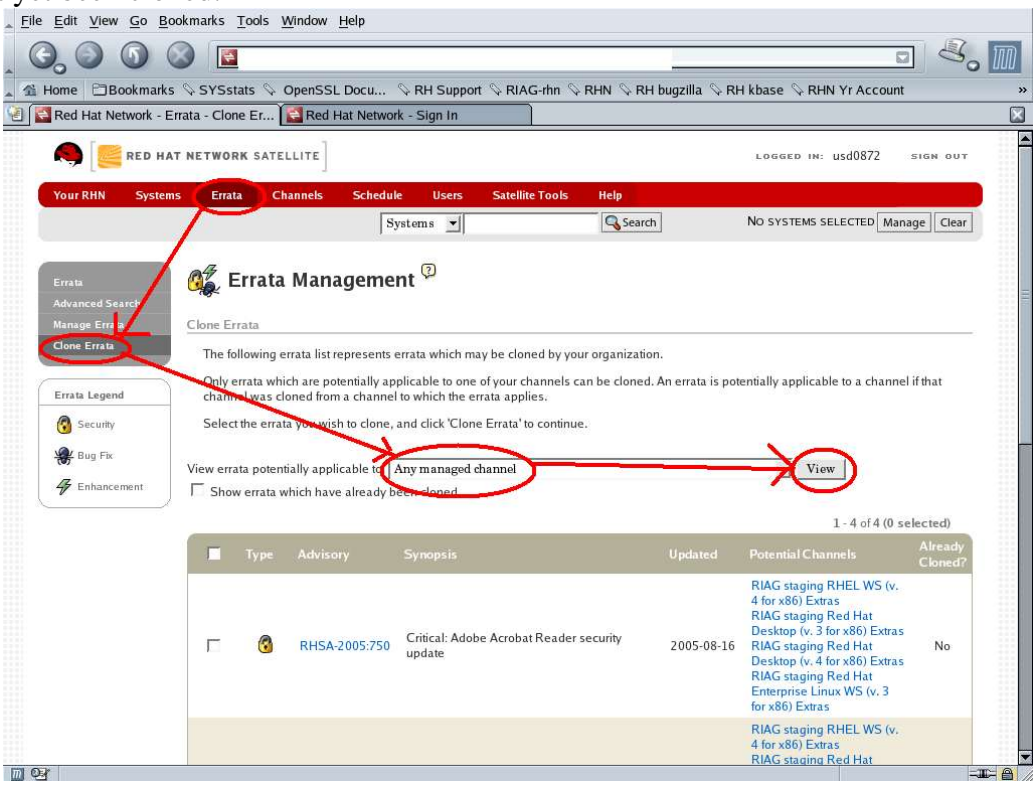
Red Hat channel:	Red Hat Desktop (v. 4 for 32-bit x86)
-> clone of above:	RIAG staging Red Hat Desktop (v. 4 for 32-bit x86)
-> clone of the latter:	RIAG Red Hat Desktop (v. 4 for 32-bit x86)

The channel structure can be seen in the following two pictures.



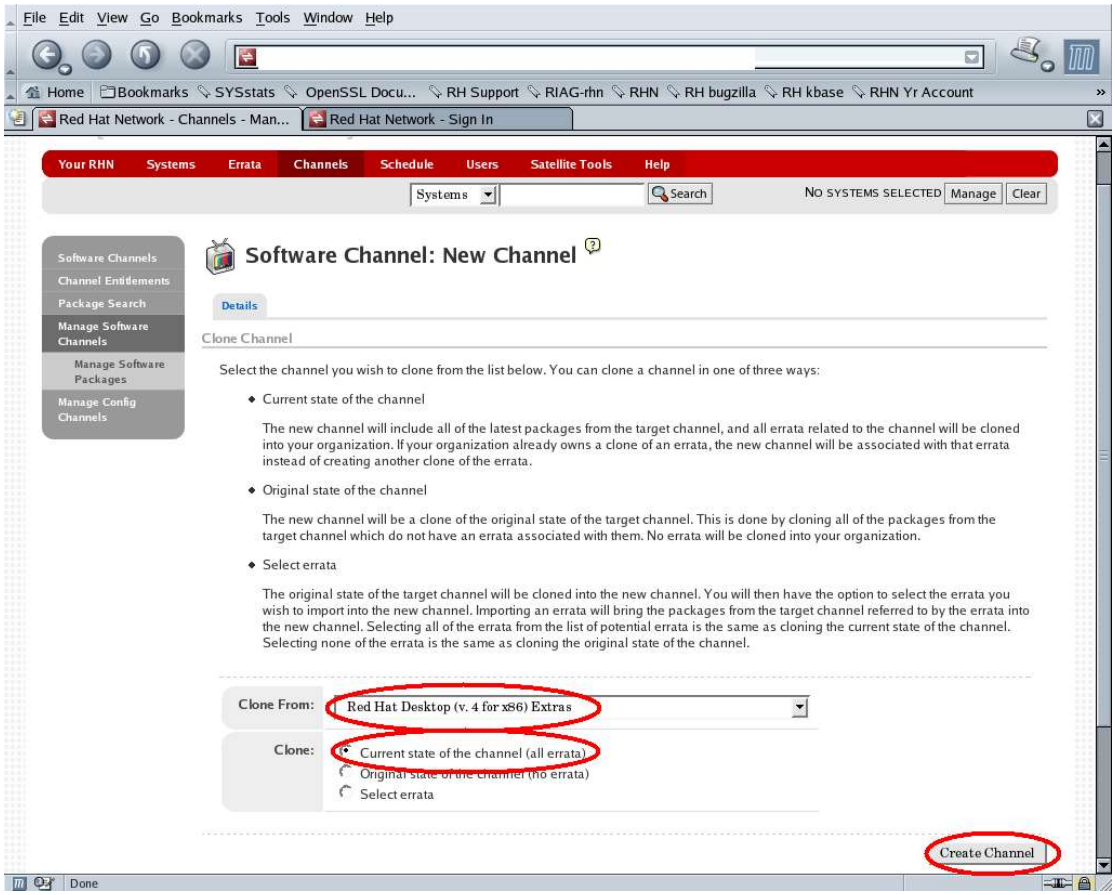


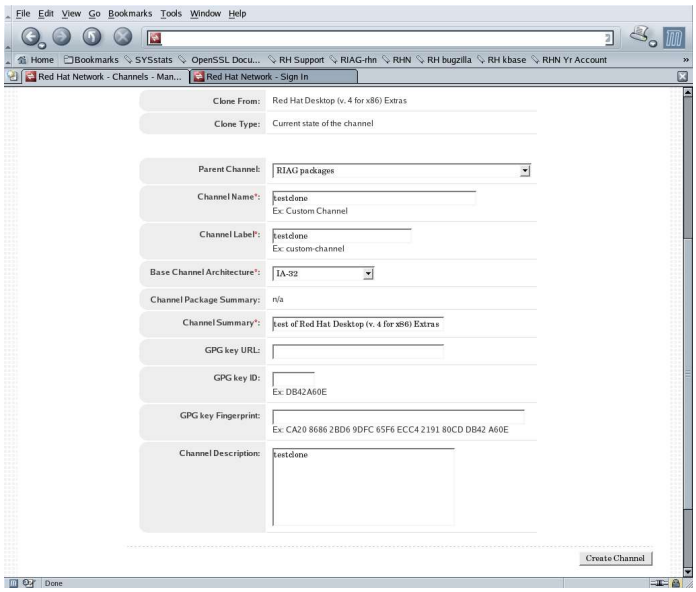
With this channel structure in place errata from Red Hat come in for the Red Hat base channels. These are visible as errata which have potential targets for cloning but have not yet been cloned.



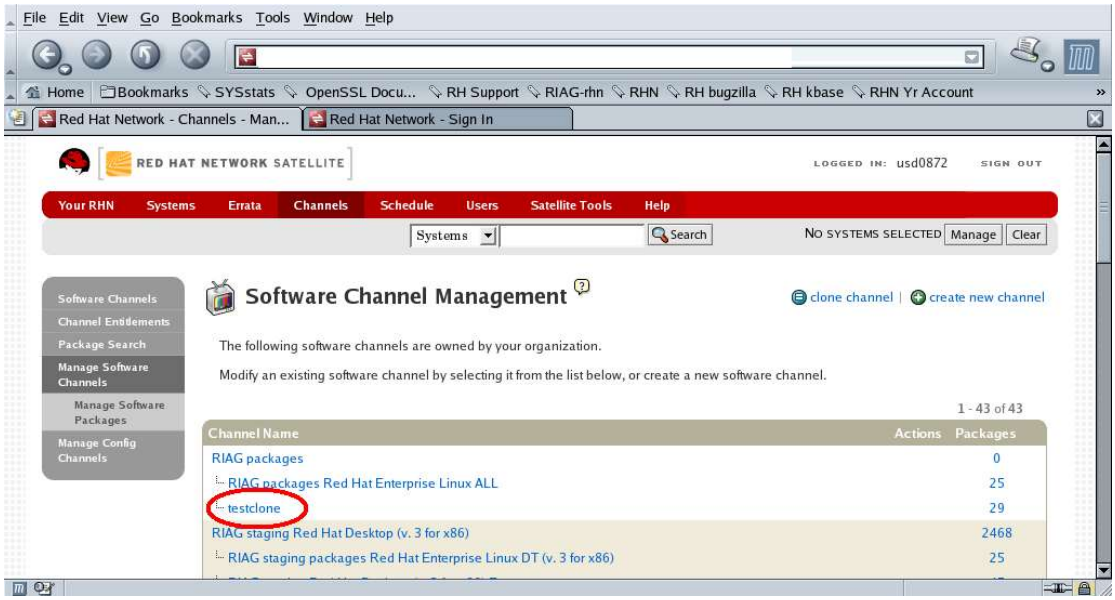
To demonstrate the wrong behaviour of the satellite, we do **NOT** clone these errata right now.

We create a new clone channel called test channel. The parent channel of this new clone is one of the channels, the outstanding errata is for. We also select to clone the current state of the parent channel (that is with the outstanding errata, as this has already been applied to the original Red Hat channels, just not yet to our clones).

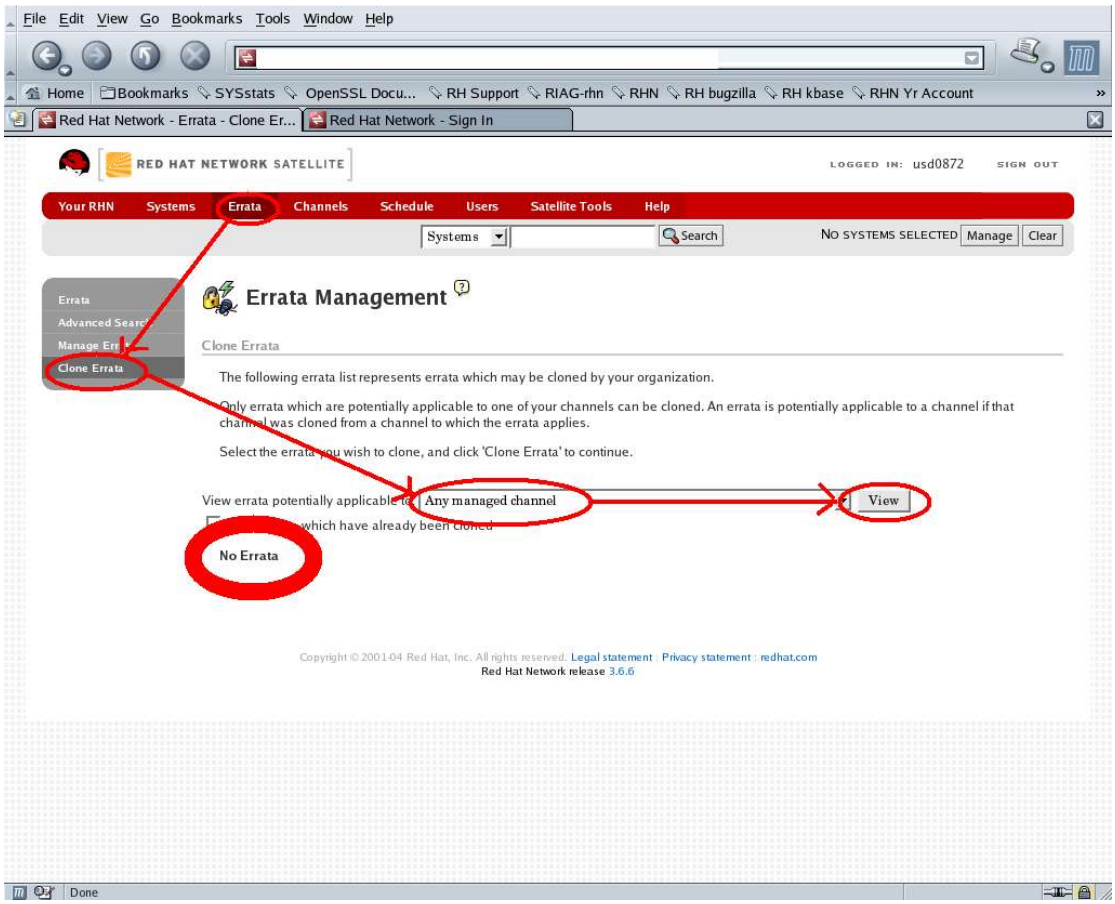




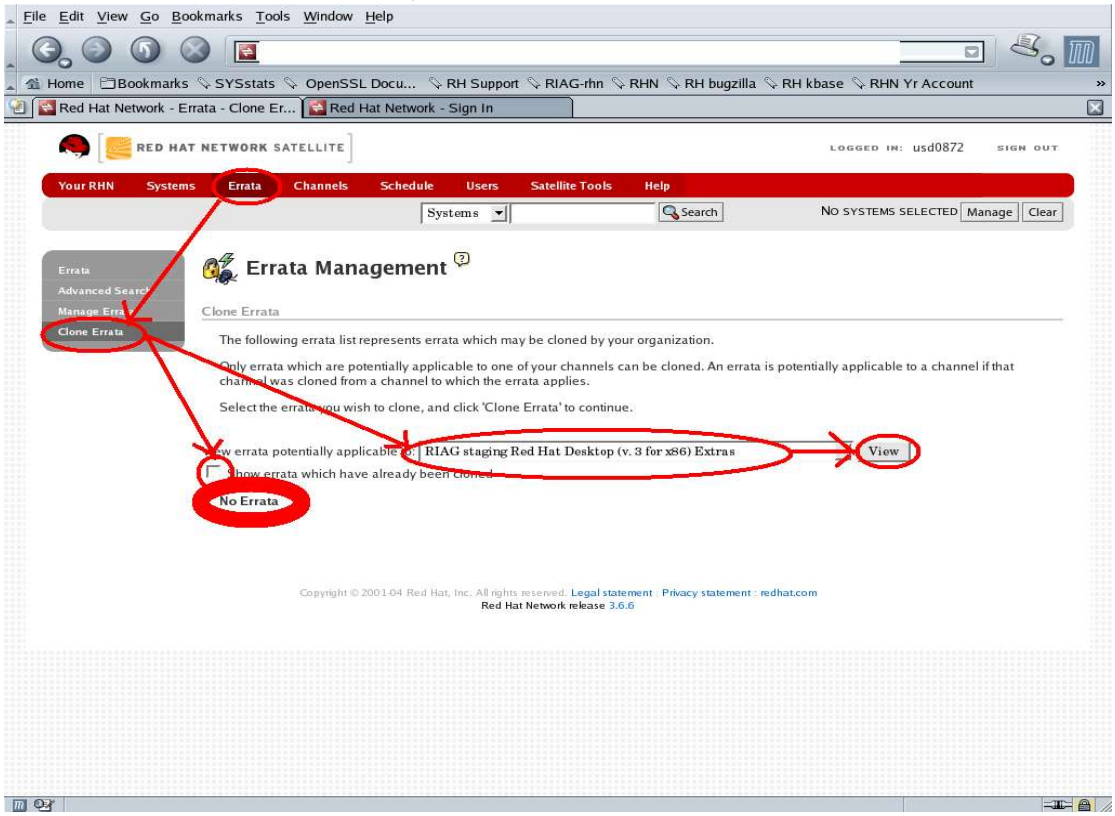
Now we have a new clone available. Which base channel it is attached to does not matter for demonstrating the problem.

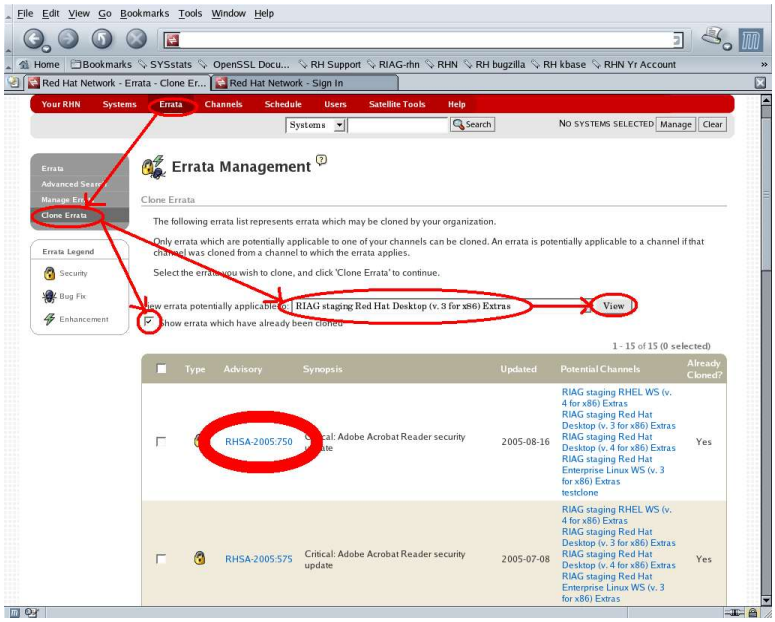


If we now go to check the outstanding errata, which we still should clone over to the WS4-extra / DT4-extra / WS3-extra / DT3-extra clones, they are gone!



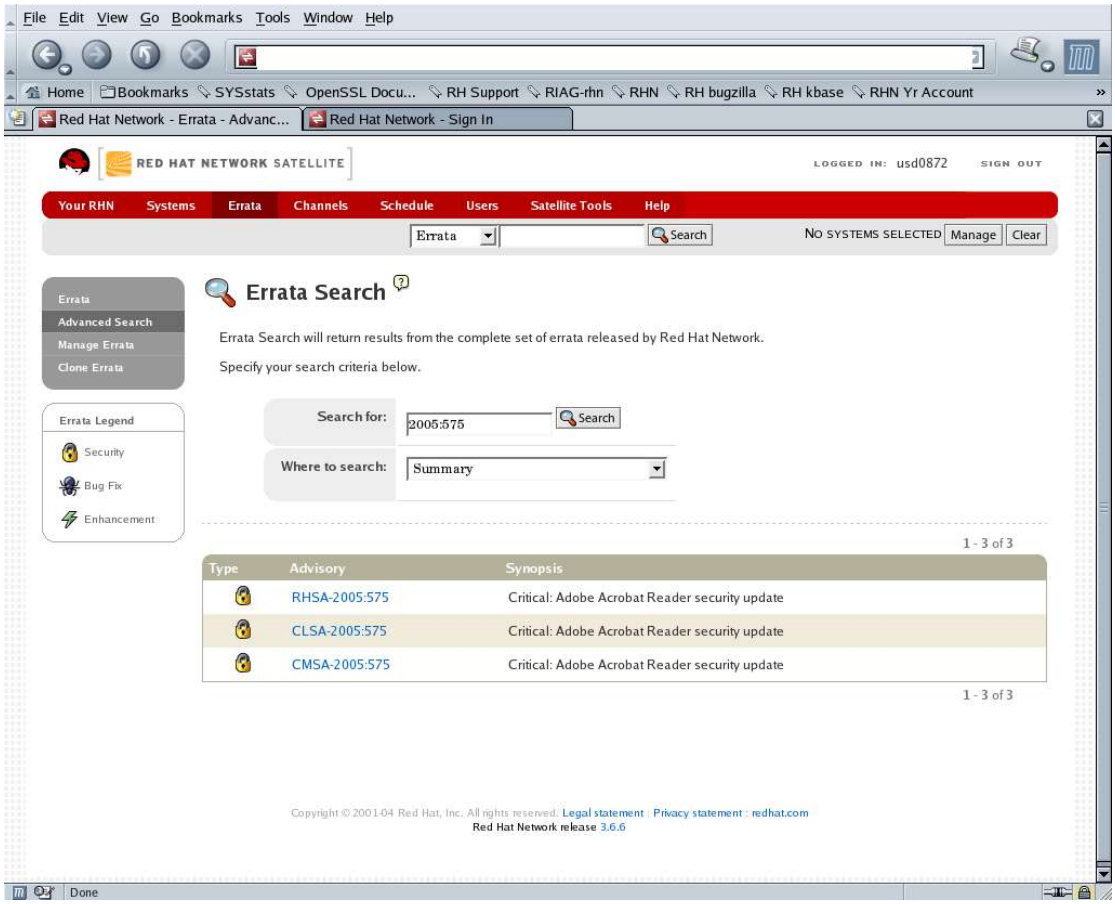
Red Hat Support told me I had to select the specific channels rather than 'Any managed channel'. On one hand I do not believe this could be meant to be, on the other hand that would be a major headache for anyone really working with custom channels as the number of channels can grow very quickly. Well, I did as I was told anyway. No errata available for cloning is shown, unless 'Show errata which have already been cloned' is selected (another thing I can not believe is meant to be this way; the errata I'm after is cloned, but not yet to the selected channel). When displaying the errata which already have been cloned, I get a number of errata in the list I don't think should be there, but more about that towards the end.

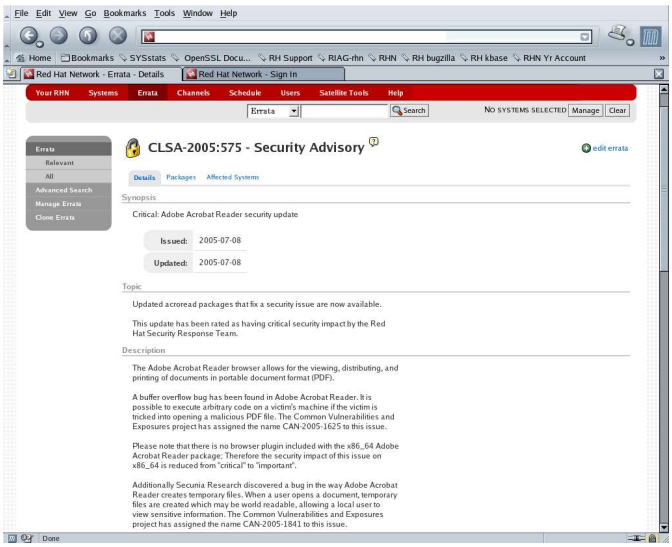


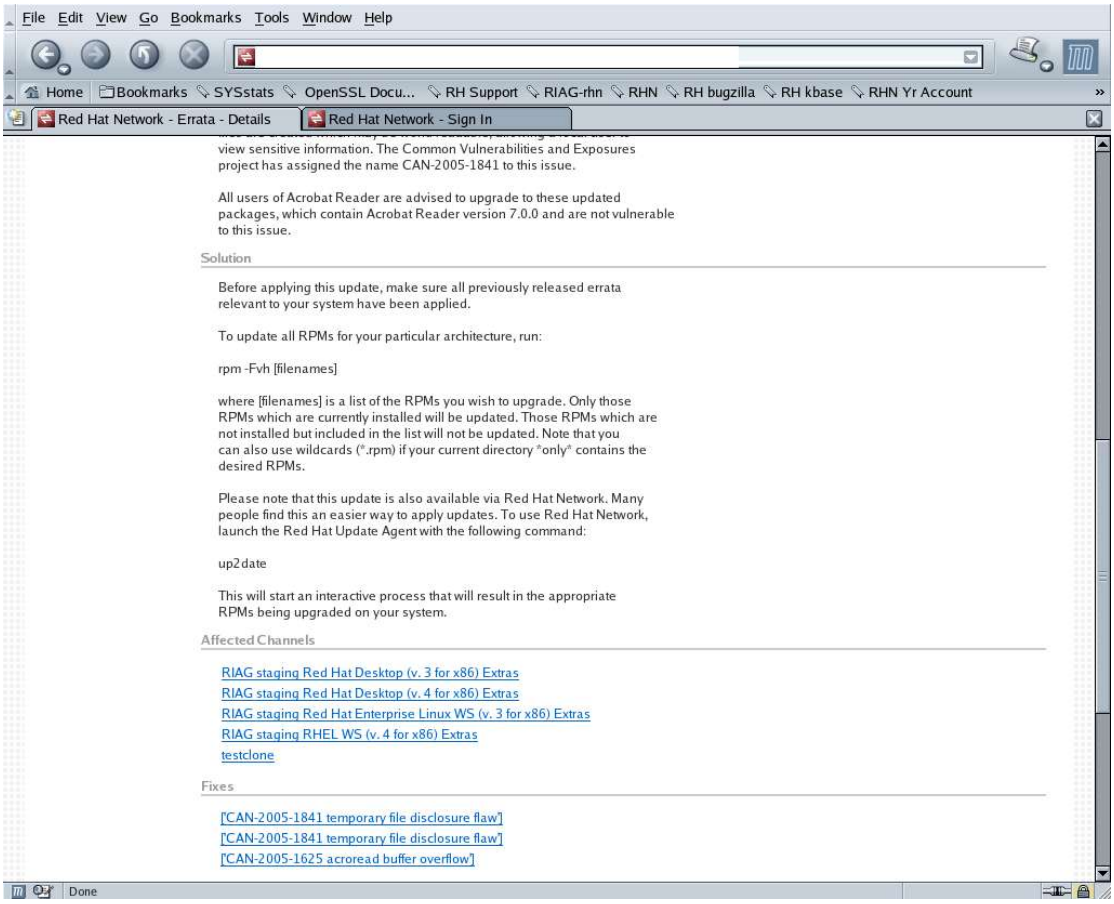


Let's compare the two errata shown in the last screen shot. The 2005:575 is one I cloned in the ordinary way, the 2005:750 is the one we're talking about the whole time (not yet cloned, but not shown as 'waiting to be cloned' any more).

The original errata of the 2005:575 is RHSA-2005:575, just as it came in from Red Hat and as it is available for the original Red Hat channels. This errata I had cloned to the applicable staging channels, which then created the errata CLSA-2005:575. And this one again, I had cloned to the production channels, which created the errata CMSA-2005:575.

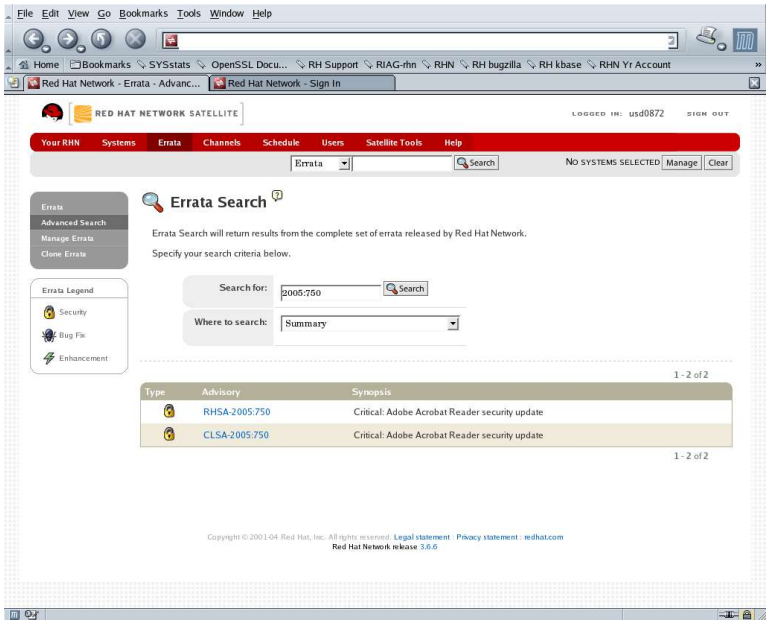




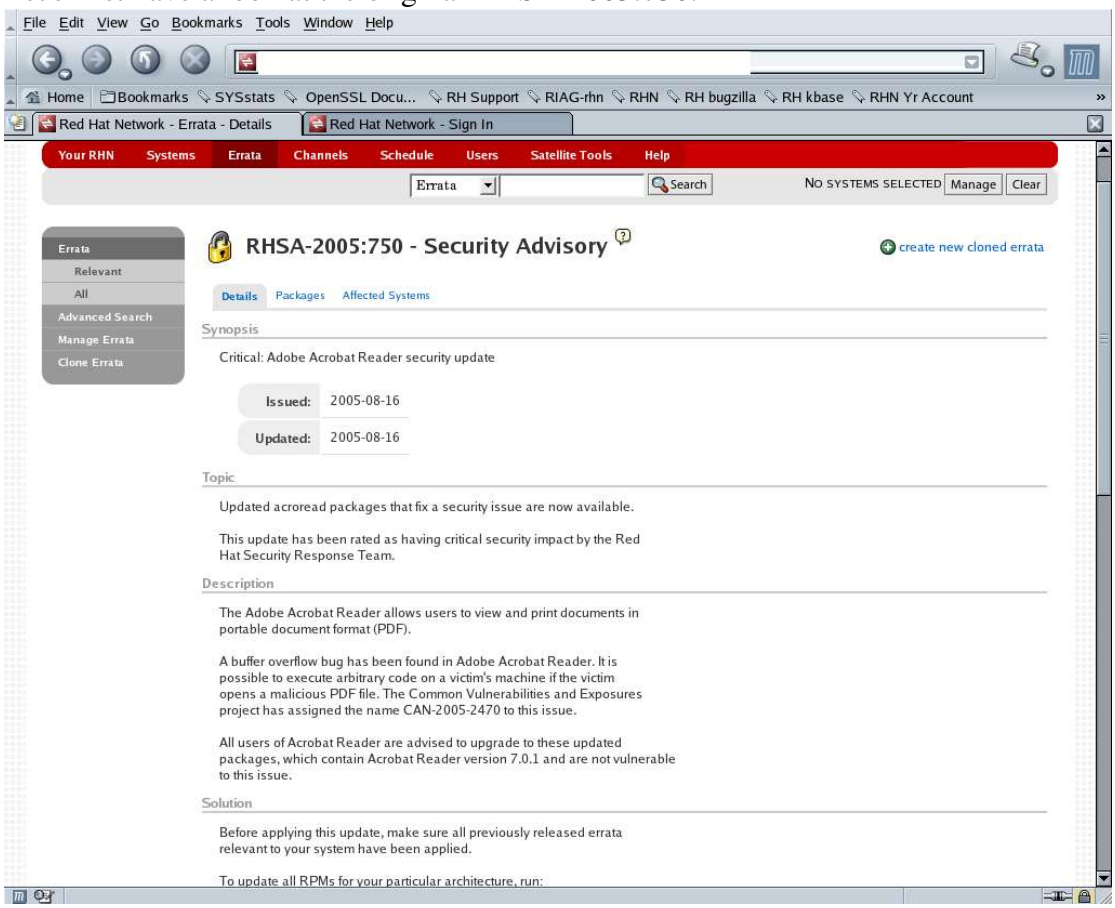


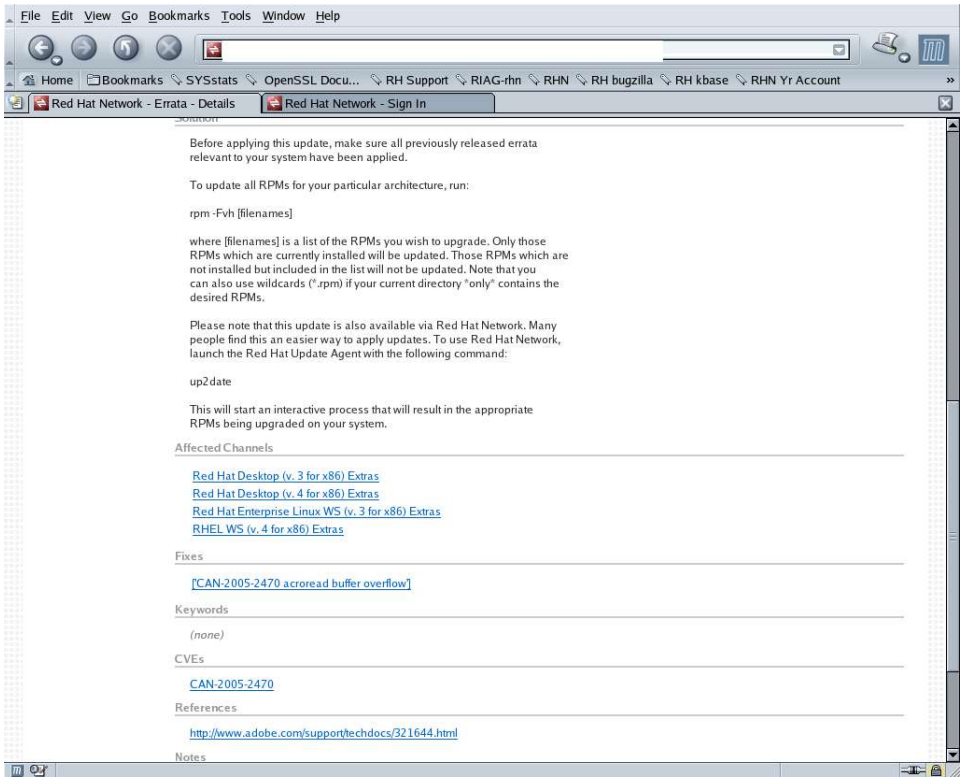
Please note the list of 'Affected Channels' in the last screen shot. It does list all the staging channels the errata does apply to. Everything went fine, the new packages are in those channels, all no problem. The testclone channel is listed here as well, since we chose to clone with the 'current state' of the Red Hat channel.

Now, let's compare this to the 2005:750 errata, which we did not clone before creating the new testclone channel.

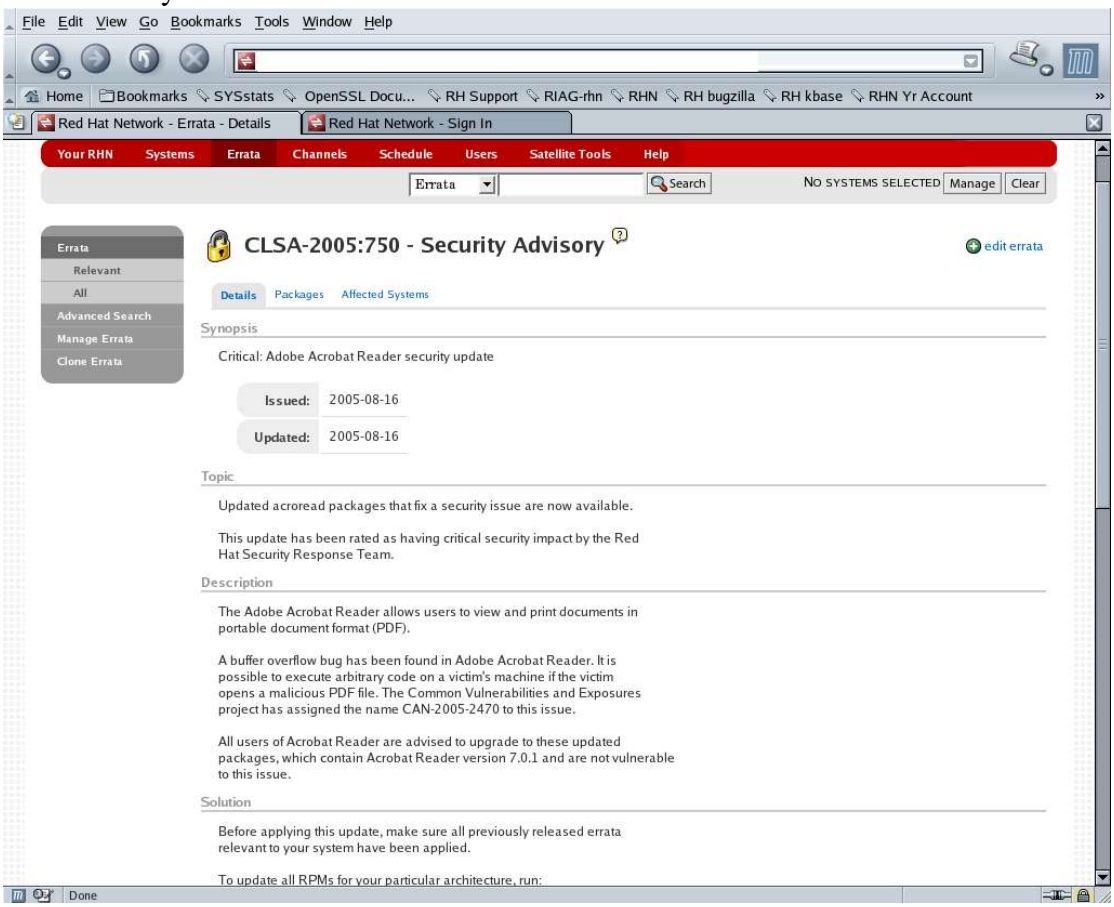


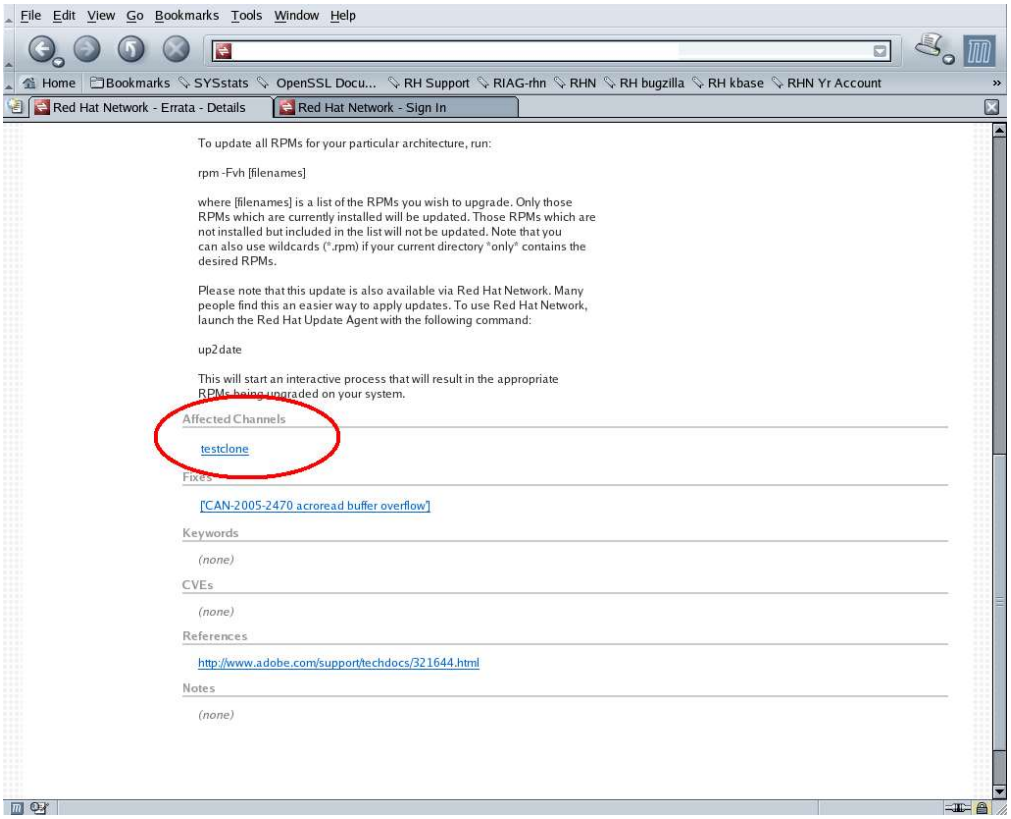
Oh, nice, the system automatically cloned the errata to CLSA-2005:750. Looks cool. Let's first have a look at the original RHSA-2005:750.



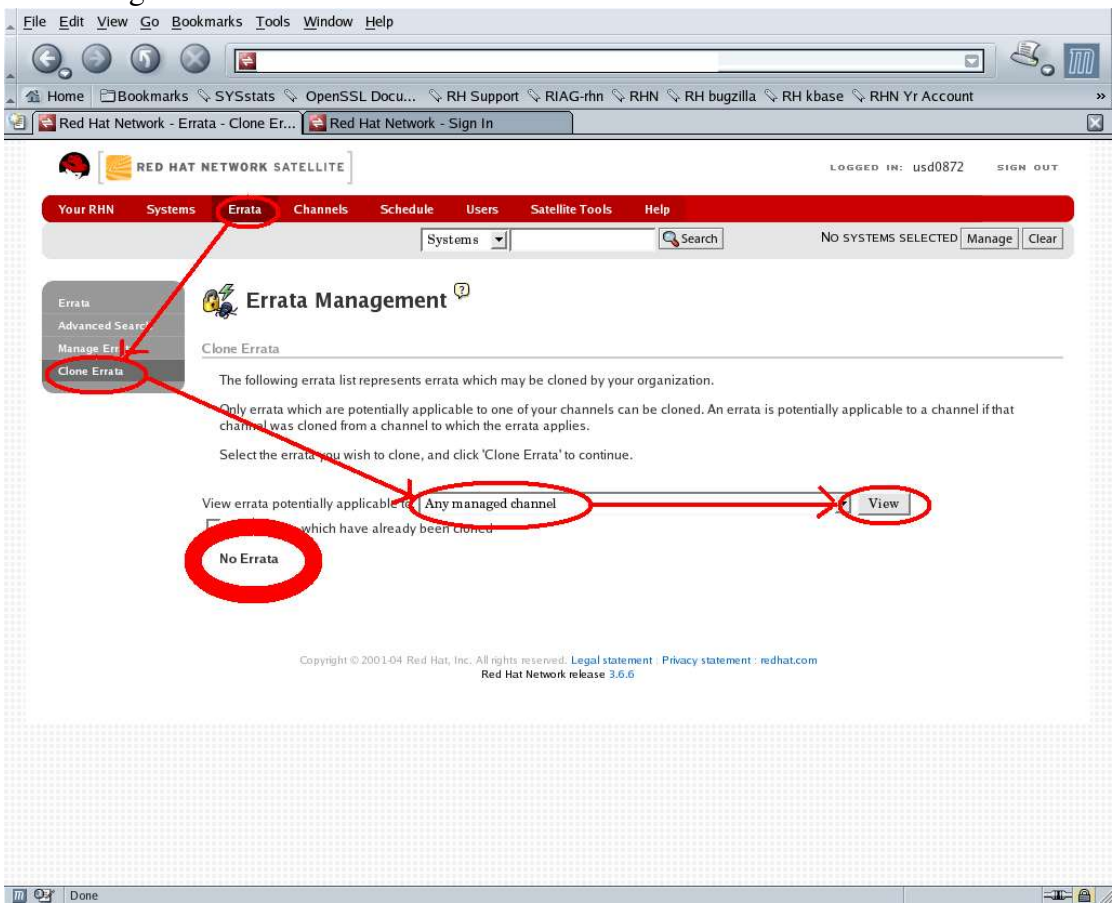


Looks all fine. Especially note the 'Affected Channels' entries. Now, examine the automatically created CLSA-2005:750.



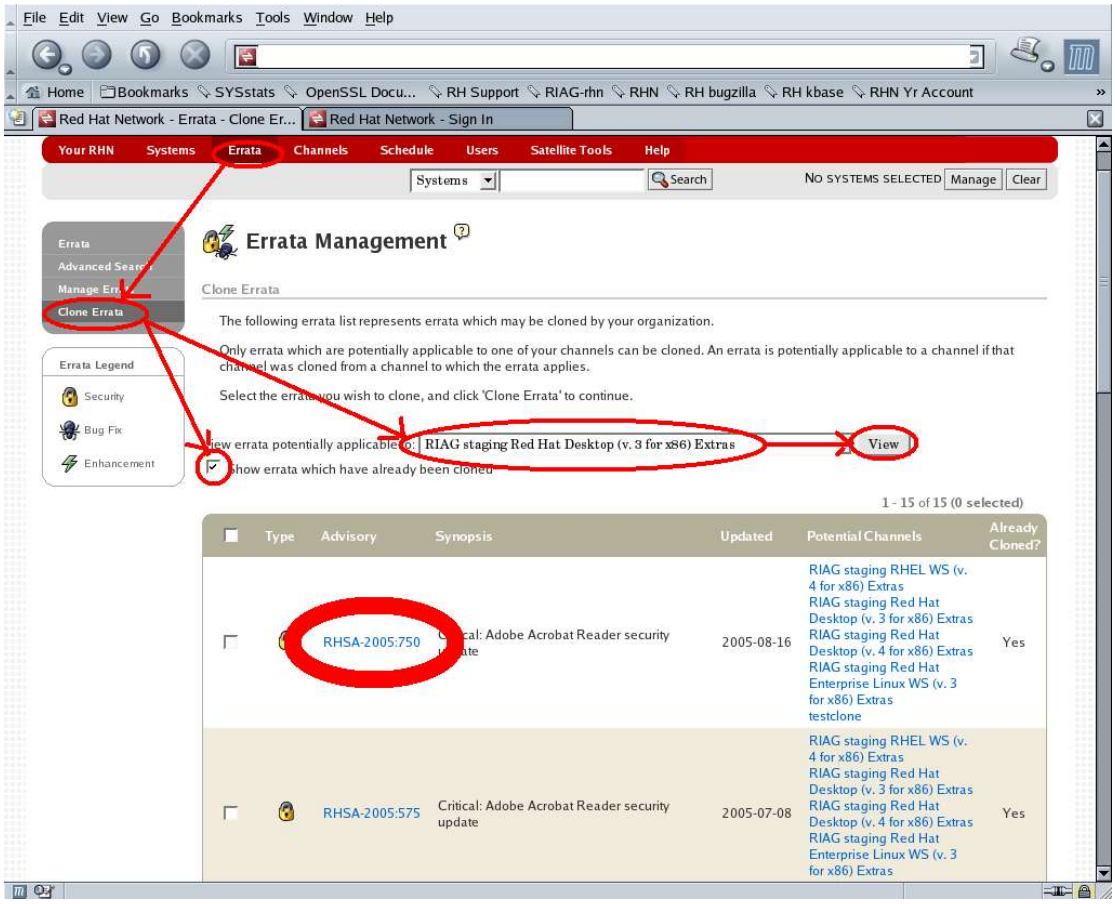


As we can see, this was only cloned to the testclone channel. Basically fine, as I want to have control over what channels a errata is cloned to and I did not yet specifically clone this one to the applicable staging channels. The thing which really bothers me, however, is the fact that this errata is not shown any more in the list of errata available for cloning.



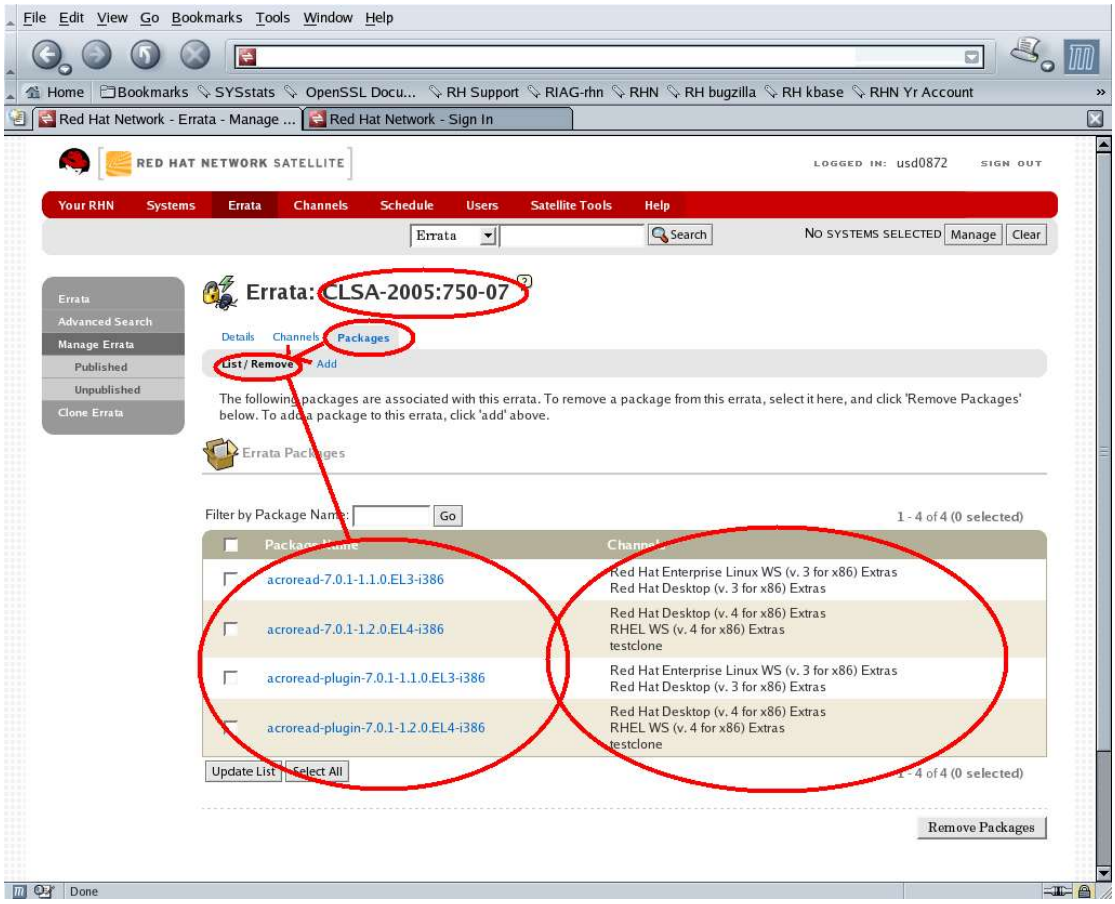
Let's say I'm not yet up to date with cloning erratas over to the staging channel and my colleague creates a new clone channel. In this case I will never see that there is an errata which I did not yet clone to my staging channels. It will just be missing from my staging channels (and of course also from their clones, the production channels). This can be a security issue if it was a security errata. It can also cause big problems later on if in two months time a errata is issued which has a dependency for the specific version of the RPM attached to this 'lost' errata; I will not be able to apply that new errata as the dependency is not fulfilled.

Ok, Red Hat support has a solution to this problem, they say. It's as simple as that: For each cloned channel, display the errata which already have been cloned, select the one which got 'lost' and clone it again:



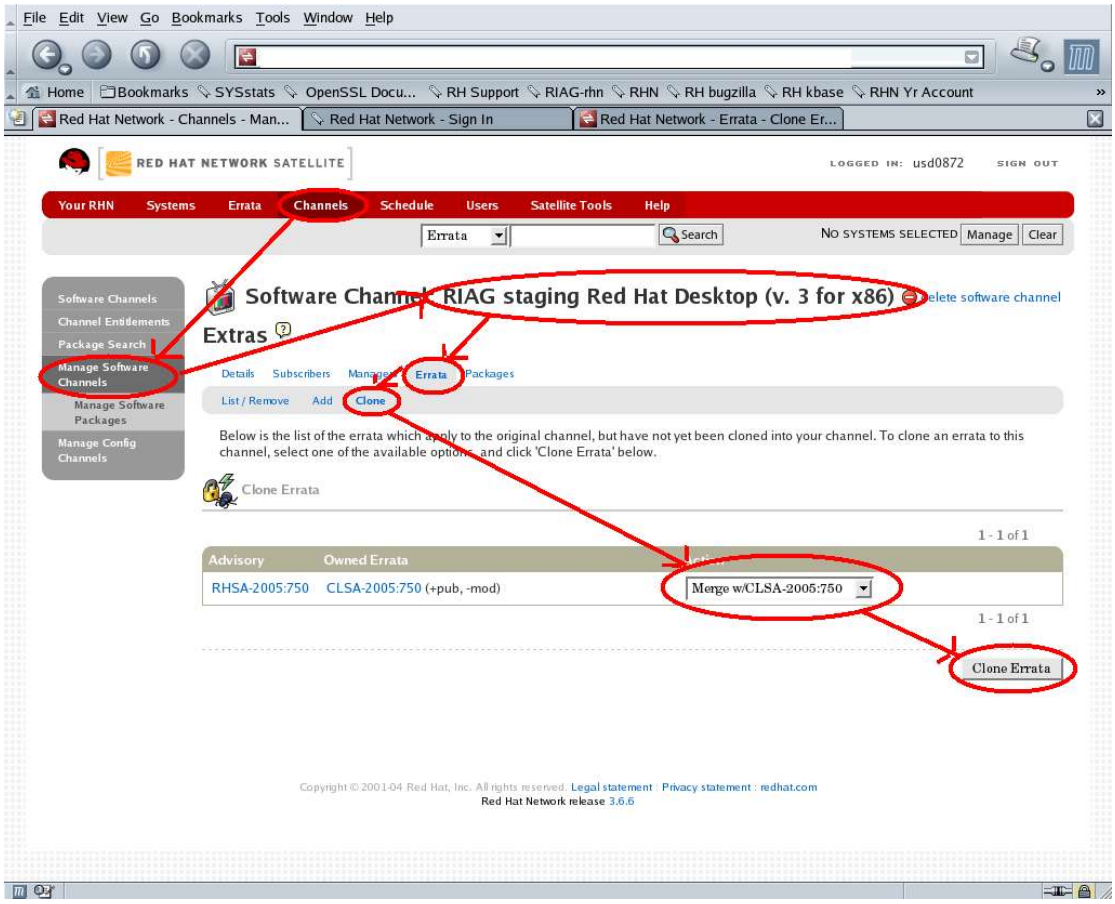
Great – is it?
First of all I currently do have 42 clone channels all in all. I'm definitely not keen to check through them all every once in a while. And even worse, in the list of already cloned errata I have no indication at all which errata has **NOT** been cloned to the selected channel. So I say the solution is no solution at all. If it helps, it only helps when I exactly know which errata I'm missing, and this is exactly what I do not know.

Is there a way to actually find out which errata I'm missing. Oh yes, I can think of one. Select the errata, check the packages attached to the errata and see in what channels theses are actually available, it's nicely listed.



Cool. Or rather not. I definitely don't want to click through all the hundreds of errata and compare whether the selected channel is in the list. If that was necessary a satellite would definitely be of no use any more, more of a burden than a tool to help administrators.

Well, well, well, a completely different approach; instead of hunting through the errata menus, take the way via channels. Oops, this way it works. However, again it is necessary to go through every single channel one by one, quite (VERY) cumbersome. But at least it works.



Nope guys, you can tell me what you want, but the way through the errata tab is either a bug (some kind of slightly wrong SQL statement?) or a screwed up design. If I do have a way to display all the errata waiting for cloning, (Errata -> Clone Errata, as shown first), I'm sure not going to the trouble of walking through all my channels (Channel -> Manage Software Channels -> select each channel -> Errata -> Clone, as shown in the last screen shot) in order to find those errata. I have better things to do than spending hours with that.

So please either fix the display of errata waiting to be cloned, or entirely take that menu option away as not to irritate people and make them falsely believe every errata has been cloned perfectly well, even though it has not been.

Thanks,

Kurt