



Infonet Nederland B.V.

Infonet wanted to upgrade its SAP* business management systems, and initially determined that 12 new physical servers would be required. By migrating from Microsoft* Windows* to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server, Infonet instead needed to buy only three new servers, and significantly reduced its IT operational costs and administrative workload.

Overview

Infonet, a subsidiary of the KPN group, is a global networking service provider offering fully managed, integrated communications infrastructures, including data centre services. Infonet is the Netherlands representative organisation for BT Infonet. Under this distribution relationship, Infonet delivers network services, communication solutions, data centre services and service management.

Challenge

Infonet was running SAP R/3 4.6C applications, SAP Customer Relationship Management, Business Objects* XI 3 and SAP NetWeaver* Enterprise Portal to manage part of its operations. Each SAP landscape was divided into production, test and development environments, requiring a total of 12 physical servers running Microsoft Windows and Oracle* database software.

The end-of-support announcement for SAP R/3 and the extended functionality offered by the new SAP ECC 6.0 applications made a compelling case for Infonet to upgrade. However, the company determined that the new SAP software would require it to replace all 12 existing physical servers, making the upgrade cost prohibitively expensive. Infonet was also concerned that supporting the new SAP applications and infrastructure would stretch its relatively small IT team to the limit.

To minimise the upgrade cost, the Infonet team looked into server virtualisation options on a Linux platform.

Solution

Infonet created a fully virtualised platform for its SAP software using SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and VMware Infrastructure, a combination certified by SAP. Rather than requiring the deployment of a new physical server for each production, test and development landscape, the use of virtualisation technology enabled Infonet to build all three environments for each SAP application within a single server.

Infonet deployed three HP* ProLiant* DL580 servers with Intel* Xeon* quad-core processors to replace all 12 of the existing servers. Each system runs VMware ESX and multiple instances of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server to support the SAP applications. Infonet migrated its business data from Oracle to Max DB, which also runs in its own virtual server on each ProLiant machine. Infonet completed the migration—approximately 2TB of data—within just two months.

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Infonet at a glance:

Integrated communications infrastructure provider

■ Industry:

Network services

■ Location:

The Netherlands

■ Products and Services:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server Priority
Support for SAP Applications

■ Results:

- Cut IT operational costs by 20 percent
- Reduced administration workload by 30 percent
- Consolidated physical server landscape by 75 percent

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Rick Meezen

*Manager, Information Management
Infonet Nederland B.V.*

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Rick Meezen, Manager, Information Management, Infonet Nederland BV. “The migration to Linux* has also reduced our software licensing costs.”

As its SAP applications are a business-critical tool, Infonet needed to ensure reliable operation and rapid-response support. The company selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Server Priority Support for SAP Applications designed to provide enterprise-class support without the cost of maintaining a large, team of in-house experts.

“SAP applications are a critical element in many of our business processes, so down time is simply not an option,” said Meezen. “With the support package from Novell, we have full confidence that our SAP environment will always be up and running.”

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server Priority Support for SAP Applications offers maintenance and support in a single package, integrated through the SAP Solution Manager into the SAP global support backbone for managing the entire life-cycle of SAP applications. It offers a single support entry point, from the operating system through the application, to streamline resolution of support incidents, reduce complexity and lower the total cost of ownership.

Results

By migrating its SAP applications from Microsoft Windows to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server with VMware virtualisation, Infonet was able to shrink its SAP server landscape from 12 machines to just three—avoiding the purchase of nine new servers.

“We estimate that the new virtualised server infrastructure running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server has reduced operational costs at Infonet by around 20 percent,” said Meezen. “The reduction in the number of physical servers has saved floor space, simplified networking and reduced our total power consumption. In combination, these factors have eased the IT department’s server administration workload by around 30 percent.”

Infonet’s selection of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server Priority Support for SAP Applications gives a single point of contact for co-ordinated support services from Novell and SAP. This ensures that—in the unlikely event of downtime—no time is lost to disputes about whether the fault lies in the operating system or the application layer.

“We find the SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and VMware environment easier to use and administer than Windows, and creating new virtual machines to support additional workload is fast and easy,” said Meezen. “The SAP support offering from Novell takes on responsibility for ensuring our solution runs reliably and effectively, leaving us free to focus on other matters.”



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