



99.9%
availability

50%
reduction in time
to patch systems

10%
cost savings

STIA Holzindustrie GmbH

Industry and Location
Manufacturing | Austria

Product and Services
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop

STIA Holzindustrie GmbH offers greater value to its customers and partners

Success Story

At-a-Glance

STIA is growing at around 10% every year. To boost operational efficiency and strengthen its customer value proposition, the company wanted to launch new services – without adding costs. Migrating from Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server (SLES) has enabled STIA to boost the availability and performance of its business-critical applications, while reducing system administration requirements.

Overview

STIA Holzindustrie GmbH specializes in producing wooden flooring and panels, manufacturing a total of 25,000 different products. Headquartered in Austria, the company operates offices throughout the German-speaking region and sells its products in 98 countries worldwide. The firm employs a total of 330 people and generates annual revenues of 55 million euros.

Challenge

STIA is growing at around 10% every year and is constantly searching for ways to boost operational efficiency. A key part of this involves preventing costs from spiraling out of control, which would damage profitability.

STIA wanted to strengthen the value proposition that it offers to its customers



and partners, which include companies such as architecture firms.

Thomas Brottrager, head of IT at STIA Holzindustrie GmbH, says, “We wanted to begin working more closely with partners and customers, so we needed to launch new services to support that collaboration.

“We set out to find a new platform that would enable us to launch new services without adding costs and provide the scalability to support future growth.”

Solution

STIA engaged ITdesign, a SUSE partner, to identify possible solutions and ultimately chose to migrate from RHEL to SLES.

“After testing SLES for six months, we decided to switch and simplify our workflows,” says Brottrager. “ITdesign provided us with outstanding support throughout the evaluation and migration.”

“We found our business application vendors released patches much earlier for SUSE Linux Enterprise Server than for Red Hat Enterprise Linux, so we get faster fixes when problems occur.”

THOMAS BROTTTRAGER

Head of IT
STIA Holzindustrie GmbH

STIA operates a VMware cluster with nine physical nodes, running almost 100 instances of SLES, plus some Windows servers. The company is steadily migrating applications to SLES and is already successfully running various mission-critical systems, such as its ERP system, Informix, PostgreSQL and MySQL database clusters and Oracle Database servers on the new platform. SLES also supports various application servers, portal systems and web servers at STIA, including Apache Tomcat for its Java applications.

Brottrager says, “We found our business application vendors released patches much earlier for SLES than for RHEL, so we get faster fixes when problems occur.”

STIA also deployed SUSE Linux Enterprise (SLE) Desktop as a development platform, streamlining application development and testing workflows. Using SLE Desktop and SLES together helps to avoid bugs when moving from development to production, since they are extremely similar environments.

The container engine from the Docker open source project tool featured in SLE enables users to run multiple applications on one host without a hypervisor — allowing a much more efficient use of resources. This has enabled STIA to decrease the number of virtual machines required for test systems, reducing the associated administrative overhead.



“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server provides a remarkably reliable platform for our business-critical systems. For some applications, we have achieved availability of 99.9%.”

THOMAS BROTTTRAGER

Head of IT
STIA Holzindustrie GmbH

Results

The migration to SLES is already providing significant benefits.

“SLES provides a remarkably reliable platform for our business-critical systems,” says Brottrager. “For some applications, we have achieved availability of 99.9%. We have also seen significant performance improvements for our PostgreSQL database.”

STIA has also been able to accelerate patching processes by capitalizing on the seamless integration of SLES with third-party software repositories, which simplifies system maintenance.

“Most vendors provide software packages for easy installation and updates, but in the past, integrating external package sources was extremely complicated, so we avoided doing it,” says Brottrager. “With SLES, we can update over 70% of the basic components of our applications easily without compiling software ourselves from the source code, so we can maintain higher levels of security with less effort.”



Moving to SLES has also reduced the time and resources required for system management by approximately 20%.

“We find SLES much easier to use and manage than our previous Red Hat environment,” says Brottrager. “The YaST® tool gives us a central point to configure many aspects of the system, helping us save time.”

“Using the container engine from the Docker open source project tool included in SLES has enabled us to reduce the

number of virtual machines we need to manage in our development environment. We estimate that we have cut system administration costs by 10% as a result.”

Overall, migrating to SLES is helping STIA to free up resources, which can then be used for value-add initiatives. The platform also provides the scalability needed to support STIA’s rapidly growing business.

Benefits

- Achieved 99.9% availability for some applications.
- Reduced time to patch systems from around 20 hours to 10 hours per month while helping to improve security.

- Reduced the time and resources required for system management by approximately 20%.
- Cut costs by 10%.

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