



Getronics

Responding to a major hosting client's requirements for a cost-efficient high availability environment for SAP, Getronics deployed SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server with its high availability capabilities and Oracle* Real Application Clusters on IBM* System x3850 hardware. The new environment will support a Web-enabled customer information system for almost two million customers.

Overview

With annual revenues of 2.5 billion Euros and approximately 20,000 employees world-wide, Getronics is the largest provider of IT services in the Netherlands and a leading global ICT-service provider. Since 23rd October 2007, Getronics has been part of KPN, the main provider of telecommunication services in The Netherlands. Getronics offers workspace management services, consultancy, and data centre and hosting services.

Challenge

In the Netherlands, the Data Centre and Hosting Services division of Getronics provides 24x7 support for numerous clients across multiple industries. When an existing client—a major Dutch utility company with almost two million domestic energy customers—needed to reduce its total cost of ownership for customer management, it asked Getronics to architect a new SAP* hosting environment.

Against a backdrop of rising energy prices and increased competition, the utility company determined that its cost of handling customers was too high, and targeted a substantial reduction in its cost-per-contract. The plan was to create a new customer information system based on SAP applications that would support greater automation

of business processes and the introduction of a 24x7 customer self-service Web portal.

The challenge for Getronics was to design an SAP hosting environment that would combine high performance, availability and flexibility with low total cost of ownership.

Solution

Working with IBM, Getronics architected the new hosting environment based on an early set of functional requirements provided by the client. The lack of detail in these requirements made it vital to create a highly flexible and scalable infrastructure capable of supporting the then-unknown final application landscape.

"An important objective for our client was to reduce TCO; our decision to base the new infrastructure on Linux* and Intel processor-based servers kept the cost low and gave us the greatest flexibility," said Rob ter Veer, ICT Consultant & Architect, Getronics Data Centre and Hosting Services. "We felt that SUSE Linux Enterprise Server was the best Linux distribution for a data centre environment, where robustness, support and manageability are key concerns. The service management tools that Novell has built into SUSE Linux Enterprise help to meet the extreme demands we place on our operating systems."

Getronics at a glance:

The largest provider of ICT services in the Netherlands

■ Industry:

ICT services

■ Location:

The Netherlands

■ Products and Services:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ Results:

- Built robust high-availability platform for business-critical SAP applications
- Reduced total cost of ownership for hosting environment
- Created flexible standardised platform for future client environments

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*ICT Consultant & Architect
Getronics Data Centre
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ICT Consultant & Architect
Getronics Data Centre and Hosting Services

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With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server running on industry-standard IBM System x3850 servers, Getronics and IBM were able to provide a robust, high-performance platform for SAP applications at low cost and with the flexibility to adapt to new requirements.

The client specified the use of Oracle Real Application Clusters (RAC) to provide high availability for its customer databases, and Getronics worked closely with technical specialists from Oracle, SAP and Novell to ensure that the combination of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, Oracle RAC and SAP applications would run optimally on the IBM x3850 servers.

“Oracle RAC offered protection for the databases, but we also needed to have high availability for some single-point-of-failure applications,” said ter Veer. “Following in-depth discussions with Novell, we were convinced that the High Availability Storage Infrastructure included with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server would provide the necessary level of protection for our client’s SAP application servers.”

Novell and its partners REALTECH and b1-systems helped Getronics tune the high availability solution, and proved its failover capabilities in the production SAP environment. When the solution detects a failure in one node, it seamlessly recovers all running processes on the remaining node in the cluster.

Results

By selecting SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with its High Availability Storage Infrastructure, Getronics created an efficient and reliable

data centre platform for its client’s SAP applications. As the client ramps up its usage of the new customer information system, the high availability provided by SUSE Linux Enterprise Server will ensure that newly automated business processes run reliably and cost-effectively.

“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with its proven high availability capabilities provides the reliability our client needs to support mission-critical workloads: 24x7 customer Web portals and business process automation,” said ter Veer. “Our client will ultimately handle almost two million customers using this system, and we are confident that the platform will easily scale to meet this demand.”

Getronics now views the combination of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with its high availability capabilities and Oracle RAC running on Intel* processor-based servers as a standard environment for hosting SAP applications with high availability demands. By standardising on these technologies, the company will reduce hardware, software licensing, maintenance and training costs—enabling improved client service and competitive pricing.

“With the high availability capabilities in SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, our client’s SAP applications can recover from a complete server failure within one minute,” said ter Veer.

“The Novell® solution gave us a documented, repeatable, low-cost approach to high availability for SAP applications. The Novell consultants we worked with have exceptional technical abilities and a clear understanding of our demanding requirements.”



For More Information:

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