



Belgian Ministry of Justice

As part of a strategic move towards open standards, The Belgian Ministry of Justice selected Novell® Open Workgroup Suite, deploying SUSE® Linux Enterprise Desktop on 10,000 workstations. The Novell solution provides productivity and collaboration software for both Linux* and Microsoft* Windows* platforms, and the Ministry estimates that it will reduce its software licensing costs by 50 percent.

Overview

The Belgian Ministry of Justice delivers a broad range of services to the Belgian judiciary. It employs around 10,000 people at more than 400 locations across the country, providing services to a total of 22,000 people.

Challenge

The Belgian Ministry of Justice relies on its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) department to manage an estate of more than 16,000 workstations. Like all government entities, the Ministry must demonstrate its ability to use public funds effectively—so there is always pressure to “do more with less” in the ICT sphere.

At the same time, the Ministry is becoming increasingly reliant on computerisation, and the demands on its ICT department are growing. With sensitive legal information stored on its systems, improving security is a key priority. Moreover, as the Ministry is increasingly expected to work with other government departments, a commitment to interoperability is becoming an important element of its ICT strategy.

“We want to ensure that staff can gain the same secure access to our services from any workstation, whether at home or in the office,” said Michel Martin, Director of the Strategy and Methodology Management Directorate. “Our aim is to improve flexibility, security and interoperability without increasing costs or compromising on reliability.”

Solution

The Ministry decided to explore the possibilities of running an open source desktop environment in parallel with existing Microsoft Windows workstations, using OpenOffice.org on both platforms to aid interoperability. It chose OPNS, a Novell Platinum Partner™ and Linux Specialist, to implement and provide training for a solution based on Novell Open Workgroup Suite.

“Rolling out a Linux desktop solution to more than 10,000 desktops is a huge project—it will be one of the largest public sector implementations in Europe when we have finished,” said Martin. “We have worked with OPNS on a number of projects in the past, so we know we can rely on them to manage such a large-scale implementation effectively.”

Belgian Ministry of Justice at a glance:

Government agency responsible for Belgian justice system

■ Industry:

Government

■ Location:

Belgium

■ Solutions:

Novell Open Workgroup Suite

■ Results:

- Reduced licensing costs by 50 percent
- Improved flexibility and interoperability
- Simplified management of multiplatform environment

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Michel Martin

*Director of the Strategy and Methodology Management Directorate
Belgian Ministry of Justice*



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Michel Martin

*Director of the Strategy and Methodology Management Directorate
Belgian Ministry of Justice*

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Novell Open Workgroup Suite provides a comprehensive infrastructure and productivity solution, entirely based on open standards. It includes Novell Open Enterprise Server, giving the Ministry a secure and reliable workgroup services on the SUSE Linux Enterprise Server operating system, while SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop delivers a high-performance, user-friendly working environment for end users.

“Novell has shown that with the right group of products and a robust support mechanism, Linux is now ready for wide-spread desktop deployment,” said Martin. “SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop is a packaged, professional, office-oriented distribution of Linux which provides all the functionality of a proprietary solution at a fraction of the cost.”

A commitment to flexibility and interoperability means that while most of the Ministry’s desktop estate will be migrated to the new Linux environment, support for the Microsoft Windows platform will be maintained. Novell support for multiplatform environments is a key factor in the success of this approach.

“Working with both environments forces us to design all our systems with a view to openness and helps us remain vendor-neutral,” said Michel Martin. “Thanks to Novell’s versatile approach, we can use the same software across our Windows and Linux infrastructures—Novell ZENworks® for software deployment, Novell eDirectory for secure user management, and OpenOffice.org for office productivity.”

Results

The new solution will provide a high level of security for both Windows and Linux desktops, using Novell eDirectory™ and other tools to implement a dual-factor authentication system based on the Belgian electronic identity card. The Ministry can better protect sensitive legal information and simplify identity management, as a single directory will handle user accounts for both Windows and Linux environments.

With open source, platform-independent software like OpenOffice.org running equally well under SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and Windows, the Ministry will be closer to achieving its goals for interoperability and flexible working. Novell AppArmor™—included in Novell Open Workgroup Suite—will help detect security issues by monitoring software behaviour, keeping the Ministry protected against intrusion.

Equally important are the financial implications of the new solution. With an estate of 16,000 desktops, even small increases in licensing costs would have a considerable financial impact. By moving the majority of its machines to the SUSE Linux Enterprise platform, the Ministry will be much closer to achieving independence from price rises imposed by proprietary software vendors.

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

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