PCMS Group plc

To deliver reliable, cost-effective and highly available point-of-sale (POS) solutions, PCMS has chosen SUSE® Linux Enterprise Point of Service as its strategic platform. Offering a comprehensive range of functionalities straight out of the box, SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service delivers dependable reliability and constant availability for even the largest retail environments.

Overview

Founded in 1982, PCMS has headquarters in Coventry, UK and also operates in the US, employing more than 500 people across the world. PCMS' retail-focused Vision product portfolio offers a comprehensive set of software applications covering POS, mobile devices, back office, and centralized systems.

Challenge

One of the key solutions in the PCMS portfolio is its VISION BeanStore (VBS) point-of-sale (POS) software. To help its customers realize the full benefit of VBS software, PCMS targets a highly secure, robust and available server platform for every POS landscape.

Tony Espley, Technical Consultant, Data Center, Managed Services at PCMS Group plc said, "In the retail industry, delivering streamlined, high-quality checkout services

"The retail industry is evolving rapidly, and our SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service platform ensures that we can react with agility to meet our clients' requirements."

TONY ESPLEY
Technical Consultant,
Data Center, Managed Services
PCMS Group plc

is a key priority, and our VBS solutions are designed with the customer experience in mind.

"One crucial but often overlooked element of POS solutions is the server platform for the stack. Selecting the optimal platform is vital, as it will ultimately determine the manageability, stability and overall performance of the POS solution—and the experience of customers who interact with it on their retail journey."

Arcadia Group—the largest privately owned fashion retailer in the UK—engaged PCMS to deploy a fresh POS solution across its entire retail landscape. PCMS realized that the demands on the underlying server platform would be unusually high.

Andrew Clarke, Group IT Director at Arcadia Group said: "We operate numerous brands and a footprint of hundreds of stores across the United Kingdom alone. In addition to implementing an aggressive strategy for international expansion, we are also in the process of consolidating our store landscape.

"When we began scoping the VBS implementation project, we realized that fast and effective change management in the POS arena would be essential. If we decided to consolidate two brands in a single store, or to open a variety of new stores overseas, we needed to rapidly configure the POS solution to support additional product

PCMS Group plc at a Glance:

PCMS specializes in retail services, including point of sale (POS) software, contact center and IT support services. It is a pioneer in developing mobile retail solutions, including customer shopping applications and mobile POS.

■ **Industry and Location**
   Computer Services, Coventry, United Kingdom

■ **Product and Services**
   SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service
   SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ **Results**
+ *Enables constant availability for point-of-sale (POS) systems*
+ *Drives cost-efficiencies with automated management of the POS landscape*
+ *Reduces manual effort with preconfigured, prepackaged software libraries*

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catalogs, and to build new POS systems with support for different time-zones."

Solution

After identifying the requirements for the new VBS solution covering more than 4,200 POS systems worldwide, PCMS determined that a SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service would offer the optimal balance of reliability, availability and manageability to meet its client's needs. In particular, choosing the SUSE solution avoided the need for an on-site engineer to install and configure each software component individually, and to visit the site in person in the event of a software issue.

"The great advantage of SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service is that it offers extremely powerful scripting tools to automate the process of building and managing the POS landscape," said Tony Espley.

"Rather than building each POS system in a store individually, we simply use a bootable SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service image on a USB stick to build one 'master' POS system. Using utilities such as YaST®, LDAP and PXE, the master POS system then builds all of the other POS systems in the store with minimal human intervention."

Andrew Clarke said: "SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service is extremely lean in terms of processor utilization. This enabled us to obtain an even better performance than with our previous environment but with a reduced capital investment in hardware resources."

Results

Thanks to its SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service server platform, PCMS can support the needs of its largest retail clients.

"Today, automation from our SUSE platform enables us to manage Arcadia Group's extensive landscape of POS solutions with minimal manual effort," said Tony Espley. "Using our remote tools and scripts, we can perform the vast majority of maintenance and management tasks without the need for an on-site engineer visit—helping us to deliver constant availability for the VBS solution.

"For example, when we roll out quarterly updates for the VBS system, built-in monitoring tools such as YaST in the SUSE Linux Enterprise platform help us ensure that the update packages are downloaded and installed successfully. Obtaining this kind of granular insight from other operating systems we have used would require extensive modifications, but with SUSE Linux Enterprise it works straight out of the box."

Tony Espley concludes: "The retail industry is evolving rapidly, and our SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service platform ensures that we can react with agility to meet our clients' requirements."

To read more customer success stories, visit:
www.suse.com/success

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SUSE
We adapt. You succeed.