



RED HAT DELIVERS RELIABILITY, PERFORMANCE AND COST SAVINGS FOR EUROPCAR

FAST FACTS

Industry	Transport
Geography	Australia
Business Challenge	To support Europcar's business objectives by delivering a robust technology platform to improve productivity and reduce costs
Migration Path	Intel-based variant of Unix to Red Hat Enterprise Linux
Software	Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5 Desktop, customised TelNet booking application
Hardware	2 x HP BL45P blades
Benefits	Experienced decreased TCO and increased ROI, reliability, stability, performance, flexibility, scalability, and ease of management

BACKGROUND

As one of the world's leading car rental companies, Europcar has a network of over 2,600 branches across 118 countries, including 110 offices around Australia. It operates a large fleet of quality vehicles and continues to grow as new locations and regional franchises open regularly.

The company relies heavily on its technology infrastructure to power its car-rental reservation system. Its IT department is divided into three teams, including Help Desk, Infrastructure, and Business Systems. Together, these teams provide internal 24/7 support for Europcar's server platforms and applications and allows for the expanding functionality of its systems. Europcar is committed to establishing technology systems that deliver high levels of customer service delivered through cost-effective solutions.

CHALLENGE

Europcar faced the challenge of discovering a reliable, productive, and efficient new platform for its central booking and reservation system. With the pressures to grow and improve system functionality and efficiency across

geographically diverse locations, the company was additionally facing the challenge of keeping costs low by managing the licensing costs associated with its hardware.

"We had been running an Intel-based variant of Unix to support our central booking and reservation system, but it was experiencing extensive performance and reliability issues. Because the reservation system is our core application and the stability of that platform is paramount, we decided to look for a new technology platform that could offer a robust solution that could improve productivity and reduce costs for our servers," said Scott Allen, CIO at Europcar Asia Pacific.

SOLUTION

To improve the stability, performance, and cost-effectiveness of its technology infrastructure, Europcar turned to open source solutions. "Europcar's policy is to always consider open source when investing in new technology because it means we can minimise costs and do more with the budgets that we're allocated every year," said Allen.



After evaluating a number of open source solutions and after the completion of successful trials with Red Hat solutions, Europcar selected Red Hat Enterprise Linux to run on its two HP BL45P blade servers, one of which is responsible for its mission-critical reservation system. Red Hat worked at local Europcar offices to trial the deployment and management processes associated with the Red Hat Enterprise Linux platform and remotely worked through the process of building scripts and conducting updates.

Europcar's decision to deploy Red Hat Enterprise Linux for its mission-critical systems focused heavily on the reliable support associated with the solution. Europcar conducts some support for its solutions in-house, but additionally relies on the valuable expertise and experience of Red Hat support services.

"Red Hat was able to turn an open source product into an industrial-strength solution that was completely enterprise-ready," said Allen. "We wanted to have the reliability of this support for our critical reservation system and for our internal desktops that enable our daily business."

"Europcar customers know that the car they reserve is the car they will get because they interface directly with our core reservations system. With the performance and reliability of Red Hat Enterprise Linux, we're given the security and reliability that keeps our customers happy."

BENEFITS

Since migrating to Red Hat solutions, Europcar has benefited from flexibility, cost savings, increased ROI, and scalability in both its server environment and its internal desktop deployment.

"When we headed down the open source path, we didn't want to sacrifice anything, especially the end-user experience. Our aim was to offer the same experience, but at a lower cost," said Allen. "With Red Hat solutions, we're now operating an environment that affords a greater degree of flexibility in terms of what we can deliver to end users and customers, and we've successfully lowered our total cost of ownership."

A key strength of Europcar's system has always been that when customers make a booking over the Internet, via its call centre or in a branch, they receive real time availability. "Customers know that the car they reserve is the car they will get because they interface directly with our core reservations system. With the performance and reliability of Red Hat Enterprise Linux, we're given the security and reliability that keeps our customers happy."

For the future, Europcar faces significant growth opportunities that involve geographical expansion and plans to grow its franchise network. Already, countries including India and Thailand are being serviced through Europcar's central booking application running on Red Hat Enterprise Linux. With the company's growth will come expanded use of Red Hat solutions.

"During the evaluation process we had to ensure our Red Hat platform could grow with the business. The work we've done to date has proven Red Hat has the scalability to support our future plans for growth," said Allen.

For further information about Europcar's use of Red Hat Enterprise Linux Desktop, please see the customer reference "Red Hat Drives Desktop Cost Savings for Europcar"