Delivering Agile Software Development Tools with a Virtual Appliance

Black Diamond Software, experts at creating virtualized architectures, has seized upon an opportunity with software appliances. As a partner in the SUSE® Appliance Program, Black Diamond is able to provide prepackaged software development tools—speeding time-to-market and bringing added value to their clients.

Overview
Black Diamond Software has 20 years of success in developing software solutions for their clients. As an IBM® Premier Business Partner, and a recognized leader in software development best practices, their goal is to provide the highest quality software development solutions that meet customers’ business needs at the best possible price.

Challenge
Recognizing the opportunity to offer its tools in a virtual format, Black Diamond set out to find the best operating system and tools to create an appliance version of its Presto® software development product. “We wanted a rock solid operating system that was well supported,” said Richard Duncan, president and CTO of Black Diamond Software. “If we used free Linux® there would be a lot of effort required to build the base virtual machine.”

After evaluating numerous Linux® vendors, the firm found the SUSE Appliance Program from Novell to be an ideal choice. “Novell was a perfect match,” said Duncan. “SUSE Linux is an enterprise-class Linux, and one of only two that’s supported by IBM. Moreover, no one offers what Novell does through its SUSE Appliance Program. It allows us to try different configurations and ‘what if’ analysis so we can incorporate the best features to suit our clients’ needs. The operating system can be tailored down to exactly what you want.”

Black Diamond was especially impressed with the automated capabilities of SUSE Studio™. “Manual development processes can be time-consuming,” said Duncan. “You might realize two to three days into the development process that you’ve missed something and have to go back and start all over again. When our developers saw how SUSE Studio could automate this process and minimize time spent, they were very excited.”

Solution
Black Diamond is participating in the SUSE Appliance Program, using SUSE Studio, to create appliances that combine its Presto application with SUSE Linux Enterprise.

Novell Business Partners:
- Name of Company: Black Diamond Software
- Industry: Software development
- Location: United States
- Products and Services:
  - SUSE Appliance Program
  - SUSE Studio
  - SUSE Linux Enterprise
- Results:
  - Saved two weeks on appliance build time
  - Accelerated time-to-market of a new product
  - Gained new market opportunities
  - Significantly reduced file size
  - Delivered instant productivity

“Being a member of the SUSE Appliance Program opened up new market opportunities for us. If we tried to do this with a different Linux platform, we would have to start from scratch. The SUSE-powered Presto Appliance has been transformative for our clients. They love having these incredible agile management tools.”

Richard Duncan
President and CTO
Black Diamond Software
“I can’t say enough about the benefits of SUSE Studio. It has transformed the way we think about product development. What used to be an arduous process now takes just a few minutes. With SUSE Studio, we can build appliances in a near automated fashion—and, make product decisions (such as the size of the virtual hard drives to include and modify) on the fly.”

Richard Duncan
President and CTO
Black Diamond Software

into one integrated package. This streamlined build process is accelerating product development.

Using SUSE Linux Enterprise Just enough Operating System (JeOS), Black Diamond created a much improved and simplified product. “By using only the portions of Linux we need, we have a smaller product footprint that’s more efficient, portable and easier to manage,” said Duncan.

As a SUSE Appliance Program partner, Black Diamond capitalizes on Novell® go-to-market resources to promote the Presto appliance. “Novell marketing initiatives give us a fantastic benefit,” said Duncan. “We have an opportunity to educate the market about this excellent environment through compelling white papers and e-kits.”

Results
SUSE Studio has enabled Black Diamond to speed up its R&D processes and delve into lucrative new markets. Duncan says, “On average, we’re saving two weeks’ worth of an engineer’s time putting the appliance together. Using SUSE Studio, our clients benefit from a single appliance with self-contained functionality. It’s like having to put together sound system components versus receiving a pre-loaded iPod.”

The footprint of the Presto appliance is now half a gigabyte smaller, which helps speed the sales cycle. “We can demonstrate Presto right on a typical developer’s notebook. Within an hour they’re up and running and realizing the product value,” says Duncan.

The speed and agility of its development cycle frees Black Diamond to bring additional offerings to its clients. “Being a member of the SUSE Appliance Program opened up new market opportunities for us,” said Duncan. “By leveraging SUSE Studio, we also have an easy way to extend our offerings into the cloud. If we tried to do this with a different Linux platform, we would have to start from scratch.”

Moreover, SUSE Linux Enterprise simplifies the upgrade process. “Moving to SUSE Linux Enterprise 11 would have been a tumultuous upgrade process if it weren’t for SUSE Studio. But thanks to this technology, we can just recreate the existing image as another appliance.” Black Diamond’s clients have been thrilled with the Presto appliance. “The SUSE-powered Presto Appliance has been transformative for our clients,” said Duncan. “They love having these incredible agile management tools.”

To find out more about the Presto Appliance from Black Diamond, visit: www.blackdiamond.com/Solutions.aspx

For More Information
To read more about the SUSE Appliance Program, visit: www.novell.com/appliance

Contact your local Novell Solutions Provider, or call Novell at:
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