

The Top 10 Reasons To Switch To Linux

Switching operating systems in a business or organization is a serious endeavor. Linux has ten significant advantages over current operating systems that make migration a reasonable and cost effective strategy.

In the last few months, countries such as England, Germany, Japan, China, India, Korea, Mexico, and Brazil have launched new projects to switch their government's software platform from Windows to Linux for desktops, workstations and servers. Many organizations and businesses have already begun to make the switch.

At the same time, corporations like IBM, Novell, Red Hat, Dell, Oracle, and HP have announced their support for the Linux platform, indicating that they believe in the operating system as the future standard for governments and business. Based on these announcements, multiple companies have started to understand the advantages that the Linux operating system can deliver and have begun porting proprietary applications to the Linux platform. So, what does Linux offer to governments, businesses, and organizations that they are willing to go through a complete migration process to switch from one operating system to a completely new one? The following provides expanded information on the top 10 reasons that all of these entities are willing to go through the migration process.

1. Lower Total Cost of Ownership

Independent TCO studies clearly back the Linux operating system as the most cost effective platform available on the market. Although paid third party reports contest this fact, they tend to compare the costs of non-analogous systems. The fact is that Linux's Total Cost of Ownership is significantly less than a Windows™ system. This is not only based on the fact that the major Linux distributions are less expensive, but also on the fact that hardware costs, software costs, support, and administration trend lower with Linux. Independent research suggests that network administration on Linux is several times more efficient, while software costs are a fraction of those on monopoly platforms. Independent studies also suggest significant cost advantages based on productivity gains due to Linux's renowned stability and security.

2. Premier Security

The Linux operating system has a proven record of security. Linux security is so high because of the way in which Linux was developed. The development of Linux was based on the needs and concerns of the programmers and system administrators who were creating and would use the operating system. Unlike other operating systems, marketing and sales departments were not pushing new features and products that would look good in press releases and advertising but expose users to security risks. Instead, the Open Source programmers involved with developing Linux focused on creating the most secure and robust operating system for programmers and systems administrators. Organizations such as the U.S. Department of Defense have moved thousands of desktops to Linux precisely because of security concerns with other operating systems.

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3. Highest Reliability

The Linux operating system was designed and developed to process complex and time-consuming operations. Due to this development background, Linux uses a computer's hardware resources more intelligently than other operating systems. It's extremely difficult to overload the computer's hardware so as a result Linux crashes much less than standard operating systems. Linux also runs well on older hardware due to this efficient use of processor power. Linux's reliability also lessens the need for regular administrative duties and allows systems administrators to keep more computers up and running at any one time. Updates are much easier and, in the majority of cases, can be done without the need to restart the operating system. All this together makes Linux the most reliable and robust system available for computer users.

4. Avoiding Vendor Lock In

One of the biggest advantages of the Linux operating system is the independence that Open Source status delivers to the system. On a monopolist platform, each company can be held to ransom over mission critical business needs. Deliberate and needless integration of products on a monopolist platform forces companies to pay for products and services unnecessary to their business. On an Open Source platform, each company can negotiate for the best possible cost and support from a range of vendors. In addition to this, the ability of Linux to be deployed in different hardware environments frees company from the need to buy expensive proprietary hardware, as in some UNIX and SUN systems. Wider range of choices prevents monopolist prices and improves organizations bottom line.

5. Ease of Migration

The migration process for the Linux servers does not necessarily means a complete transformation in an organization's infrastructure and systems. Current hardware can still be used with Linux and, in fact, migrating to Linux tends to extend the useful life of current hardware because of Linux's more efficient use of processor power. Data and documents painlessly translate to the Linux system, while email transfer works flawlessly. Migration can also allow proprietary applications to run on top of the Linux operating system, whether on desktops or on servers. Heterogeneous transitional systems can maintain critical systems while offering the benefits of Linux's lower costs, reliability, and security. Depending on the volume of computers and systems requirements, migrations can occur in a matter of weeks. For critical applications a migration can be executed through a step-by-step schedule, testing all the way through to set a reliable and secure environment.

6. World Class Support

With companies like IBM, Novell, Red Hat, SUN, Hewlett Packard, and Dell backing up some Linux platforms and hardware you can be assured that the Linux platform has robust support networks for any organization. In addition to this, a large number of IT companies and consultants around the world offer different levels of support for every aspect of the Linux platform. Based on these facts, any type of organization can have access to the right level of support and expertise at any time and can be assure that their investments in the Linux platform will not be obsolete in a few years.

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7. Rapid Employee Training

The Linux operating system and all of the standard software packages have user interfaces that are very similar to the ones used in other operating systems. This standardized user interface makes new users' introduction to the Linux environment much easier. With this in mind, training on Linux can concentrate on the details of the operating system that can increase the productivity of the workforce. A wide range of companies are already providing training for the Linux environment, while numerous books and websites are available to implement fast, effective employee education.

8. Inexpensive Standard Desktop Software

All the major Linux distributions on the market come with software packages for normal productivity needs. The standard packages vary depending on the type of installation, but all of the standard office tasks such as word processing, spreadsheets, email, and presentations that are done in the normal daily work of any employee can be done with the standard packages available in Linux. Linux software is fully compatible with similar software packages from other system platforms. Word, Excel, Acrobat, PowerPoint, and other standard document formats can be read and edited using Linux software.

9. Improved Custom Applications

For custom business applications Linux offers the best environment on the market. First, since programmers can choose from a variety of programming languages that will work on Linux, they can choose the best programming language to develop each specific application. Second, since developers have direct access to the source code of the Linux operating system and all the major processes running in it, they can create more robust and efficient applications. In addition to this, the databases, servers, and development tools available in the Linux platform provide a comprehensive environment to test and debug new applications.

10. Superior Network and Systems Management

On the Linux system, all needed administrative tasks for networks, servers, and desktops can be accomplished remotely without compromising the security of the system. A significant Linux advantage in network and systems management is the high level of automation of the maintenance and service tasks that the platform delivers. This reduces the time spent on the maintenance of the system, while speeding the delivery of updates and new software versions. In the case of a major systems problem, this efficient centralized administrative structure reduces the time it takes to deliver a solution to the complete infrastructure.

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It's The Right Time To Switch To Linux

These ten reasons to switch to the Linux operating system are the most significant reasons that Linux is gaining ground in the marketplace for both servers and desktops. Linux has proven to be more reliable and secure than other operating systems on the market, offering a perfect platform for critical organizational computing applications. It is also gaining a wider acceptance on the desktop because of the broad support that is emerging from the hardware and services industry as well as the fact that it is the most cost effective platform on the market.

Governments around the world, corporations, small businesses, and individuals are discovering the wide-ranging benefits of switching to a Linux environment. These organizations receive an operating system that matches their exact needs, a system that runs critical applications in a reliable, secure environment that protects their valuable assets, and a system that increases the productivity of their work forces.
