

Getting an Edge on Point of Service

Save money and lock down your POS environment with SUSE Manager for Retail.

A Point of Service (POS) network is a highly specialized environment that requires specialized tools. Traditional solutions depend on proprietary hardware running proprietary software that limits flexibility and enforces vendor lock-in. An alternative approach is to build the retail environment around general-purpose, PC-based client systems and general-purpose management tools. Implementing a retail environment through general-purpose systems solves the lock-in problem, but it fails to provide the security, efficiency and convenience of a system specifically designed for the needs of the retail industry. If you're looking for a solution that is specifically designed for retail, but avoids the complications and added expense of proprietary tools, try SUSE Manager for Retail. SUSE Manager for Retail is an open source infrastructure management solution that is powerful, flexible, secure and easy to customize.

What is SUSE Manager for Retail?

SUSE Manager for Retail is an open source infrastructure management solution that is carefully crafted for the retail industry. You can use SUSE Manager for Retail to keep watch over point-of-service terminals, reverse-vending systems, kiosks, self-service systems and even non-retail devices at schools, banks or hospitals. SUSE Manager for Retail can also manage Linux workstations, servers and other assets, thus consolidating POS and conventional infrastructure in a unified management framework.

Your SUSE Manager for Retail system offers a comprehensive interface that enables you to:

- Create, deploy and maintain images for POS devices that are optimized for retail applications, including support for secure payments protocols.
- Automatically update or patch all retail terminals from one central location.
- Automatically monitor, track and report any deviation from compliance of every Linux-based system in your environment.
- Lower costs by extending the lifetime of legacy hardware.
- Optimize operations through scripting and programming for continuous integration.

If you administer a POS retail environment, SUSE Manager for

Retail will help you reduce costs, streamline operations, increase flexibility, enhance reliability and improve uptime.

SUSE Manager for Retail 4 offers new support for offline operations and better performance in low-bandwidth environments. The latest release also comes with a new Content Lifecycle Management tool for more efficient package development and deployment, along with system monitoring support through the open source Prometheus monitoring tool.

The Retail Environment

At the local level, SUSE Manager for Retail enables you to deploy, configure, manage and audit a collection of POS systems (Figure 1). Ask SUSE about the SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service client, which is designed for easy and complete integration with SUSE Manager for Retail.

A multi-site enterprise environment benefits still more from the powers of SUSE Manager for Retail (Figure 2). The SUSE Manager for Retail server unifies dissimilar local environments within a single unified management interface. Branch servers operating at the local level provide proxy, DNS and other services to improve performance and minimize network traffic.



Figure 1. The architecture of a typical SUSE Manager for Retail network.

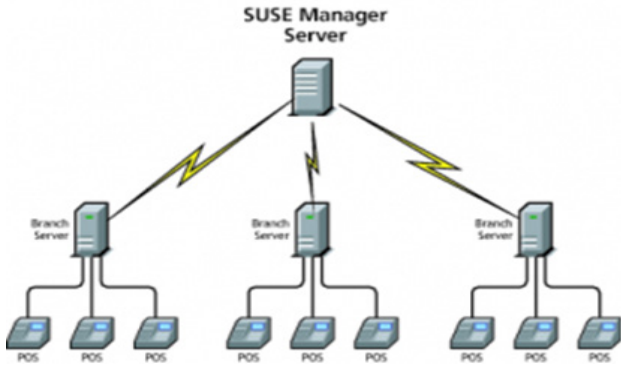


Figure 2. SUSE Manager for Retail offers a unified view even in complex, multi-site scenarios.

Why SUSE Manager for Retail?

SUSE Manager for Retail oversees the complete lifecycle of your Linux-based point of service systems. You can install system images for your POS systems from pre-configured image templates or even create your own custom images. SUSE Manager

for Retail also provides remote deployment and provisioning for point-of-service systems. The Salt-automated configuration environment included with SUSE Manager for Retail enables you to pre-define complete systems in a declarative format that is easy to adapt for fast and efficient rollout. SUSE Manager for Retail locks down software installation, forcing client systems to receive updates through managed channels that enhance security and enforce standardization to minimize reconfiguration and lost work time.

SUSE Manager for Retail also simplifies system management. The SUSE Manager for Retail user interface offers an easy overview of the retail landscape, enabling the admin to check the configuration and patch status at a glance (Figure 3). For ease of administration and better security, SUSE Manager for Retail enables you to divide admin responsibilities by role (Figure 4) or location.

New support for the open source Prometheus monitoring tool enables you to monitor the health of your infrastructure and configure alerts to ensure continuous operation.

Figure 3. SUSE Manager for Retail provides a convenient map of the landscape, with configuration settings for managed clients in easy reach

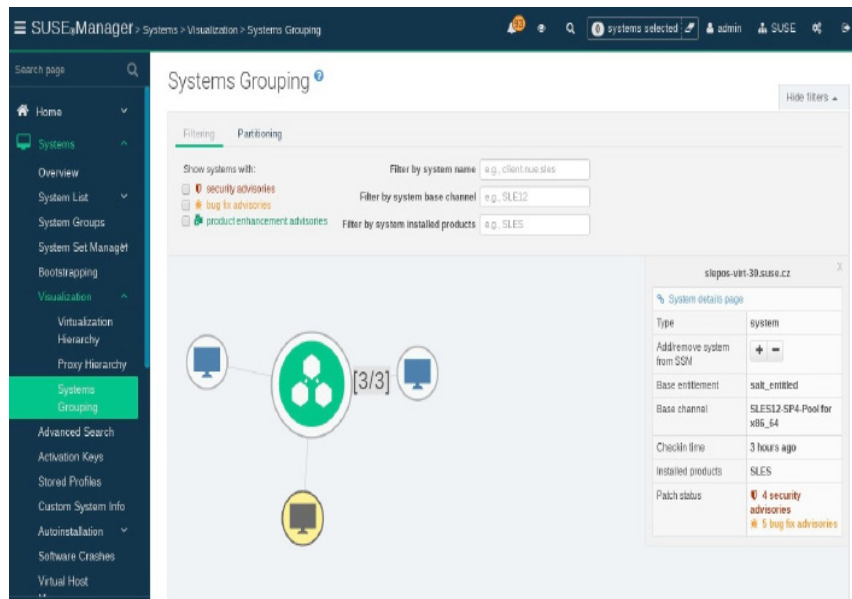




Figure 4. Minimum privilege: You can assign admin responsibilities to different groups with different roles.

Efficiency and Cost Savings

SUSE Manager for Retail reduces risk and minimizes hardware and admin expenses. The minimal hardware requirements of the SLEPOS operating system enable you to build your retail infrastructure around commodity hardware and even extend the life of older POS terminals that might not be compatible with other systems. The Salt configuration management system at the heart of SUSE Manager enables IT staff to automate rollouts and reconfiguration; and SUSE Manager for Retail offers additional staff time savings through auditing, software updates and automation. An administrator without advanced scripting skills can use the web forms built into SUSE Manager for Retail to describe and implement complex configurations for any store environment.

Built-in support for deploying SUSE Linux Enterprise Point of Service 11, SP3 clients helps you minimize cost by keeping your legacy 32-bit POS client systems alive and online. The latest version also provides additional optimizations to operate smoothly in offline branch offices and low-bandwidth settings.

Easier Compliance

SUSE Manager for Retail makes it easy to verify that your retail assets are in compliance with internal corporate policies and external regulations. You can view the compliance status of any POS system anywhere in the network (Figure 5). Your staff can use SUSE Manager for Retail to create an inventory of all managed systems. Once that inventory is available, SUSE Manager for Retail continuously monitors all clients and reports on any

deviation from the current patch level or any other compliance requirement.

SUSE Manager for Retail can also monitor your systems automatically to ensure compliance with external standards such as CVE (Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures) and OpenSCAP (Security Content Automation Protocol).



Figure 5. SUSE Manager for Retail makes it easy to spot a system that needs maintenance.

HANA Integration

The SAP S/4 HANA for Retail toolkit is a powerful collection of tools for tracking and analyzing retail data. You can use SAP's retail tools to track inventory, study-buying habits, optimize store layout and carry out retail simulations. SUSE® has a 20-year relationship with SAP and serves as the core platform for 90 percent of all HANA implementations. The latest version of SUSE Manager for Retail offers close integration with the SAP environment, including predefined SALT formulas for deploying and configuring SAP HANA nodes and HA clusters.

Automation and Delivery

You can use the SUSE Manager XML-RPC API to integrate SUSE Manager for Retail with custom applications written in Python, Perl and other programming languages. An optional text-based command interface makes it easy to build SUSE Manager commands into Bash scripts and other admin utilities. This strong support for automation, combined with the powerful configuration and deployment features described earlier, make SUSE Manager for Retail a natural fit for Continuous Integration/Continuous Delivery scenarios.

SUSE Manager for Retail 4 also includes the new Content Lifecycle Management tool, which adds efficiency and reduces reconfiguration in the package development process. Content Lifecycle Management leverages the software channels feature built into SUSE Manager for Retail, enabling you to promote packages through the development, Q&A and production phases with minimal disruption.

Conclusion

SUSE Manager for Retail enables you to manage the full lifecycle of your POS retail infrastructure from a single interface. You can lock down control of your retail systems through software channels, automated configuration, auditing and other powerful features. Easy administration and strong support for automation improve efficiency and lower total cost of ownership.

For more information on SUSE Manager for Retail, contact the experts at SUSE.

Additional contact information and office locations:
www.suse.com

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