



# Arca Insurance Group

The Arca Insurance Group has a distribution network requiring fast and secure access to its IT systems. By migrating its existing Web application servers from a proprietary platform to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server, Arca has significantly reduced its hardware, software and operating costs, while maintaining security and increasing performance and flexibility.

### Overview

The Arca Insurance Group sells a comprehensive range of life, auto, domestic and general insurance policies through partner banks and in its 1,500 branch offices throughout Italy and through a network of 150 agencies. Headquartered in Verona, the company generates total annual premium income of approximately €650 million, and is one of Italy's top 100 insurance companies.

### Challenge

The Arca Insurance Group sells insurance nationally, and needs to ensure access to all its centralised business systems. To do so, the company had invested heavily in Web technologies, enabling browser-based access to management systems for its network of agencies.

The original hardware and software solutions enabled Arca to provide secure connections using purpose-built virtual private networks and extranets. Key concerns for Arca were to ensure that these network links would preserve customer confidentiality when submitting insurance policies and claims, and guarantee that the company's own systems were secured against unauthorised access.

Running a proprietary UNIX\* operating system, Arca was locked into a vendor-specific hardware platform costing in excess of €50,000 per server. The company wanted to find a more cost-effective and flexible solution, that would preserve or enhance network security and performance while eliminating its reliance on proprietary technology.

### Solution

Working with H4T, a Novell Gold Partner™, Arca chose to free itself from the proprietary operating system and hardware, and migrate to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server running on four industry-standard x86 servers from HP, each with eight Intel\* Xeon\* processors.

Arca examined and tested every aspect of the proposed SUSE Linux Enterprise Server environment to ensure system and data security. This review process included identifying and removing applications and components that were not critical to the Arca solution, using the highly configurable nature of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server to provide a hardened and optimised operating system.

"By imposing strict access control policies, we were able to achieve an unprecedented level of security," said Dario Spoldi, IT

### Arca Insurance Group at a glance:

Italian financial services firm with 1,500 banking locations and 150 agencies

#### ■ Industry:

Insurance

#### ■ Location:

Italy

#### ■ Products and Services:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

#### ■ Results:

- Quadrupled performance, while cutting hardware costs by 60 percent
- Reduced software licensing costs by 30 percent

**"Migrating from a proprietary UNIX platform to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server eliminated our dependency on proprietary hardware and software, cutting hardware acquisition costs by 60 percent."**

#### Luca Perego

IT Director

Arca Insurance Group

**“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server gives us the security and availability of our previous proprietary operating system, but at significantly lower cost.”**

**Dario Spoldi**  
*IT Systems Manager*  
Arca Insurance Group

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Systems Manager at Arca Insurance Group. “The flexibility of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server enabled us to configure and optimise every component, while ensuring we gain maximum performance from WebSphere Application Server.”

Arca is able to install new servers to cope with faults in the system using SUSE AutoYaST scripts.

## Results

The move to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server has enabled Arca to make significant reductions in capital and operational costs, while simultaneously boosting performance and maintaining high security.

“Migrating from a proprietary UNIX platform to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server eliminated our dependency on proprietary hardware, cutting acquisition costs by 60 percent,” said Luca Perego. “We estimate that SUSE Linux Enterprise Server offers four times the performance of our previous platform. The ability to reduce software licensing costs as well as hardware costs means total savings of 30 percent.”

With each server sized more accurately for the predicted workload, Arca has reduced the number of processors required for each instance of WebSphere\*, cutting the licensing costs. Arca can easily add new servers, enabling rapid scalability as its business grows.

“Software licence fees have fallen by around one-third for our key applications, and are now aligned more closely to the actual usage,” said Luca Perego. “The savings can be directed to system development tasks, such as creating new analysis features and services for the sales agents.”

The flexibility of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server gives Arca more scope to tailor its security controls, protecting commercially sensitive data while enhancing access from its remote offices. Configuration changes that previously took several days to process can now be completed on the same day, enabling the company to react rapidly and efficiently to user requests and business change requirements.

“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server gives us the security and availability of our previous proprietary operating system, but at significantly lower cost,” said Dario Spoldi. “And with commodity hardware, it is significantly less expensive to extend the solution.”

The new architecture, which comprises a set of Web servers on a virtual platform with corresponding application servers, allows Arca to scale horizontally at reduced costs and time, freeing them from the hardware limitations of their infrastructure. Performance demands are no longer tied to hardware innovations, and can be satisfied by a new set of application servers. This is why SUSE Linux Enterprise Server was a winner; costs and performance have reached a perfect balance.



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