



Success Story

Enterprise Linux

Istanbul Technical University

Istanbul Technical University (ITU) has worked closely with SUSE for many years, including running training courses in the use of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. When ITU's server infrastructure became too costly to manage with its existing Linux setup, the university decided to implement SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for its own environment. The university deepened its partnership with SUSE, gaining a more open and cost-effective platform for IT operations, and reducing the administrative burden.



Overview

Founded in 1773, Istanbul Technical University (ITU) is one of the oldest universities in Turkey. It trains more than 40,000 students in a wide range of science, technology and engineering disciplines. In addition to maintaining the university's internal IT systems, ITU's IT department teaches students to develop and operate a variety of network and infrastructure technologies.

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HAKAN VELIOĞLU

System Administrator
Istanbul Technical University

Challenge

Universities increasingly depend on their IT departments, with thousands of students relying on educational and administrative services powered by information technology. As well as training students for careers in technology, ITU's Office of Information and Technologies supports the university's diverse IT across 80 physical servers and more than 100 virtual ones—running everything from admissions data to library administration to faculty payroll.

However, complex pricing plans for its existing environment led ITU to seek a new operating system provider.

"We were running Red Hat Enterprise Linux, which relied on fairly expensive hardware and restricted the number of virtual servers that we were permitted to run," said Hakan Velioglu, System Administrator at ITU.



Istanbul Technical University at a Glance:

Founded in 1773, Istanbul Technical University (ITU) is the third-oldest engineering sciences university in the world. It teaches more than 40,000 students and employs 3,000 people.

■ Industry and Location

Education, Istanbul, Turkey

■ Product and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server
SUSE Manager

■ Results

- + Facilitates world-class IT education
- + Reduces administration costs
- + Eliminates potential for vendor lock-in

“SUSE Manager gives us the power to centrally administer hundreds of servers at once, which helps keep overall administration workload manageable.”

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System Administrator
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“On top of that, we found Red Hat’s pricing regime very convoluted, which made it difficult to track how much the solution was really costing us. We wanted to find a way to manage and reduce our costs while continuing to support first-class education at ITU with strong, reliable IT systems.”

Solution

For some years, ITU has partnered with SUSE to run a SUSE Linux Enterprise Server technical course for its students. Familiar with SUSE’s helpful local team and its flexible, easy-to-manage solutions, it was natural for ITU to turn to the company as its new enterprise Linux provider. Hakan Velioğlu said: “We began reviewing the costs and virtualisation capabilities of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, and determined that the SUSE technology would provide superior flexibility and value for money compared to our previous Red Hat solution. In addition, we knew from our educational partnership that we could rely on SUSE as a company.”

ITU migrated its entire server environment to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server. The SUSE team offered support during the transition, but ITU was able to handle the migration smoothly on its own.

Hakan Velioğlu said: “Although some of the configurations are different to our previous solution, it was very easy to install SUSE Linux Enterprise Server both on bare-metal servers and as virtual machines, and to migrate all the relevant data.”

ITU also deployed SUSE Manager, a single-pane-of-glass management solution for its enterprise Linux environment, covering both physical and virtualised servers. The university had originally used the application as a teaching aid, but found it was far superior to its previous solution for managing its own server network. ITU was especially impressed with SUSE Manager’s intuitive interface.

“We liked the GUI for SUSE Manager so much, we now use it to manage our entire server infrastructure,” said Hakan Velioğlu. “SUSE Manager gives us the power to centrally administer hundreds of servers at once, which helps keep overall administration workload manageable.”

Results

Following its migration to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, ITU enjoys all the flexibility and cost-effectiveness of SUSE’s open technology, as well as benefitting from its ongoing educational partnership.

ITU can now run its growing virtual server landscape efficiently and without concerns about spiralling costs. The SUSE solution’s lack of restrictions on the number of virtualised servers means the university can more easily expand its software-defined network. Additionally, SUSE offers a simple pricing structure that enables ITU to gain clearer understanding of its operational costs, and identify areas for further savings and efficiency.

“With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, everything has become more open, more cost-effective, and easier to manage,” said Hakan Velioğlu. “Operating costs are no longer artificially inflated by rigid hardware requirements and restrictions, and SUSE’s clear pricing plans mean we can easily track how much we are paying for the solution. Having spent all these years teaching students how to manage SUSE environments, we now practice what we preach, and the university runs more efficiently for it.”

He added: “We are thrilled with the new SUSE solution, and our partnership with SUSE is stronger than ever before. We are now in an even better position to teach our students about the long-term benefits of SUSE technology.”