



Watts Water Technologies

To support an ERP upgrade, Watts Water Technologies needed to replace old shop-floor terminals with flexible desktops that could run additional applications. Moving to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Desktop in a thin-client deployment has improved reliability, increased application access from the manufacturing floor and greatly reduced maintenance costs.

Overview

Watts Water Technologies, Inc. is a world leader in the manufacture of innovative products to control the efficiency, safety, and quality of water within residential, commercial, and institutional applications. The company has 8,000 employees throughout the world.

Challenge

Watts Water Technologies recently completed a two-year upgrade of QAD, the ERP application that runs its business. To support the new software, the company needed to replace many of its old wireless terminals on its manufacturing floors. These terminals lacked management capabilities and had to be sent out for any repairs or upgrades. Instead, the IT staff wanted a desktop solution that could be managed from a central location.

Watts Water Technologies is also a fast-growing company and makes several acquisitions each year that require tremendous IT integration. The company wanted to implement open and flexible desktops that could be used for more than just ERP applications.

Solution

After evaluating several desktop and thin-client solutions, Watts Water Technologies selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop for use in a thin-client deployment, as well as Novell® ZENworks® to manage more than 1,000 desktops.

“Linux really shines and Novell has a great Linux strategy,” said Ty Muscat, Data Center Manager for Watts Water Technologies. “We have almost every platform imaginable and are moving more and more to SUSE Linux Enterprise desktops and servers. We like having an open platform with a lot of flexibility.”

The company runs SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop on Neoware* thin-client hardware, creating a compact and efficient solution for its manufacturing floors. The IT staff uses the remote control functionality of Novell ZENworks to manage its desktops from a central location which greatly reduces ongoing maintenance costs.

“We simply did not have the staff or budget to support a large Microsoft deployment,” said Muscat. “Our thin-client SUSE Linux

Watts Water Technologies at a glance:

Leading manufacturer of water products

■ Industry:

Manufacturing

■ Location:

United States

■ Solutions:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop
Novell Identity Manager
Novell eDirectory™
Novell GroupWise®
Novell ZENworks

■ Results:

- Improved desktop reliability and management
- Significantly reduced desktop maintenance costs
- Improved application access from manufacturing floor
- Reduced IT travel time and costs

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Ty Muscat

Data Center Manager
Watts Water Technologies



“Overall, SUSE Linux Enterprise puts us in a good position to respond to management changes, whether an acquisition or new applications. Everything really boils down to flexibility—it’s the driving force in IT to respond quickly to business needs and keep costs down at the same time.”

Ty Muscat
Data Center Manager
Watts Water Technologies

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Enterprise Desktop machines require little maintenance. We can support far more Linux servers and desktops with fewer administrators, than we could with Microsoft Windows. We also avoid the headaches associated with viruses and constant patching.”

With Novell ZENworks, the IT staff can distribute applications to its Linux* desktops in hours and can troubleshoot problems cost-effectively without having to visit specific locations.

“We have been able to make our thin-client desktops very hands-off,” said Muscat. “We deployed them in many areas where we lack an IT presence so we don’t want to have to touch them again. If we do, we can use Novell ZENworks to manage them from a corporate office.”

In addition to running its ERP system on the Linux desktops, Watts Water is considering deployment of OpenOffice.org suite to provide access to key business productivity applications. A Linux environment has also expanded the company’s ability to use open source software.

“When acquiring any new software, we always consider open source before we buy anything,” said Muscat. “We currently use an open source helpdesk solution.”

Watts Water Technologies runs SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on IBM*, HP* and Dell* hardware for its back-end applications, print servers, DNS servers and Legato* network backup environment. Using VMware*, the company has created more than 35 virtual servers to further reduce maintenance time.

Watts Water Technologies also plans to implement a Novell security and identity solution to centralize access management. With a central repository for user identity information, the company can easily integrate new users from acquisitions and better comply with Sarbanes-Oxley requirements for user access.

“Working with Novell as a vendor is easy to do,” said Muscat. “Novell Technical Services provides excellent support. We don’t hit a lot of roadblocks trying to get access to the right people, as we often do with other organizations.”

Results

Watts Water Technologies is moving from old terminals to flexible, thin-client desktops at a fraction of the software and hardware costs of a Microsoft* desktop solution. SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop offers improved reliability, as well as a lower total cost of ownership. By supporting new applications, the new desktops will also give users greater flexibility and application access from the manufacturing floor.

With Novell ZENworks, the company can manage its desktops from a central location, significantly reducing its travel and administration costs.

“Without Novell, we would have had to invest far more to get anything similar to what we have with SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop,” said Muscat. “The ongoing management and maintenance costs of other options would have been overwhelming for us.”



Contact your local Novell Solutions Provider, or call Novell at:

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