



Metropolitan Bank Group

Rapid growth through acquisitions was taxing a small IT staff and a disparate infrastructure was contributing to rising IT costs. Metropolitan Bank Group reduced server costs by 60 percent with Novell® Open Enterprise Server on Linux*, and leveraged Novell ZENworks® to reduce IT travel time by 70 percent.

Overview

Metropolitan Bank Group consists of ten banks with more than 85 branches and over 100 automated teller machines. With nearly \$3 billion in assets, the group is the second largest privately held holding company in Illinois.

Challenge

Metropolitan Bank Group is expanding rapidly through acquisitions, having completed four acquisitions in the past two years. An aggressive business strategy challenges a small IT staff to keep pace with a growing infrastructure. The staff was spending most of its time off-site setting up new offices. The company needed to hire more staff, or put systems in place to better manage its growth.

Cost efficiency was also a concern as the bank watched its hardware and software costs multiply with each new acquisition. A disparate environment was also greatly increasing administrative time and costs. Standardizing its environment would help reduce these costs, as well as simplify the integration of new IT environments.

Solution

Concerned about the escalating administrative costs of Microsoft* Windows*, Metropolitan Bank Group made the move to Linux-based Novell Open Enterprise Server. The bank also selected Novell ZENworks to centrally standardize and manage its desktops.

“Open source is cost effective and just makes sense with backing from Novell,” said Tom Johnson, director of IT for Metropolitan Bank Group. “We liked the idea of having an open enterprise, an infrastructure able to support anything and without boundaries.”

The bank now runs nearly its entire enterprise on Novell Open Enterprise Server. Open Enterprise Server, which runs on SUSE® Linux Enterprise server, provides additional networking tools and productivity services not found in standard Linux distributions.

“We run community banks and it’s critical for our systems to be functional at all times,” said Johnson. “Linux is so stable that we just don’t have to worry about it.”

Metropolitan Bank Group at a glance:

Second largest privately held bank holding company in Illinois

■ Industry:

Financial Services

■ Location:

United States

■ Solutions:

Novell Open Enterprise Server

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

Novell ZENworks

■ Results:

- Reduced server costs by 60 percent
- Reduced IT travel time by 70 percent
- Can set up new branches 66 percent faster
- Saved millions of dollars in overall IT costs

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Our previous Windows environment was a constant concern for us as we always wondered when it was going to go down.”

The bank is currently migrating many of its applications from Windows to Linux for dramatic software cost savings. For example, migrating its IT ticketing system from MS SQL on Microsoft Windows 2000 to MySQL* on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server reduced its software costs from \$18,000 to \$600.

“The cost savings from moving our Windows applications to Linux seems almost ridiculous, but it’s true,” said Johnson. “Open source software is very important to our organization. Using open source with proven support from Novell has taken the fear out of implementing new technologies.”

Novell ZENworks helps a small IT team manage workstations across more than 50 locations. Gone are the days of traveling to manually update individual workstations. With Novell ZENworks, the IT staff can now automatically deliver applications and updates from a central location in days, rather than weeks.

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The bank also uses Novell ZENworks to standardize all its workstations, including giving employees screen savers that are

password protected to comply with federal requirements. The inventory features of ZENworks solve one of the bank’s biggest regulatory issues with the ability to generate inventory reports on any branch in minutes.

The bank also rolled out the OpenOffice.org desktop productivity suite to many of its front-end office personnel, including tellers, branch managers and personal bankers. With its employee growth in the past two years, the bank has saved more than \$100,000 in licensing fees.

Results

With Novell solutions, Metropolitan Bank Group is saving millions of dollars in overall IT costs. Novell Open Enterprise Server and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server have helped reduce server costs by 60 percent and open source technologies are dramatically reducing software costs.

Managing a standardized environment with Novell ZENworks has reduced IT travel time by 70 percent, freeing up IT staff to concentrate on other projects. The bank also relies on ZENworks to keep pace with rapid growth. In the past, the bank needed a three-person IT team to set up a new branch, but can now do it with one.

“Without Novell, there is no way we could keep up with our growing organization and we would have a lot of frustrated executives and end users,” said Johnson. “Novell gives us a stable infrastructure to support our growth, as well as a way to manage it all efficiently.”



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