



Usha Martin Group

Usha Martin Group wanted to reduce its operational IT costs by eliminating persistent virus infections that were causing reliability issues and impacting user productivity. The group selected SUSE® Linux Enterprise Desktop to increase system uptime and raise performance, with Novell® ZENworks® Desktop Management to simplify support and software updates.

Overview

Usha Martin Group is an integrated speciality steel and wire rope manufacturer based in India. The company has seven manufacturing locations in India and an additional four around the globe, generating annual revenues of approximately \$325 million through both domestic and international sales.

Challenge

With geographically diverse manufacturing sites and another 20 stockholding warehouses throughout the country, the Usha Martin Group was looking for more cost-effective ways to manage its desktop PC environment in India.

Approximately 700 users in the manufacturing sites use local office productivity applications and access Baan ERP applications running in the Usha Martin Group headquarters in Kolkata, West Bengal. Frequent virus outbreaks were pushing up operational IT costs, and the lost user productivity associated with downtime was becoming a major issue.

“Addressing system security and protecting against virus infections was our number one priority,” said Mr Sunil Jala, Vice President of IT at Usha Martin Group. “Another key issue was managing operating system patches and security fixes—our IT team was at times

overwhelmed by the workload, making it difficult to support users effectively.”

Solution

Usha Martin Group’s desktop PCs were running various versions of Microsoft* Windows*. Not only were these susceptible to virus attacks, but also the regular march of operating system upgrades and frequent patching requirements made the systems increasingly difficult to manage.

“By moving to the Linux operating system, we knew that we would eliminate the security and virus infection issues,” said Mr Subhakar Rudra, Corporate IT Manager at Usha Martin Group. “We looked at several different options, and selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop. The aggressive pricing model, the high level of interoperability with our ERP applications, and the strong support from Novell made SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop the best choice for Usha Martin Group.”

The company started with an extensive testing programme, followed by a trial rollout to 40 users in one of its smaller manufacturing locations. Working closely with VHP Infotech, a specialist Novell migration and training organisation based in Mumbai, Usha Martin Group’s IT team monitored performance, system stability and uptime. The joint team re-installed the Windows-based Baan ERP

Usha Martin Group at a glance:

Integrated speciality steel and wire rope manufacturer based in India

■ Industry:

Manufacturing

■ Location:

India

■ Products and Services:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop

Novell ZENworks Desktop Management

■ Results:

- Reduced total cost of operation for desktop environment by 90 percent
- Cut desktop PC downtime by 80 percent
- Eliminated virus infections, increasing staff productivity

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Mr Subhakar Rudra

*Corporate IT Manager
Usha Martin Group*

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Mr Sunil Jala
Vice President of IT
Usha Martin Group

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client software on CrossOver Linux* from CodeWeavers, enabling it to run unmodified on top of SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop.

“The first pilot implementation enabled us to identify training requirements for SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop,” said Subhakar Rudra. “We found that users quickly became accustomed to the new operating environment, and that we could successfully re-use our existing Baan client software.”

Usha Martin Group also tested the ability of OpenOffice.org Novell Edition to access word processing, spreadsheet and presentation documents created using Microsoft Office applications. This helped to ensure a successful migration to SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop for all users, without business disruption.

As part of the solution, Usha Martin Group deployed Novell ZENworks Desktop Management to enable remote control of employee desktops for support purposes, and to simplify the deployment of updates and new software.

Usha Martin Group now plans to migrate its core servers from the Microsoft Windows Server platform to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server—and expects to make cost savings in terms of both software licensing and server management. Equally, the move to Linux—which has a smaller footprint than Windows—will extend the useful life of Usha Martin Group’s server hardware, reducing long-term capital expenditure.

Results

By eliminating virus infections and enabling remote management and patching, the combination of SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop and Novell ZENworks Desktop Management has significantly reduced operational and support costs. Site visits are rarely required, saving on IT staff time and costs, and users enjoy reliable access to the central Baan application for billing and general management purposes.

“With SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop, we have reduced our total costs of operation by 90 percent,” said Mr Subhakar Rudra. “The Novell solutions have greatly improved stability, and we no longer have any problems with viruses. Downtime in the desktop environment has fallen 80 percent, so our users are more productive.”

Employees quickly became completely accustomed to using SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop, and have made an easy transition to the OpenOffice.org Novell Edition productivity suite. The improved stability and performance of Linux compared with Windows enables them to be more productive, and Novell ZENworks is helping IT support staff resolve user issues rapidly and with minimal effort.

“The Novell solutions have helped Usha Martin Group cut costs and increase user productivity,” said Mr Sunil Jala. “The migration to SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop has been a complete success.”



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