



Success Story

Server

ICU IT Services

ICU IT Services is constantly looking for ways to help its customers get more out of their IT infrastructure. This commitment to innovation led ICU IT Services to launch new services for customers on SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server on the IBM LinuxONE Rockhopper system—the first LinuxONE environment to ever go live in the Benelux. The environment will allow customers to explore the many possibilities of enterprise-grade Linux and LinuxONE.



Challenge

ICU IT Services operates in a competitive industry, where failing to innovate can result in losing hard-won market share. As a result, the company is always looking for ways to serve customers better.

Johan Schelling, Managing Partner at ICU IT Services, elaborated, “Historically, we have focused on delivering solutions and services around the mainframe environment. However, the world is changing fast—many of our customers are facing increasing cost pressures, which has left them reluctant to make large investments in IT systems. Our aim is to help them strike the right balance between strong performance, reliability, security, and cost control.”

With more organizations turning to open-source technologies as a way to reduce

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JOHAN SCHELLING

Managing Partner
ICU IT Services

expenses, ICU IT Services looked to introduce Linux-based solutions alongside its existing z/OS offerings.

Schelling continued, “Linux allows us to enrich our services with flexible, cost-effective open-source technologies. To convince customers that their data and applications would be safe in our hands, it was critical for us to find an enterprise-grade Linux infrastructure that could support 24/7 availability, easy scalability, powerful performance and strong security.”

Solution

ICU IT Services had already made its move into the Linux world when IBM approached the company with a new portfolio of systems, solutions and services called IBM LinuxONE.

“At ICU IT Services, we aim to give customers the total package, bringing together hardware, software and services to build the best solution for their needs,” said Schelling. “LinuxONE perfectly matches this philosophy. It offers a host of capabilities all pre-integrated within a single, scalable platform.”

ICU IT Services selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Server as its operating system for LinuxONE, with virtualization capabilities delivered by KVM and z/VM hypervisors.



CHALLENGING IT

ICU IT Services at a Glance:

Founded in 1999, ICU IT Services specializes in the design and implementation of large enterprise IT infrastructures, helping customers make smarter use of technology.

■ Industry and Location

Computer Services, Netherlands

■ Products and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for System z
IBM LinuxONE Rockhopper

■ Results

- + Sets ICU IT Services apart as the first company in the Benelux to go live with LinuxONE
- + Cuts complexity, management effort and software costs with the ability to support hundreds of virtual Linux servers on a single system
- + Will help ICU IT Services broaden its service portfolio to grow market share and revenues

“We can support between 100 and 200 virtual instances of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server across two LinuxONE CPUs...we would need around 40 to 50 physical x86 servers for the same workload. This delivers savings on space, energy and software costs and management effort.”

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Schelling explained: “When it came to picking a Linux distribution, we had two requirements: it needed to be fully supported and able to run with KVM virtualization as this is very important for our customers. SUSE Linux Enterprise Server was the only operating system that met these needs, making it the natural choice.”

ICU IT Services went live with SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on IBM LinuxONE Rockhopper in early 2016, breaking ground as the first organization in the Benelux to do so.

Initially, the company plans to use the LinuxONE platform as a training and development environment for internal teams, as well as a showcase environment for customers. Ultimately, the aim is to use LinuxONE as the basis for a new range of solution and service offerings.

“With LinuxONE we can spin up new environments quickly, making it ideal for testing and demonstration,” said Schelling. “Our teams will be able to explore new ways of working, and we will be able to run proof-of-concept scenarios to show customers how their applications will run in the LinuxONE environment. We are already in talks with several customers about moving some of their applications to LinuxONE.”

Results

As the IBM LinuxONE Rockhopper system is capable of supporting hundreds of virtual Linux servers on a single footprint, ICU IT Services and its customers benefit from lower complexity, management effort and software costs.

Schelling noted, “We can easily support between 100 and 200 virtual instances of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server across just two LinuxONE CPUs. When you consider that we would need around 40 to 50 physical x86 servers to support the same workload, it adds up to huge savings on data center space, energy, cooling and software costs and management effort.”

With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on the IBM LinuxONE system, ICU IT Services will be able to provide customers with an efficient and secure platform for supporting business-critical workloads.

“With SUSE and IBM LinuxONE, we can deliver modern solutions for DevOps, Cloud, Data management and Security using state-of-the-art technology,” said Schelling. “The LinuxONE platform, combined with SUSE software, enables us to offer solutions with unparalleled speed for large, data-oriented workloads and the highest possible availability requirements. ICU is already working on benchmarks to support these claims.

“At ICU we see a move to more centrally managed systems in the coming years. Not only will this lower total cost of ownership of the IT infrastructure, it will also reduce the environmental footprint.”

Schelling concluded: “With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on IBM LinuxONE, we can bring together the very best in enterprise and open source technologies to help our customers run better businesses.”



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