



Dundee City Council

Dundee City Council uses SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server on both mainframes and x86 hardware for all Linux* environments that require a certified operating system for vendor support. The Novell® solution provides a stable, secure, flexible and cost-effective platform for business-critical applications.

Overview

Dundee City Council provides an extensive set of municipal services to the 145,000 inhabitants of Dundee, the fourth largest city in Scotland. Once known for its heavy industry, Dundee has transformed itself into a UK centre for life sciences and digital media. The city has been named one of the world's top seven intelligent communities for two years running.

Challenge

Dundee City Council aims to provide the best possible services to its citizens within its available budget. Whenever the Council is able to make cost savings through greater administrative efficiency, this frees up money for service delivery and for investment in the future.

The IT function at Dundee City Council plays its part in the overall drive for efficiency by continually reducing the size and complexity of the infrastructure—even while increasing the variety and number of services it offers. Server virtualisation is a key tool, enabling the Council to consolidate multiple physical systems to a smaller number of machines for reduced hardware, software and operational costs. As energy costs continue to rise, the ability of virtualisation to create an infrastructure that uses electricity far more efficiently is another major bonus.

To keep support costs low, the IT function aimed to standardise on a single operating system for virtualised servers across both mainframe and x86 platforms. Critical factors were to ensure high availability and support from major software vendors such as Oracle.

Solution

As early adopters of Linux—in operation at Dundee City Council since 1995—the IT function knew that its combination of stability, security, flexibility and ease of management made it the ideal platform for virtualisation. The organisation had successfully used SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z* on its IBM* mainframes for several years, principally to support Oracle* database applications, and also chose to deploy it for mission-critical systems in its x86 environment.

“We originally chose SUSE Linux Enterprise Server as the best-adapted Linux distribution for the mainframe, and because it matched the release cycles for Oracle more closely than competing distributions,” said Tim Simpson, IT Support Manager, Dundee City Council. “When we looked to introduce a standard Linux distribution for business-critical workloads on x86 machines, it made sense to select SUSE Linux Enterprise Server—as we had built up significant skills and as it was certified for use with all our major applications.”

Dundee City Council at a glance:

Municipal administration for Scotland's fourth largest city

■ Industry:

Government

■ Location:

UK

■ Products and Services:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with built-in Xen virtualisation

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z

■ Results:

- Gained a single certified platform for business-critical applications
- Supported increasing levels of virtualisation for a smaller, more efficient infrastructure
- Provided a stable, secure, cost-effective and flexible platform

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*IT Support Manager
Dundee City Council*



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Dundee City Council now deploys SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for any system that requires a certified operating system for vendor support. Across its two IBM mainframes, the organisation has a total of between 70 and 100 Linux virtual servers—the number fluctuates as requirements change.

The Council recently purchased a new support contract for SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z from ANS Group, a Novell Partner. “ANS Group offered by far the most competitive pricing for SUSE Linux Enterprise for System z, and the service was highly professional,” said Simpson. “We buy support mainly in order to get the latest version of the software; one of the great things about open source is the free support available from the community.”

On the x86 side of the infrastructure, the Council has approximately 100 instances of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, both running natively and as virtual machines using built-in Xen* virtualisation.

Results

With more than 150 SUSE Linux Enterprise Server environments across mainframes and x86 hardware, Dundee City Council has a stable, cost-efficient, flexible and easy-to-support platform for business-critical applications. The organisation has recently

decided to migrate away from a legacy Windows-based e-mail system, and will run the new solution on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

“We trust SUSE Linux Enterprise Server to run a range of important systems for the Council, and the ease of firing up new virtual servers makes it likely that the Linux environment will continue to grow,” said Simpson. “The ability to run Linux on just about every physical platform out there makes it a very powerful tool. In particular, that means that any investment in internal skills can pay dividends in more than one part of the infrastructure.”

By extending its use of server virtualisation, using both Xen for SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and Parallels Virtuoso for Windows*, Dundee City Council is steadily driving down cost and carbon emissions, while improving the quality of IT service delivery.

“Our two mainframes host 100 virtual servers, replacing at least 50 under-utilised x86 machines and all the associated power and cooling requirements,” said Simpson. “As well as giving us a smaller and more efficient infrastructure, this ultimately means that we’re making better use of taxpayer money.”



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