



RED HAT VIRTUALIZATION AND TAPASOL ENABLE COST-EFFECTIVE DEPLOYMENT OF SERVUSNET INFORMATICS SOFTWARE

FAST FACTS

Companies	Partner: Tapasol Solution Customer: ServusNet Informatics
Industry	Technology
Geography	Cork, Ireland
Business Challenge	Simplify the deployment of ServusNet Informatics' Red Hat Enterprise Linux-based process management software at remote customer sites using Tapasol's provisioning engine based on Red Hat Enterprise Linux Advanced Platform
Software	Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5 with built-in virtualization, JBoss Application Server, Liferay Portal, Oracle DB
Hardware	Dell x86 servers
Benefits	Increased deployment speed of ServusNet Informatics' Process Driven Operations & Maintenance solution; reduced costs of implementing virtualization technology; continuing enhancement to the productivity of developers working on leading-edge Red Hat Enterprise Linux-based software products



BACKGROUND

ServusNet Informatics is an innovative Irish company delivering Process Driven Operations & Maintenance solutions for the Distributed Generation industry. ServusNet believes that a tipping point has been reached for a broad range of enabling technologies for management solutions. This will allow more sophisticated, targeted, and cost-effective solutions to be delivered to a wide range of customers. ServusNet's flagship product applies a process-driven approach to operations and maintenance, giving companies a way to improve operational efficiency of Renewable Energy and Distributed Generation assets as well as diagnose and identify bottlenecks and inconsistencies in their existing processes.

Tapasol is a Red Hat ISV partner and leading provider of automated software provisioning solutions, for both the Solaris and Linux server markets. Created in 2007, specifically with the goal of helping customers reduce their costs when deploying software solutions on Solaris and Linux servers, Tapasol's innovative provisioning framework enables customers to build and provision servers with software—including operating systems, databases, and other third-party products—from a single media source with minimal operator interaction.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

ServusNet Informatics was founded with the belief that huge productivity gains are possible by guiding Operations & Maintenance tasks with well defined processes and ensuring that those processes are consistently followed by all stakeholders. In late 2008, the company planned to release its first product – a Linux- and J2EE-based process management system – but senior managers became concerned about the complexity of installing the application at remote customer sites.

“We have to balance the technical support team between building servers out and further development of support services,” said Sean Condon, director of product development for ServusNet Informatics.

The company had two basic choices: either send highly technical personnel out to client sites to install the software – a costly proposition – or hope that customers could do it themselves if guided by comprehensive documentation. “Neither solution was optimal,” said Condon.

SOLUTION

Hoping to automate the deployment process, ServusNet Informatics examined the market for available third-party provisioning solutions. “We’re a software development house, and we did not want to invest resources in configuring boxes,” said Condon. “Our talent and skills are best served concentrating on our core business.”

Given that ServusNet Informatics had built its software using JBoss Application Server, Liferay Portal and Oracle DB running on Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5, the Tapasol solution was the perfect match.

Tapasol soon discovered that demand for its Linux-based product was much stronger than for its Solaris one, and “of all the Linux distributions out there, Red Hat Enterprise Linux is by far the most popular,” said Brendan Fidgeon, chief technology officer at Tapasol. “At least 70 percent of our Linux customers use Red Hat Enterprise Linux,” he said.

For ServusNet Informatics, using Red Hat Enterprise Linux was not a choice, but an imperative given technological and market conditions. “Coming from the telecom world, most of our experience and previous work had been on Solaris,” said Condon. “But after thinking about it long and hard, we realized that in our market there was greater recognition of Red Hat Enterprise Linux than other UNIX systems, like Solaris.”

What clinched the Red Hat decision: the fact that it supported so many third-party products. “When we started building our software, we knew we would use three major components: the Liferay Web-based portal; JBoss Enterprise Application Platform, and a mediation framework that we’d brought over from the telecom world,” said Condon.

“Liferay supported Red Hat Enterprise Linux; all the scripts in the mediation framework ran on Red Hat Enterprise Linux; and of course JBoss is a division of Red Hat, and so there was a synergy there that we hope to capitalize on too,” said Condon. “A nice side effect is that Dell Open Manage application, which we use for monitoring the Dell servers that we recommend, is fully supported on Red Hat. We put everything on Red Hat Enterprise Linux, and the decision in retrospect has worked out well,” Condon added.

“Of all the Linux distributions out there, Red Hat Enterprise Linux is by far the most popular, at least 70 percent of our Linux customers use Red Hat Enterprise Linux.”

**Brendan Fidgeon,
Chief Technology Officer
Tapasol Solutions**



Another of ServusNet Informatics' requirements was support for virtualized hosting of their product – and Tapasol was able to support this need. "Since so many of our customers possess virtualized servers, we needed to be able to set up our product on both bare metal and on virtualized systems," said Fidgeon. Because the Tapasol solution leverages the para-virtualization capabilities available with Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5, this was a major selling point for that product from ServusNet Informatics' perspective.

BENEFITS

Both ServusNet Informatics and Tapasol reaped significant benefits from building their products using Red Hat Enterprise Linux.

For ServusNet, the benefits came down to ease of use and cost. "Running our Solaris solution on the SPARC architecture is very complex, and support of Solaris on the Dell x86 systems is sometimes less than 100 percent," said Condon, "Red Hat Enterprise Linux runs flawlessly on these Dell x86 servers, and the support is excellent."

One of the reasons most of its customers had standardized on Red Hat Enterprise Linux was that more hardware and software vendors supported it, and the development environment itself was so rich that they didn't have buy supplemental compilers and other tools to make it work. Plus, "our people found the Red Hat professionals very easy to get along with – it is a very compatible culture to ours," he said.

According to Tapasol, one of the key benefits of Red Hat Enterprise Linux is that it delivers a completely integrated virtualized environment, including features like Live Migration and Resource Management, at no added cost. "Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5 with integrated virtualization capabilities was easy and more cost-effective to implement than the other solutions on the market," said Condon.

ServusNet Informatics, which had itself considered using VMware to host its virtualized solution in its own labs, estimated that it reduced virtualization costs by 75 percent by selecting Red Hat's leading open virtualization solution. "We're talking significant savings for the same or even better functionality and performance," said Condon.

"Red Hat Enterprise Linux with integrated virtualization capabilities was easy and more cost-effective to implement than other solutions on the market."

**Sean Condon,
Director of Product Development
ServusNet Informatics**

By utilizing the Red Hat Enterprise Linux-based Tapasol provisioning engine, ServusNet Informatics no longer needs to worry about sending engineers on site, or about customers' technical capabilities.

"We reduced the effort it took to provision a server by 92 percent," said Condon. "This is a real advantage because we need to get machines up and running very quickly when we sign on a new customer. As the engine underlying both our and Tapasol's solutions, Red Hat Enterprise Linux is making a significant contribution to our ability to offer a competitive product."



RED HAT SALES AND INQUIRIES

NORTH AMERICA

1-888-REDHAT1
www.redhat.com

ASIA PACIFIC

+65 6490 4200
www.apac.redhat.com
sales-ap@redhat.com

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

00800 7334 2835
www.europe.redhat.com
europe@redhat.com

LATIN AMERICA

+54 11 4341 6200
www.latam.redhat.com
info-latam@redhat.com