



Etos

To create a stable and cost-effective IT infrastructure, Etos migrated its mission-critical systems from a UNIX* environment to SUSE™ Linux Enterprise Server. The company eliminated downtime and reduced its hardware costs by 80 percent. Overall, Etos has realized an IT cost savings of €650,000.

Overview

Acquired by Ahold in 1974, Etos is the leading health and beauty care retailer in The Netherlands with 432 stores and nearly 5,000 employees. Approximately 50 percent of Etos stores are wholly owned, the rest operating as franchises.

Challenge

Etos has a centralized distribution center at its headquarters to deliver inventory to each of its stores. A stable IT infrastructure is a critical component of efficient distribution because downtime is extremely costly and can cause significant delays.

Etos needed to replace its aging RS/6000 machines that had been running AIX*. The company evaluated a move to Linux* to create a simplified and more cost-effective infrastructure with Intel-based machines.

Solution

After experiencing some problems running Red Hat* with its storage system, Etos evaluated SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server was incredibly easy to install and configure,” said Edwin Idema, manager of Service Desk and Operations at Etos. “Linux also gives us the flexibility to run on low-cost hardware, configure it any way we want and avoid big hardware and software contracts. Running Linux on Intel-based machines has reduced our dependence on proprietary hardware vendors.”

Etos now runs SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on 15 Dell* PowerEdge* machines. The company runs most of its mission-critical applications on SUSE Linux, including its logistics application, Oracle* databases and Apache Web servers. The company is also running its storage and backup appliances on SUSE Linux and is evaluating Novell® Linux Point of Service for its in-store servers.

Etos at a glance:

Leading health and beauty retailer in The Netherlands

■ Industry:

Retail

■ Location:

The Netherlands

■ Solutions:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ Results:

- *Eliminated downtime*
- *Reduced hardware costs by 80 percent and software costs by 20 percent*
- *Reduced overall IT costs by €650,000*

“Novell’s support for Linux made moving to SUSE Linux an easy decision. We do not have to look far for solutions because Novell offers certified software and the right tools to deploy it. We have a vendor we can count on and a great partner.”

Edwin Idema

Manager

Etos Service Desk and Operations



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Edwin Idema

Manager

Etos Service Desk and Operations

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“Users in our retail stores have noticed a significant performance improvement with zero unexpected downtime in the past year,” said Idema. “We can also run our Oracle* systems ten times faster on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server than our previous UNIX system.”

With a more efficient infrastructure, Etos can process transactions significantly faster. End-of-day procedures for each of its stores, including administrative transactions and order processing, used to require four to six hours and ran well into the evening. Etos’ stores can now expedite these processes in just 25 minutes and troubleshoot any issues before the following day.

The IT staff spends considerably less time managing its Linux environment and is no longer dependent on vendors and account managers to manage proprietary hardware and software. Open source technology also opens a host of development options and allows the staff to make changes on their own. Etos is also evaluating Novell Linux Desktop to reduce desktop software costs.

“Now when we need a new solution we have the freedom to compare open source

applications with other packaged solutions,” said Idema. “We like having a transparent infrastructure. As a retailer, we don’t want to invest in a lot of applications that we don’t really need.”

Results

By moving its mission-critical systems from UNIX to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, Etos has achieved greater performance while substantially reducing IT costs. The company has reduced hardware costs by 80 percent and software costs by 20 percent. Overall, the company has realized IT savings of €650,000.

By eliminating downtime and increasing efficiency, the company can run transactions and get inventory to its stores significantly faster. A Linux infrastructure has also reduced administration time and gives the IT staff new opportunities with open source development.

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