



Casas Bahia

Casas Bahia is the largest retail chain in Brazil, selling electronics, furniture and appliances. With 55,000 employees and more than 500 stores, the company has developed an innovative financing model to service the lower-income segment of Brazil's population.

Challenge

When IBM discontinued support for OS/2, Casas Bahia needed to standardize on a new platform for its enterprise architecture. The company estimated that moving to a proprietary solution would cost more than \$8 million. Instead, Casas Bahia turned to Linux* for an open platform that would provide greater flexibility and scalability.

Casas Bahia has more than 22 million active customers and 80 percent of its monthly sales are from returning customers. Sales employees need real-time access to data to quickly check a new customer's credit history or to manage an existing customer's account. A flexible solution with workstations and point of sale (POS) systems in each store is essential to maintain the company's superior customer service.

Solution

After deciding against a proprietary solution, Casas Bahia experimented with Red Hat* before moving its entire architecture to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server.

"We moved to Novell® because of its strong reputation for support as well as its relationship with IBM," said Frederico Wanderley, CIO of Casas Bahia. "Unlike our experience

with Red Hat, we have local support for SUSE Linux which is extremely important for our dynamic retail business. Novell Brasil is a great partner for us."

Casas Bahia runs SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on two IBM* 2084 zSeries* mainframes with a 60-terabyte storage solution on an IBM 8300. The company has avoided a significant investment in new hardware with the ability to run Linux on its existing Intel-based machines.

"The move to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server was completely transparent—we had no interruption whatsoever," said Wanderley. "We didn't have to do any training for our 55,000 employees which could have been very costly."

Each of Casas Bahia's 510 stores runs completely on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, including 16,000 workstations and 4,000 POS terminals. All stores are linked and executives can monitor performance in real-time and track results from the 14 million clients who enter the stores each month. The company also runs its network, e-mail and Web applications on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

Casas Bahia at a glance:

Largest retailer in Brazil

■ Industry:

Retail

■ Location:

Brazil

■ Solutions:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ Results:

- *Avoided US\$8 million cost of moving to a proprietary platform*
- *Completed a seamless transition to Linux without any employee retraining*
- *Achieved 99.999 percent uptime*
- *Can now set up new stores in two days, rather than two weeks*

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Frederico Wanderley

CIO

Casas Bahia



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Frederico Wanderley
C/O
Casas Bahia

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“Having a secure and reliable platform is essential for our US\$6 billion business,” said Wanderley. “Everything we do is real-time so our managers can make better business decisions. In four years of running Linux, we have never had a problem with security or downtime in any of our stores.”

With fast and reliable systems, 16,000 Casas Bahia salespeople can quickly service each client in a matter of minutes, even including a credit check if they are a new client.

“We have three guiding principles for our technology: productivity, low-cost operations and client satisfaction,” said Wanderley. “Novell has helped us achieve all three—all while we have grown exponentially in the past three years.”

Casas Bahia is currently based in more than 200 cities throughout Brazil. The flexibility of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server allows the IT team to keep pace with rapid growth. The team can now set up a new store with all the necessary technology and communications infrastructure in two days, rather than two weeks.

For the 900 users who need desktop software, Casas Bahia uses the OpenOffice.org productivity suite for a significant reduction in licensing costs. The ability to use open

source software also gives the company flexibility to find and customize solutions for its unique business.

“The main objective of our IT department is to assist our users in a fast, online and efficient way,” said Wanderley. “We can do it all with a Linux platform.”

Results

Moving to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server gives Casas Bahia the kind of reliability and flexibility required by a retail giant. An open platform helped the company avoid the US\$8 million cost of a proprietary solution, as well as any increased hardware, software and training costs which would be significant for a company of its size.

With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, Casa Bahia has 99.999 percent uptime in each of its 510 stores to service its clients quickly and securely. As its business continues to grow, the company can set up new stores nearly 90 percent faster using Linux Remote-Boot.

“Novell people are very dedicated and the solutions are great,” said Wanderley. “If we ever need anything, we get it quickly. We feel that we are true partners with the Novell team.”



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

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