



Gaining a Fast and Stable Development Platform

With a number of clients keen to move their Allone trading systems to the most stable and reliable platform possible, the company wanted to port its applications to run on IBM System z—but had no in-house experience of the platform. By working with SUSE and IBM to adopt SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server for System z, Allone was able to rapidly port its existing software to Linux on the mainframe, giving clients exactly what they need.



Overview

Allone IT Co., Ltd. is a Taiwan-based subsidiary of Shanghai Allone Network Technology Co., Ltd. The parent company has provided IT services and software development to large banks and brokers since 2003. Allone employs 25 people in the creation and customization of financial services software, including systems for foreign currency trading, financial analysis, derivatives management and gold trading.

Challenge

Many of Allone's clients and prospects are major financial institutions. For these companies, just a few seconds of downtime at a critical point in the transaction cycle could mean millions of dollars in lost revenues. Even being a few tenths of a second

late to a trade on the financial markets could mean the difference between success and failure.

For clients and prospects already using IBM mainframes for other parts of their business, there is significant appeal in consolidating trading systems to the same platform. This would avoid any need to invest in additional hardware platforms, and would also allow the trading systems to benefit from the unrivalled reliability, availability and scalability of the mainframe.

However, with no prior experience of developing for the primary mainframe operating system—IBM z/OS—Allone was potentially facing a long and costly training process to get its developers up to speed. Equally, the company did not want to have to purchase its own IBM mainframe purely for development and test environments.

“Getting started with Linux on the mainframe was a very smooth process, backed by plenty of support from IBM and SUSE.”

MARCO MAK

Regional Director
Allone IT Co., Ltd.

Solution

Allone chose to adopt SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z as a new platform for its software offerings, working with both IBM and SUSE to gain the necessary experience to successfully port its applications to the mainframe. IBM gave Allone access to IBM System z hardware



SUSE Business Partner Allone at a Glance:

■ Industry and Location

IT services and solutions, Taiwan

■ Products and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z

■ Results

- + Gained powerful new platform for software deployment
- + Expanded product range, giving clients more options
- + Enabled clients to improve the reliability and scalability of their trading systems

“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z is optimized to take full advantage of the IBM mainframe platform, enabling users of our trading applications to achieve high availability and throughput at low cost.”

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*Regional Director
Allone IT Co., Ltd.*

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for testing purposes and to enable it to advise clients on the sizing requirements for its software offerings. Both SUSE and IBM provided formal training and ad-hoc support throughout the process of porting the applications, enabling rapid up-take of the new technologies by Allone's team of developers.

“We had very limited practical experience with the mainframe platform, and we weren't at all familiar with the IBM z/OS mainframe operating system,” said Marco Mak, Regional Director, Allone IT Co., Ltd. “Acquiring the skills to develop software in z/OS would have taken a considerable amount of time and effort. By choosing SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z, we were able to take advantage of the mainframe while using an operating system that we are relatively familiar with. SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z is part of the SUSE Linux Enterprise Common Code Base, which guarantees that the operating system is consistent across all products and architectures, as is the look and feel. This helps us to leverage the existing skills of our staff. In addition, publishing our software for Linux on the mainframe makes it a highly cost-effective option for our clients.”

Allone writes its trading applications in Java, which is a highly portable technology that will run on any certified Java Virtual Machine. This helped minimize the time required to port the applications to Linux on the mainframe, and enabled Allone to focus on optimizing its software to take full advantage of the IBM System z hardware.

“Getting started with Linux on the mainframe was a very smooth process, backed

by plenty of support from IBM and SUSE,” said Mak. “Both companies helped our developers get up to speed quickly, and helped solve various challenges in porting our software.”

Results

For Allone, the ability to offer trading systems running on the mainframe platform is a significant competitive advantage, given that many financial services companies are looking at consolidating more workload to the mainframe.

“Without the support from IBM and SUSE, it would not have been possible for us to service this set of clients,” said Mak. “With our trading applications running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z, we can offer our clients an extremely stable platform that is also highly scalable. Where a client already has a mainframe server, it is typically both easy and cost-effective to set up a Linux partition capable of running our trading systems.”

The long relationship between SUSE and IBM was a significant factor in Allone's choice of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. “There is a long history of companies using SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on the IBM System z mainframe, and it is clear that IBM and SUSE work closely together to ensure an optimal fit between the two products,” said Mak. “We saw that relationship as a way of reducing our risk and ensuring a smooth transition to the new platform, both for us and for our clients. SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z is optimized to take full advantage of the IBM mainframe platform, enabling users of our trading applications to achieve high availability and throughput at low cost.”



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