



CertOps

Certificate Lifecycle Management done Cloud Native

23. Cloud Native Computing Linz Meetup - May 30, 2023

Martin Strigl



Ehlo!



Martin Strigl

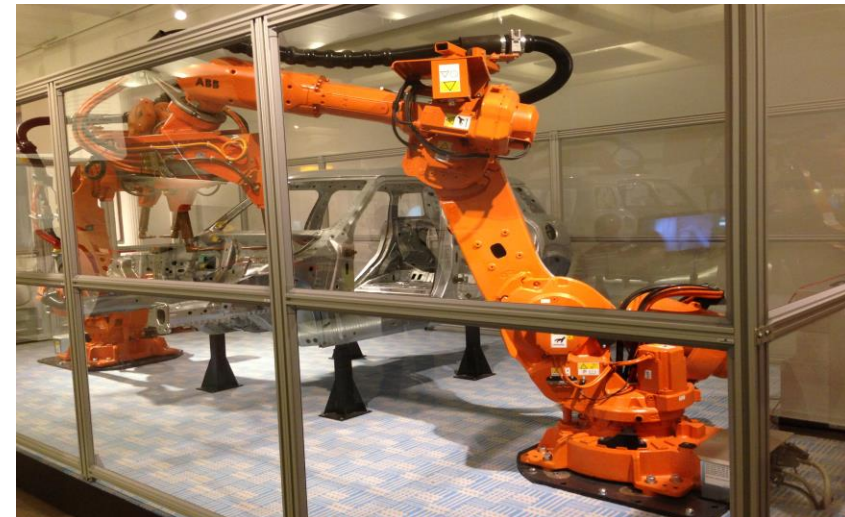
Master of disaster (internal IT + SRE)
Not afraid of touching php
Using linux container technics since 2010

Why this talk ?

- I was asked if I have an idea covering the areas cloud native and security
- Thinking about it I realized that quite some non necessary problems in the last years derived from certificate handling or to be more specific from missing and/or manual certificate lifecycle management
- This good read also showed that I' not alone: <https://venafi.com/blog/why-manual-certificate-management-really-hurts/>



Picture Source: <https://p1.pxfuel.com/preview/382/198/335/grinding-maintenance-labor-work.jpg>



Picture Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/99/ABB_Schweissroboter_Technisches_Museum_Wien_Februar_2013_File2.JPG

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History & Terms used

Protocol	Published	Status
SSL 1.0	Unpublished	Unpublished
SSL 2.0	1995	Deprecated in 2011 (RFC 6176)
SSL 3.0	1996	Deprecated in 2015 (RFC 7568)
TLS 1.0	1999	Deprecated in 2021 (RFC 8996)
TLS 1.1	2006	Deprecated in 2021 (RFC 8996)
TLS 1.2	2008	In use since 2008
TLS 1.3	2018	In use since 2018

• Digital certificates

- A digital certificate certifies the ownership of a public key by the named subject of the certificate, and indicates certain expected usages of that key. This allows others (relying parties) to rely upon signatures or on assertions made by the private key that corresponds to the certified public key
- As a consequence of choosing X.509 certificates, certificate authorities and a public key infrastructure are necessary to verify the relation between a certificate and its owner, as well as to generate, sign, and administer the validity of certificates
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transport_Layer_Security#SSL_1.0,_2.0,_and_3.0
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/X.509>

• 2012

- The Let's Encrypt project was started in 2012 by two Mozilla employees, Josh Aas and Eric Rescorla, together with Peter Eckersley at the Electronic Frontier Foundation and J. Alex Halderman at the University of Michigan. Internet Security Research Group, the company behind Let's Encrypt, was incorporated in May 2013

• 2015

- On January 28, 2015, the ACME protocol was officially submitted to the IETF for standardization. On April 9, 2015, the ISRG and the Linux Foundation declared their collaboration. The root and intermediate certificates were generated in the beginning of June. On June 16, 2015, the final launch schedule for the service was announced, with the first certificate expected to be issued sometime in the week of July 27, 2015, followed by a limited issuance period to test security and scalability. General availability of the service was originally planned to begin sometime in the week of September 14, 2015.
- On October 19, 2015, the intermediate certificates became cross-signed by IdenTrust, causing all certificates issued by Let's Encrypt to be trusted by all major browsers
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Let%27s_Encrypt

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The/A Solution

- **cert-manager.io**

- cert-manager is a powerful and extensible X.509 certificate controller for Kubernetes and OpenShift workloads. It will obtain certificates from a variety of Issuers, both popular public Issuers as well as private Issuers, and ensure the certificates are valid and up-to-date, and will attempt to renew certificates at a configured time before expiry.
- Really good documentation at: <https://cert-manager.io/docs/>

Cloud native certificate management

X.509 certificate management for
Kubernetes and OpenShift



The/A Solution



The/A Solution

cert-manager is a CNCF member project



cert-manager was created by  JETSTACK

It was proudly [donated](#) to CNCF in 2020.

KEY FEATURES



Automated issuance and renewal of certificates to secure Ingress with TLS



Fully integrated Issuers from recognised public and private Certificate Authorities



Secure pod-to-pod communication with mTLS using private PKI Issuers



Supports certificate use cases for web facing and internal workloads



Open source add-ons for enhanced cloud native service mesh security



Backed by major cloud service providers and distributions

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The Howto get running

Release	Release Date	End of Life	Supported Kubernetes versions	Supported OpenShift versions
1.12	May 19, 2023	End of September, 2024	1.22 → 1.27	4.9 → 4.14
1.11	Jan 11, 2023	Release of 1.13	1.21 → 1.27	4.8 → 4.14

- **Cloud Compatibility**

- See <https://cert-manager.io/docs/installation/compatibility/>

- **Possible ways to install**

- kubectl apply (<https://cert-manager.io/docs/installation/kubectl/>)
 - kubectl apply -f <https://github.com/cert-manager/cert-manager/releases/download/v1.12.0/cert-manager.yaml>
- Helm (<https://cert-manager.io/docs/installation/helm/>)
 - helm repo add jetstack <https://charts.jetstack.io>
 - helm repo update
 - helm install cert-manager jetstack/cert-manager --namespace cert-manager --create-namespace --version v1.12.0 --set installCRDs=true
- Operatorhub - OLM (<https://cert-manager.io/docs/installation/operator-lifecycle-manager/>)
 - operator-sdk olm install
 - kubectl krew install operator
 - kubectl operator install cert-manager -n operators --channel stable --approval Automatic
 - kubectl get events -w -n operators
 - Limited configuration can be done via editing subscription and/or ClusterServiceVersion

The Howto get running

- **Issuers**

- Issuer

- Is a namespaced resource
- Cannot be used from different namespace

- ClusterIssuer

- Basically the same as Issuer - just no namespacing and therefore can be used to issue certificates across all namespaces
- If you reference a secret from a ClusterIssuer this secret has to exist in the Cluster Resource Namespace of cert-manager (default: cert-manager, can be changed by flag `--cluster-resource-namespace` of cert-manager controller)

- **Issuer Types**

- SelfSigned
- CA
- Vault
- Venafi
- External (<https://cert-manager.io/docs/configuration/external/>)
 - e.g.: step-issuer (<https://github.com/smallstep/step-issuer>)
- ACME (Automated Certificate Management Environment)
 - HTTP01
 - DNS01: ACMEDNS / Akamai / AzureDNS / Cloudflare / DigitalOcean / Google CloudDNS / RFC-2136 / Route53 / Webhook

The Howto get running

- Example Issuer using Route53 and LE

```
[mstrigl@PCATLNZPC0MAB1G cert-manager]$ cat cm-le-prod-route53.yaml
apiVersion: cert-manager.io/v1
kind: ClusterIssuer
metadata:
  name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-route53
spec:
  acme:
    email: martin.strigl@cloudflight.io
    preferredChain: ISRG Root X1
    privateKeySecretRef:
      key: tls.key
      name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-route53-account-secret
    server: 'https://acme-v02.api.letsencrypt.org/directory'
    solvers:
      - dns01:
          route53:
            region: eu-central-1
            accessKeyID: AKXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
            hostedZoneID: Z0XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
            secretAccessKeySecretRef:
              name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-route53-credentials
              key: secretKey
          selector:
            dnsZones:
              - mstdemo.openshift-sandbox.
```

The Howto get running

- Example Issuer using ACMEDNS and LE

```
[mstrigl@PCATLNZPC0MAB1G cert-manager]$ cat cm-le-prod-acmedns.yaml
apiVersion: cert-manager.io/v1
kind: ClusterIssuer
metadata:
  name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01
spec:
  acme:
    email: martin.strigl@cloudflight.io
    preferredChain: ISRG Root X1
    privateKeySecretRef:
      key: tls.key
      name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-account-secret
    server: 'https://acme-v02.api.letsencrypt.org/directory'
    solvers:
      - dns01:
          acmeDNS:
            accountSecretRef:
              key: acmedns.json
              name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-acmedns-secret
            host: 'https://acme-dns.xxxxxxxxxx.xx'
            cnameStrategy: Follow
          selector:
            dnsZones:
              - demo.openshift-sandbox.
```

```
[mstrigl@PCATLNZPC0MAB1G cert-manager]$ cat acmedns.json
```

```
{
  "demo.openshift-sandbox.": {
    "username": "af6ba2f8-",
    "password": " ",
    "fulldomain": "5c4c21a9-4f2c-",
    "subdomain": "5c4c21a9-4f2c-",
    "allowfrom": []
  }
}
```

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The Main Use Cases

- **Securing Ingress**
 - For individual hostnames

```
[mstrigl@PCATLNZPC0MAB1G cert-manager]$ cat ingress-mst-demo-httpd-le-prod-route53.yaml
apiVersion: networking.k8s.io/v1
kind: Ingress
metadata:
  annotations:
    cert-manager.io/duration: 4320h
    cert-manager.io/issuer: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-route53
    cert-manager.io/issuer-group: cert-manager.io
    cert-manager.io/issuer-kind: ClusterIssuer
    cert-manager.io/renew-before: 2160h
    route.openshift.io/termination: edge
  name: mst-demo-httpd-le-prod-route53
  namespace: mst-demo
spec:
  tls:
  - hosts:
    - demo1.mstdemo.openshift-sandbox.██████████
    secretName: ingress-mst-demo-httpd-le-prod-route53
  rules:
  - host: demo1.mstdemo.openshift-sandbox.██████████
    http:
      paths:
      - backend:
          service:
            name: mst-demo-httpd
            port:
              number: 80
        path: /
        pathType: Prefix
```


The Main Use Cases

- **Securing Ingress**

- With a wildcard record certificate and reusing that cert in an ingress resource
- Wildcard cert could also be used as default certificate for ingress controller

```
[mstrigl@PCATLNZPC0MAB1G cert-manager]$ cat cert-mst-demo-plain10.yaml
apiVersion: cert-manager.io/v1
kind: Certificate
metadata:
  name: mst-demo-plain10
  namespace: mst-demo
spec:
  secretName: secret-mst-demo-plain10-tls
  secretTemplate:
    annotations:
      my-secret-annotation-1: "foo"
      my-secret-annotation-2: "bar"
    labels:
      my-secret-label: foo
  duration: 2160h # 60d
  renewBefore: 360h # 15d
  subject:
    organizations:
      - cloudflight
  isCA: false
  privateKey:
    algorithm: RSA
    encoding: PKCS1
    size: 2048
  usages:
    - server auth
    - client auth
  # At least one of a DNS Name, URI, or IP address is required.
  dnsNames:
    - "*.demo.openshift-sandbox.███"
  issuerRef:
    name: cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-staging-dns01
    kind: ClusterIssuer
    group: cert-manager.io
```

```
[mstrigl@PCATLNZPC0MAB1G cert-manager]$ cat ingress-reusing-cm-cert.yaml
apiVersion: networking.k8s.io/v1
kind: Ingress
metadata:
  annotations:
    route.openshift.io/termination: edge
  name: mst-demo-httpd
  namespace: mst-demo
spec:
  tls:
    - hosts:
      - mst-demo-httpd.demo.openshift-sandbox.███
      secretName: secret-mst-demo-plain10-tls
  rules:
    - host: mst-demo-httpd.demo.openshift-sandbox.███
      http:
        paths:
          - backend:
              service:
                name: mst-demo-httpd
                port:
                  number: 80
            path: /
            pathType: Prefix
```

The Main Use Cases

- **Securing Pod Communication by establishing mTLS through csi-driver**

- The goal for this plugin is to seamlessly request and mount certificate key pairs to pods. This is useful for facilitating mTLS, or otherwise securing connections of pods with guaranteed present certificates whilst having all of the features that cert-manager provides.
- Needs to be installed
 - `helm repo add jetstack https://charts.jetstack.io --force-update`
 - `helm upgrade -i -n cert-manager cert-manager-csi-driver jetstack/cert-manager-csi-driver --wait`
- Must not be used with public CA's since you will quite fast hit their rate limits
 - Either use Issue Types CA or SelfSigned or External (e.g.: step-issuer)

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Pod
metadata:
  name: my-csi-app
  namespace: sandbox
  labels:
    app: my-csi-app
spec:
  containers:
  - name: my-frontend
    image: busybox
    volumeMounts:
    - mountPath: "/tls"
      name: tls
    command: [ "sleep", "1000000" ]
  volumes:
  - name: tls
    csi:
      driver: csi.cert-manager.io
      volumeAttributes:
        csi.cert-manager.io/issuer-name: ca-issuer
        csi.cert-manager.io/dns-names: ${POD_NAME}.${POD_NAMESPACE}.svc.cluster.local
```

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The creative Solutions

- **Own PKI**

- CA

- Can be used for mTLS by csi driver
 - Can be used for already established private Company PKI
 - Has the "disadvantage" that the (intermediate) CA certificate and private key is accessible to some persons with enough permissions

- StepIssuer

- Can be used for mTLS by csi driver
 - Can be used for already established private Company PKI
 - Has the advantage that (intermediate) CA certificate and private key is NOT directly accessible since communication to step ca service can be encapsulated by using foreign endpoint (step ca is not running inside the cluster)
 - See
 - <https://github.com/smallstep/step-issuer>
 - <https://github.com/smallstep/certificates>

- **Monitoring**

- Regular

```
spec:
  template:
    spec:
      containers:
        - name: cert-manager-controller
          ports:
            - containerPort: 9402
              name: http
              protocol: TCP
```

```
apiVersion: monitoring.coreos.com/v1
kind: PodMonitor
metadata:
  name: cert-manager
  namespace: cert-manager
labels:
  app: cert-manager
  app.kubernetes.io/name: cert-manager
  app.kubernetes.io/instance: cert-manager
  app.kubernetes.io/component: "controller"
spec:
  jobLabel: app.kubernetes.io/name
  selector:
    matchLabels:
      app: cert-manager
      app.kubernetes.io/name: cert-manager
      app.kubernetes.io/instance: cert-manager
      app.kubernetes.io/component: "controller"
  podMetricsEndpoints:
    - port: http
      honorLabels: true
```

- <https://gitlab.com/uneeq-oss/cert-manager-mixin>

The creative Solutions

- Delegated Domains

```

apiVersion: cert-manager.io/v1
kind: Issuer
metadata:
  ...
spec:
  acme:
    ...
  solvers:
  - selector:
      dnsZones:
      - 'example.com'
    dns01:
      # Valid values are None and Follow
      cnameStrategy: Follow
      route53:
        region: eu-central-1
        accessKeyID: <Access ID for less-privileged.example.org here>
        hostedZoneID: <Zone ID for less-privileged.example.org here>
        secretAccessKeySecretRef:
          ...

```

```

_acme-challenge.example.com      IN  CNAME  _acme-challenge.less-privileged.example.org.
_acme-challenge.www.example.com IN  CNAME  _acme-challenge.less-privileged.example.org.
_acme-challenge.foo.example.com IN  CNAME  _acme-challenge.less-privileged.example.org.
_acme-challenge.bar.example.com IN  CNAME  _acme-challenge.less-privileged.example.org.

```

```

// Present performs the work to configure DNS to resolve a DNS01 challenge.
func (s *Solver) Present(ctx context.Context, issuer v1.GenericIssuer, ch *cmacme.Challenge) error {
    slv, providerConfig, err := s.solverForChallenge(ctx, issuer, ch)

    fqdn, err := util.DNS01LookupFQDN(ch.Spec.DNSName, followCNAME(providerConfig.CNAMEStrategy), s.DNS01Nameservers...)

    return slv.Present(ch.Spec.DNSName, fqdn, ch.Spec.Key)
}

```

```

// Present creates a TXT record using the specified parameters
func (r *DNSProvider) Present(domain, fqdn, value string) error {
    value = `"` + value + `"`
    return r.changeRecord(route53.ChangeActionUpsert, fqdn, value, route53TTL)
}

```

```

// Present creates a TXT record to fulfil the dns-01 challenge
func (c *DNSProvider) Present(domain, fqdn, value string) error {
    if account, exists := c.accounts[domain]; exists {
        // Update the acme-dns TXT record.
        return c.client.UpdateTXTRecord(account, value)
    }

    return fmt.Errorf("account credentials not found for domain %s", domain)
}

```

The creative Solutions

- Approver Policy

```
helm upgrade cert-manager jetstack/cert-manager \
  --install \
  --create-namespace \
  --namespace cert-manager \
  --version REPLACE-WITH-YOUR-CERT-MANAGER-VERSION \
  --set installCRDs=true \
  --set extraArgs={--controllers='*\,-certificaterequests-approver'}
```

```
$ helm upgrade -i -n cert-manager cert-manager-approver-policy jetstack/cert-manager-approver-policy \
  --set app.approveSignerNames="{\
  issuers.cert-manager.io/*,clusterissuers.cert-manager.io/*,\
  googlecasclusterissuers.cas-issuer.jetstack.io/*,googlecasissuers.cas-issuer.jetstack.io/*,\
  awspcaclusterissuers.awspca.cert-manager.io/*,awspcaissuers.awspca.cert-manager.io/*\
}"
```

```
apiVersion: policy.cert-manager.io/v1alpha1
kind: CertificateRequestPolicy
metadata:
  name: test-policy
spec:
  allowed:
    commonName:
      value: "hello.world"
      required: true
  selector:
    # Select all IssuerRef
    issuerRef: {}
---
apiVersion: rbac.authorization.k8s.io/v1
kind: ClusterRole
metadata:
  name: cert-manager-policy:hello-world
rules:
- apiGroups: ["policy.cert-manager.io"]
  resources: ["certificaterequestpolicies"]
  verbs: ["use"]
  # Name of the CertificateRequestPolicies to be used.
  resourceName: ["test-policy"]
---
apiVersion: rbac.authorization.k8s.io/v1
kind: ClusterRoleBinding
metadata:
  name: cert-manager-policy:hello-world
roleRef:
  # ClusterRole or Role _must_ be bound to a user for the policy to be considered.
  apiGroup: rbac.authorization.k8s.io
  kind: ClusterRole
  name: cert-manager-policy:hello-world
subjects:
  # The users who should be bound to the policies defined.
  # Note that in the case of users creating Certificate resources, cert-manager
  # is the entity that is creating the actual CertificateRequests, and so the
  # cert-manager controller's
  # Service Account should be bound instead.
- kind: Group
  name: system:authenticated
  apiGroup: rbac.authorization.k8s.io
```

The creative Solutions

- **WebhookIssuer**

- See <https://github.com/topics/cert-manager-webhook>
- e.g. Hetzner: <https://github.com/vadimkim/cert-manager-webhook-hetzner>
 - helm repo add cert-manager-webhook-hetzner <https://vadimkim.github.io/cert-manager-webhook-hetzner>
 - helm install --namespace cert-manager cert-manager-webhook-hetzner cert-manager-webhook-hetzner/cert-manager-webhook-hetzner --set groupName=acme.yourdomain.tld

```
apiVersion: cert-manager.io/v1
kind: ClusterIssuer
metadata:
  name: letsencrypt-staging
spec:
  acme:
    # The ACME server URL
    server: https://acme-staging-v02.api.letsencrypt.org/directory

    # Email address used for ACME registration
    email: mail@example.com # REPLACE THIS WITH YOUR EMAIL!!!

    # Name of a secret used to store the ACME account private key
    privateKeySecretRef:
      name: letsencrypt-staging

  solvers:
    - dns01:
        webhook:
          # This group needs to be configured when installing the helm package, otherwise the webh
          groupName: acme.yourdomain.tld
          solverName: hetzner
          config:
            secretName: hetzner-secret
            zoneName: example.com # (Optional): When not provided the Zone will searched in Hetzne
            apiUrl: https://dns.hetzner.com/api/v1
```

```
apiVersion: v1
kind: Secret
metadata:
  name: hetzner-secret
  namespace: cert-manager
type: Opaque
data:
  api-key: your-key-base64-encoded
```


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Showtime

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- ⚙️ Administrator
- 🏠 Home
- Operators
 - OperatorHub
 - Installed Operators
- Workloads
- Serverless
- Networking
- Storage
- Builds
- Observe
- Compute
- User Management
- Administration

Project: openshift-monitoring

Installed Operators > Operator details

cert-manager

1.11.0 provided by The cert-manager maintainers

Actions

Details YAML Subscription Events All instances CertificateRequest Certificate ClusterIssuer Issuer

All Instances Show operands in: All namespaces Current namespace only Create new

Filter

Name

Search by name... /

Name	Kind	Namespace	Status	Labels	Last updated
cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01	ClusterIssuer	-	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 10:09
cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-prod-dns01-route53	ClusterIssuer	-	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 08:56
cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-staging-dns01	ClusterIssuer	-	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 29. Mai 2023, 20:53
cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-staging-dns01-route53	ClusterIssuer	-	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 08:21
cm-clusterissuer-letsencrypt-staging-http01	ClusterIssuer	-	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 29. Mai 2023, 22:42
ingress-mst-demo-httpd-le-prod-route53	Certificate	mst-demo	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 09:00
ingress-mst-demo-httpd-le-prod-route53-n2khw	CertificateRequest	mst-demo	Conditions: Approved, Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 09:00
mst-demo-plain8	Certificate	mst-demo	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 08:33
mst-demo-plain8-72p7d	CertificateRequest	mst-demo	Conditions: Approved, Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 08:33
mst-demo-plain10	Certificate	mst-demo	Condition: ✔ Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 10:00
mst-demo-plain10-6im4x	CertificateRequest	mst-demo	Conditions: Approved, Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 10:00
mst-demo-plain10-xmtcf	CertificateRequest	mst-demo	Conditions: Approved, Ready	No labels	🕒 30. Mai 2023, 10:09

cloudflight

Thank you for your attention
