



CITY OF CHICAGO

FAST FACTS

Industry:	State and Local Government
Solution:	Platform: Red Hat Enterprise Linux; Hardware: HP DL580 G2; Applications: Oracle9i Database, Legato backup solutions, HP MSL Tape Library
Benefits:	Up to 3x performance improvement, lower server procurement and maintenance costs, increased hardware options

BACKGROUND

One of the most well known cities in the United States, Chicago prides itself on finding a better way to do things—from strengthening public education to inventing Cracker Jacks, lowering crime to building the first skyscraper. In the same spirit, this year they’ve begun migrating their IT systems to Red Hat Enterprise Linux to improve performance and save costs.

At the center of these efforts is Chicago’s Business & Information Services (BIS) Department, which “supports most of the city’s enterprise-level applications that keep the city working,” explains Amy Niersbach, Platform Architect for the City of Chicago. More than 15,000 city workers depend on BIS for fast, reliable access to the technology required to effectively perform in their jobs. In the spirit of finding a better way, the City of Chicago undertook a pilot project with Red Hat Enterprise Linux.

The city’s infrastructure has historically been a multi-platform environment that included about 100 Solaris servers used to run a large number of Oracle Databases and applications. “Many of these servers are nearing the end of their life cycles, and when we replace them, we need to do so with cost-effective solutions,” Niersbach says.

BIS had three primary goals when they began to consider Linux:

- Reduce the server hardware, maintenance and operating costs
- Prove that Linux could effectively run enterprise-level applications
- Increase flexibility in choosing hardware vendors for significant potential cost savings

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– Amy Niersbach, Platform Architect



Realizing the potential for open source technology to reduce the cost of hardware and IT operating costs, BIS partnered with HP, Red Hat and Systems Solutions Inc. (SSI) to kick off a Red Hat Enterprise Linux pilot project. SSI's systems engineers installed the HP DL580 G2 Server with Red Hat Enterprise Linux AS v.2.1, Oracle 9i Database, and HP MSL Tape Library with backup software from Legato.

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As part of the pilot project, SSI installed software that would allow them to evaluate system performance and

scalability, and to test backup & recovery processes and interfaces to other applications.

TPC Benchmark Software was also used to ensure an accurate assessment for the performance comparison. Results were impressive. Sun Solaris benchmarked at 50,268 transactions per minute, while the HPDL580 G2 with Red Hat Enterprise Linux benchmarked at over 149,500 transactions per minute-nearly three times faster! When running the city's long batch cycles, Red Hat Enterprise Linux proved to be fifty percent faster.

Recently the City of Chicago expanded beyond the pilot project to migrate its Vehicle Registration System from the mainframe environment to a Red Hat Enterprise Linux v.3 and HP platform. BIS expects that the system will allow them to issue more than 1 million vehicle stickers per year.

The BIS team is now confident that Red Hat Enterprise Linux can help them reach their goals:

Goal	Solution
Reduce the server hardware, maintenance and operating costs.	Red Hat Enterprise Linux is optimal for low-cost, Intel-based servers. Included in the city's yearly subscription to Enterprise Linux is Web and phone support, as well as Red Hat Network for systems management and errata.
Prove that Linux could effectively run enterprise-level applications.	Red Hat Enterprise Linux is certified for over 700 applications that the public and private sectors depend on. In addition, Enterprise Linux consistently achieves top benchmarks, such as ECPerf and TPC-C.
Increase flexibility in choosing hardware vendors for significant potential cost savings.	Red Hat's strategic partners include many major hardware vendors, and Red Hat Enterprise Linux is certified across seven hardware platforms, giving Chicago's BIS team the flexibility to choose the hardware that best meets its needs.

"We're optimistic about Red Hat Enterprise Linux and its ability to help us find a better way to deliver government services," says Niersbach.

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