



## Success Story

Enterprise Linux Servers

# Evonik Industries

To boost reliability and performance for its business-critical systems, Evonik decided to move its SAP applications from IBM AIX to SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server. In just 12 months, the company successfully migrated 150 SAP application servers to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server running on x86 processor-based servers. Evonik was able to dramatically improve performance and recognize significant savings on hardware and licensing costs, while benefiting from integrated support for the operating system and applications.



### Overview

Evonik Industries is one of the world's leading specialty chemicals companies, and operates in more than 100 countries worldwide. More than 34,000 employees generated 2010 sales of €13.3 billion.

### Challenge

Like many global companies, Evonik relies on SAP applications to support business-critical processes such as financial management, procurement, production planning, customer relationship management and business intelligence. For several years, the company ran these SAP applications on a UNIX infrastructure—IBM AIX running on IBM POWER servers.

"At that time, although we had some experience with Linux, it was a niche operating system in our landscape," said Markus

**"If there's a problem in the SAP environment, we don't have to worry about whether it's the application or the operating system. We can just contact SAP and they will work with SUSE to solve it. Combined with the general reliability of the platform, this gives us a lot of peace of mind."**

MARKUS SPERZEL

Team Manager, Systems Management Department  
Evonik

Sperzel, team manager at Evonik. "However, when we had performance issues with a third-party business intelligence application on AIX, the vendor recommended moving it to Linux and we noticed a significant improvement in performance. This made us start thinking about whether Linux could be a viable option for our entire SAP environment."

Evonik recognized that Linux could potentially improve the reliability and performance of its business-critical applications, while significantly reducing costs. The team decided to perform a thorough evaluation of SAP on Linux.

### Solution

The first step was to select a Linux distribution, and Evonik chose SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.

"SUSE was originally a German company, and it is the most popular Linux distribution among German businesses, so many members of our IT team were already familiar with it," said Sperzel. "SUSE Linux Enterprise Server is also SAP's preferred distribution, and SUSE and SAP collaborate closely to support each others' products, so we were confident that it would be the right distribution for our environment."

The project started by testing the performance of SAP NetWeaver Business Warehouse applications on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and HP BladeSystem



### Evonik at a glance:

One of the world's leading specialty chemicals companies

#### ■ Industry and Location

Chemicals, Germany

#### ■ Products and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server  
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server Priority Support for SAP Applications

#### ■ Results

- + Boosted performance: some SAP applications run four to five times faster on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
- + Reduced hardware costs by moving from proprietary systems to x86 platforms
- + Received seamless technical support for both SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and SAP through a single point of access

# “Our SAP NetWeaver Business Warehouse applications run several times faster on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server than they did on our previous UNIX platform. In some cases, we have seen performance improve by a factor of four to five.”

**MARKUS SPERZEL**

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Evonik*

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servers. When this showed a substantial improvement in performance, the company decided to test the SAP ERP applications as well.

“The SAP ERP applications are really at the heart of our business, so this was the critical test for Linux,” said Sperzel. “We knew that if we could provide similar levels of performance in the ERP system, it would make a very solid case for moving our whole SAP environment onto SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. We did a thorough benchmarking exercise, and the results were very satisfactory.”

The business case for the migration was approved by management, and the IT team began the project. In total, approximately 150 SAP application servers were ported from AIX to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, including more than 50 key production systems. The transition to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server took only twelve months to complete.

“As a next step, we are looking to migrate the Oracle database servers that support the SAP environment,” said Sperzel. “We already use SUSE Linux Enterprise Server as the platform for our non-SAP Oracle databases, and the performance is good. So we expect to see the same results when our entire SAP landscape is running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.”

## Results

The migration to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server coincided with a major corporate cost-reduction initiative at Evonik, and made a significant contribution to the IT department’s ability to meet its cost objectives.

“The project wasn’t originally motivated by cost reduction, but SUSE Linux Enterprise Server is certainly much more cost-effective as a platform for SAP,” said Sperzel. “We are certainly saving on software licensing, but a much more significant factor is the lower hardware cost. With our old platform, we needed to buy expensive proprietary server technology, but now we can utilize relatively low-cost x86 processor-based hardware.”

From a user perspective, the new platform offers significantly improved performance, particularly for analytics and reporting processes within the SAP NetWeaver Business Warehouse system.

“In general, our SAP NetWeaver Business Warehouse applications run several times faster on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server than they did on our previous UNIX platform,” said Sperzel. “In some cases, we have seen performance improve by a factor of four to five. This means that business users can run the analyses they need and get insight into business data much more easily than before.”

By using SUSE Linux Enterprise Server Priority Support for SAP Applications, Evonik has also been able to streamline support for its SAP environment. Evonik’s IT team now has a single point of access for both SAP and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server technical support.

“If there’s a problem in the SAP environment, we don’t have to worry about whether it’s the application or the operating system. We can just contact SAP and they will work with SUSE to solve it,” said Sperzel. “Combined with the general reliability of the platform, this gives us a lot of peace of mind.”



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1 800 796 3700 U.S./Canada  
1 801 861 4500 Worldwide

SUSE  
Maxfeldstrasse 5  
90409 Nuremberg  
Germany