



LAW-AND ORDER

FRED WISSING, SERGEANT

NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE, WEST TRENTON, NJ, USA

FAST FACTS	
Industry-Solution:	Government
Platform:	Linux
Hardware:	Dell PowerEdge servers
Challenge:	Statewide law enforcement agency needs a fast, responsive, secure and affordable platform for its internal network, especially for use in connection with a nationwide gun-control system.
Solution:	Establishing a network built around Red Hat Linux 6.0
Benefits:	Low startup cost, ease of operation, source code may easily be edited to tailor the software precisely to the users' needs. and call center applications in each of the company's geographically remote call centers. Remotely manage systems with Red Hat Network Satellite.

Police work is serious business.

There's no room for disorganization. Everything has a place, and everything has to be in its place. Information has to get where it's going as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Proper police procedure depends on it.

And sometimes, lives depend on it.

That's why computer systems play an essential role in any modern police organization -- and that's why the New Jersey State Police depend on Red Hat Linux.

The New Jersey State Police computer system is a smoothly-running machine -- and it's the job of Sergeant Fred Wissing to ensure that it stays that way. Red Hat Linux has been his operating system of choice since 1997 -- now running version 6.0, on a range of Dell PowerEdge servers, 6300s, 2300s, and 2100s, and powering essential day-to-day functions like email, file and print services, proxy servers, web applications, an effective, efficient Intranet, and using Oracle 8i to tie New Jersey into the National Instant Criminal Background Check System -- an application which can't afford malfunctions or glitches, not when lives might be at stake.

NICS is a nationwide system which makes it possible for federal firearms licensees to run almost instantaneous background checks on prospective gun purchasers, by allowing the dealer to link directly into the national database via a regional Point of Contact -- in this case, the New Jersey State Police. "As originally laid out," Sgt. Wissing explains, "the NICS system was to run on an NT server housed at a remote location, using proprietary tools, all kinds of client licenses, upgrades, necessary anti-virus protections, near constant system administration, and an outside development staff." And it was expensive -- just to get the project off the ground using this system would have taken over \$150,000 in taxpayer money, and would have taken several months to set up.

Instead, the NJSP turned to Red Hat Linux. "Using an existing RH Linux server with Oracle 8i, the project was turned in in less than two months," boasts Sgt. Wissing, "with a total of about 50 hours of development time, using one developer (me) when I could muster time to develop it. It works on data replication, so if the WAN goes down, the NICS center continues to work, no matter what. It's web based and totally platform independent. The only time the system is ever down is when the source database isn't available for replication. They run theirs on NT, and it was down for three weeks at one time."



"Security was a big concern," adds Sgt. Wissing, "given the fact that we are operating with confidential data. The in-kernel packet filtering available on Linux with ipchains was tailor made for locking the system down at a lower layer than the application, and providing detailed auditing of who attempts to access the data, and when."

Sgt. Wissing is a big believer in the power of Red Hat Linux -- not just in its efficient operation, but in the control that it gives to users. "Because it's open source," he points out, "I can edit source code and take out anything that's not needed. And I can have much tighter control over who gets what access to the various servers." Those are important reasons for making the Red Hat Linux choice -- but for Sgt. Wissing there are a great many other reasons.

Over seven million of them.

Taxpayers, that is. The people who pay the bills. And Sgt. Wissing feels a personal responsibility to see to it that their money is wisely spent -- that they get the best value for every dollar. And that's where Red Hat Linux really stands out -- reliable, adaptable and above all affordable!

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