



SNS Bank enjoys increased availability and lower total cost of ownership with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

SNS Bank

Industry and Location
Banking | The Netherlands

Product(s) and Service(s)
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

Success Story

At-a-Glance

Requiring a stable, flexible and highly secure platform for hosting Java based web applications, SNS Bank selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. The bank now runs more than 25% of its finance infrastructure on the SUSE operating system, which has delivered increased availability and a reduction in total cost of ownership.

Introducing SNS Bank

Overview

SNS Bank, part of the SNS REAAL group of financial services companies, is one of the top five retail banks in the Netherlands. The company employs about 3,300 people and has more than 150 offices. In recent years, SNS Bank has increasingly focused on delivering high quality banking services via the Internet.

Challenge

SNS Bank operates hundreds of servers, both to support internal services and applications and to provide web services to clients. The key challenge is always to provide the highest quality of service possible to internal and external users, within a cost-effective infrastructure. This requires the bank's IT team to balance performance, availability, security and flexibility while achieving a low total cost of ownership.



When the bank was looking for a new platform for its web-based services, flexibility and time to market were important considerations. SNS Bank wanted to ensure that it could quickly deploy new servers based on a standard configuration, either to add capacity to the infrastructure or to launch a new application. Equally important were security and reliability.

Solution

After formally researching several options, SNS Bank selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Server (SLES). Today, 25% of the bank's finance infrastructure runs SLES.

"We use SLES to run the bulk of our web applications for customers, as well as a variety of internal bank applications," says Emiel van Doorn, team leader for Java-Internet Data Center Services, SNS Bank. "The Internet service is a highly visible part of our operations, and critical to our customer relationships, which shows the trust and confidence we have in SLES."

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Emiel Van Doorn

Team Leader for Java-Internet Data Center Services
SNS Bank

“The reliability and stability of SLES makes it a highly valuable platform to run,” says van Doorn. “As the organization adds new servers to cope with increasing business volumes and new applications, SLES is the standard platform used whenever possible.” On this basis, van Doorn estimates that half of the bank’s servers will run SLES in the future.

Using a prebuilt default configuration, the IT team at SNS Bank can install a new instance of SLES in less than 30 minutes. The bank also has several security oriented configuration models based on SUSE AppArmor, which ensure that the appropriate level of security is applied. This fits perfectly with the bank’s “always on” concept and helps ensure that business critical services keep running even if some nodes in the scale-out server infrastructure suffer hardware failures.

Results

The key benefits for SNS Bank of running SLES are its high availability and security. High availability means that Internet services are always accessible for Internet banking cli-

ents, and also that the IT team at SNS Bank can minimize the time spent resolving service outages. Clearly, security is the most crucial element in Internet banking—clients must trust that the service will not expose their personal details or put them at risk of losing money.

“SUSE AppArmor makes it easy to lock down applications and create sophisticated security profiles, and we are fully confident in the security that we offer to our clients,” says van Doorn.

Having worked closely with SUSE Technical Services during the early stages of deploying SLES, the bank now largely uses its own internal resources to keep the operating system running optimally.

“We have seen a clear reduction in licensing and maintenance costs from switching our Java-based web applications to SLES” says van Doorn. “It’s hard to put a figure on the increased efficiency, but it is clear that we are able to manage a large number of Linux servers with a small team and little effort.”

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SNS Bank

Benefits

- Reduced operating costs for web applications
- Enabled rapid deployment of new servers
- Increased security and availability of web servers

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