



SACO delivers always-on service to customers with zero-downtime

SACO

Industry and Location
Retail | Saudi Arabia

Product and Services
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for
SAP Applications

Success Story

At-a-Glance

Saudi Company for Hardware (SACO) operates 27 retail outlets throughout Saudi Arabia and is looking to expand further. To achieve this, the company needs strong, scalable IT infrastructure to support its business-critical operations, so it migrated its SAP solutions to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server (SLES) for SAP Applications. With the new operating system in place, SACO benefits from a single, easily contactable source of support and zero downtime to date – providing a stable platform for further growth.

Overview

Established in 1985, SACO is a pioneer in the hardware retail and wholesale business, and it is the largest total-solution home improvement superstore in Saudi Arabia. SACO has the buying power to import the best quality merchandise from all over the world, from electrical appliances to furniture, which it sells at affordable prices.

SACO employs 1,500 people and operates 27 retail outlets in 15 cities throughout Saudi Arabia, providing over 45,000 different products. In addition, wholesale offices are supported by professional salespeople offering comprehensive services directly to customers.

Challenge

SACO's IT systems are crucial to the smooth running of its business, from



managing product distribution to processing customer payments. However, as the retailer looked to expand throughout the Middle East, SACO decided it was time to upgrade its IT infrastructure.

Ibrahim Mahmoud, IT director at SACO, says: "Our SAP applications are vital to our company, for everything from finance to HR. If our SAP solutions are down, then our business is down – the stores, the offices, the distribution warehouses.

"We knew we needed a stable, scalable platform for our business-critical SAP applications that we could rely on, both now and in the future as we grow; you can't build a big building without strong pillars and proper infrastructure."

SACO sought the right platform for its IT systems that would provide a stable foundation for future expansion.

“The solution is so stable that we’ve had zero downtime since moving to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications. This enables the entire business to run smoothly. Whenever customers want to visit a store or make a transaction online, they can, because everything’s working well on the backend.”

IBRAHIM MAHMOUD

IT Director
SACO

Solution

Requiring a scalable, high-performance operating system, SACO chose to migrate its SAP applications to SLES for SAP Applications running in a virtualized environment.

“As users of SAP applications, SLES for SAP Applications was our first choice,” says Mahmoud. “We received some good-value propositions from other companies, but there was no doubt in our minds that SUSE was the right option.”

“The key factor for us was the close strategic relationship between SAP and SUSE. SLES for SAP Applications is purpose-built to support SAP solutions in a way that other platforms aren’t. What’s more, SLES has a first-rate reputation as the leading Linux distribution for enterprise organizations running SAP solutions.”

SLES for SAP Applications is performance-optimized and configured to provide the best possible support for SAP applications, and it’s regularly updated as SAP releases new versions of its products. The solution also provides superior performance and reliability.



Mahmoud says: “As an IT director, I am always looking for security and stability, and SLES for SAP Applications more than delivers on these measures. Since the implementation, we’ve had zero downtime.”

“In addition, the SUSE team provides great support. Whenever issues do arise and we need help, they deliver an almost instantaneous response. They also provide training sessions so that our people can scale up their skills and learn more about the operating system — any new function-

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alities, how it can help the business, how it can offer more control and scalability.”

Results

With SLES for SAP Applications supporting its SAP environment, SACO’s IT infrastructure is running smoothly and ready for the company’s strategic expansion plans.

“Thanks to the strong partnership between SUSE and SAP, we have a single, easily contactable source of support so any issues are quickly sorted out,” says Mahmoud. “And thanks to the stability of the platform, we don’t have to spend as much time installing patches or doing upgrades, so we can focus on more value-added tasks.

“Indeed, the solution is so stable that we’ve had zero downtime since moving to SLES for SAP Applications. This enables the entire business to run smoothly. Whenever customers want to visit a store or make a transaction online, they can, because everything’s working well on the backend.”

Furthermore, the stability of the SUSE solution benefits business processes such as auditing and decision-making.



“SACO is a publicly-listed company, so we need to have reliable auditing processes,” says Mahmoud. “If required, I can prove that our IT systems haven’t suffered from any instability or downtime that could affect reports. Reliable reporting processes also help the management team to make the best decisions.

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Benefits

- Zero downtime since the solution was implemented.
- Staff can focus on value-added tasks instead of patches and upgrades.
- Provides a stable foundation for reliable processes and future business expansion.

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