



Office Depot

As a large global retailer, Office Depot knows the challenges of managing a complex enterprise that requires 24/7 uptime. Simplifying its IT environment with SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server has helped Office Depot reduce IT costs, while maintaining superior stability and performance.

Overview

Office Depot provides more office products and services to more customers in more countries than any other company and is one of the world's largest e-commerce retailers. With annual sales of more than \$15.4 billion, the company sells to customers directly or through affiliates in 43 countries and employs approximately 52,000 associates worldwide.

Challenge

Office Depot has grown its large global business both organically and through acquisitions. As a result, the company runs applications on a variety of platforms including UNIX*, Windows*, Linux* and AS/400* systems. To reduce complexity and control costs, the company wanted to standardize its IT environment as much as possible.

Speed to market in developing IT applications is also a key enabler of Office Depot's innovative business. An open platform would provide the flexibility to deliver applications across its enterprise, without huge costs. Moving to Linux would also help the company maintain the required levels of security and stability for a global business that operates 24/7.

Solution

To streamline its IT environment, Office Depot evaluated a number of application and server solutions before selecting SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

"SUSE was compelling because SUSE Linux Enterprise Server has the endorsement of IBM and many big companies," said Tim Toews, senior vice president and CIO of Office Depot. "SUSE knows how to support a company like ours that is large and geographically dispersed. It is critical for us to have a vendor who can provide enterprise-wide support."

Office Depot is running several mission-critical workloads on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server including databases, middleware and applications. The company runs Oracle* RAC on Linux, as well as a number of Oracle middleware and e-business modules on two-way and four-way HP* servers.

"Our strategy is to run SUSE Linux Enterprise wherever pragmatic and possible," said Toews. "The cost dynamics of running large-scale applications on commodity hardware are significant. SUSE Linux Enterprise is a stable, secure and financially compelling solution."

Office Depot at a glance:

One of the world's largest e-commerce retailers

■ Industry:

Retail

■ Location:

United States

■ Products and Services:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ Results:

- Simplified IT environment by implementing an open platform solution
- Reduced hardware costs and total cost of ownership
- Consolidated servers with virtualization
- Achieved 100-percent ROI on Linux investment in first year

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Senior Vice President and CIO
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“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server has been an excellent investment for us and is the cornerstone of our global Linux strategy. We have deployed critical business applications and IT infrastructure on Linux with great success.”

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Office Depot

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The company now runs many of its mission-critical ERP applications on SUSE Linux Enterprise, including PeopleSoft* HR and its payroll system. The IT staff is also planning to move Oracle Financials and JDA software to the Linux platform, as well as the warehouse management application used to manage more than 50 warehouses.

“The performance of SUSE Linux Enterprise has been tremendous,” said Toews. “We can deploy servers and applications with confidence in our 24/7 business where downtime is not an option. With an IT environment of our size, we carefully monitor the performance and service levels. I can’t remember an issue with SUSE Linux Enterprise that has affected our ability to support the business.”

Using VMware*, Office Depot has consolidated much of its hardware by creating virtual servers running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. This not only reduces hardware costs, but also helps the company keep pace with growth.

“The flexibility of Linux makes it easy to scale our business,” said Toews. “It’s much faster for us to add a server to a server farm, rather than install a partition on a large server. If we added several thousand employees in a matter of months, we could easily handle the volume.”

Having an open enterprise with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server has also opened up new opportunities for the IT staff to enhance their skill sets and keep up with the latest technology.

“Open source is a great motivator for our IT staff,” said Toews. “They are excited about working with modern technology and enjoy working for an organization that is keeping pace with the industry.”

Moving forward, Office Depot is also evaluating a move to Novell® ZENworks® to help its centralized IT staff manage servers and workstations across its warehouses and more than 1,500 retail stores.

Results

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server allows Office Depot to simplify and standardize its IT environment, while maintaining superior performance. By moving to an open platform, the company has dramatically reduced its hardware costs with the ability to run on commodity hardware. Consolidating servers has also helped reduce hardware costs, as well as power and cooling costs.

Office Depot has also reduced IT costs by moving many of its global ERP applications to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. The company estimates that its SUSE solutions paid for themselves in the first year.

“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server has been an excellent investment for us and is the cornerstone of our global Linux strategy,” said Toews. “We have deployed critical business applications and IT infrastructure on Linux with great success. Without SUSE, we would have been forced to find other solutions that would have been far more costly and complex.”



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