



TRANSACT COMMUNICATIONS INCREASES PERFORMANCE BY 400%

FAST FACTS	
Industry:	Telecommunications
Challenge:	Increase performance and reliability of billing system to ensure timely payments from growing customer base.
Solution:	Platform: Red Hat Enterprise Linux AS Software: Oracle Database Hardware: HP
Benefits:	Increased processing speed by 400% over legacy Sun Solaris environment. Cut costs by nearly 50%. Met TransACT's 'zero fault tolerance' policy.

TransACT Communications, based in Canberra, Australia, specialises in building and operating a fibre optic broadband network. It is capable of delivering a full range of communication services, including video on demand, pay TV, permanent high-speed-internet, and various mobile and fixed line telephone services.

TransACT operates a network reaching over 60,000 homes and 5,000 businesses and has announced plans to extend its network beyond the Australian Capital Territory.

THE SYSTEM

TransACT's billing data system is linked with the company's telephony switch. The system transfers data from the switch to the database. This information is then tested for accuracy and completeness before going to accounts payable. The information is critical as telephony accounts for a large portion of the company's revenue. If the system is inaccurate or down—TransACT doesn't get paid!

THE CHALLENGE

TransACT needed to increase the processing environment and data recovery platform for its billing data system because of a growing customer base and needed a reliable replacement system that could grow with the needs of the business.

The company's telephony system runs an Oracle Database, so it was important that TransACT chose a platform that was certified to run with the existing system.

"Reliability and capacity are key virtues of the Oracle Database," said Stephen Supple, Senior Oracle Analyst/Programmer, TransACT Communications. "The database processes hundreds of thousands of records a day very quickly and reliably with no margin for error. We needed to be certain that the underlying operating system could support this heavy work load."



TransACT chose Red Hat Enterprise Linux for a number of reasons. "I had seen Red Hat in operation for a number of years and have a greater comfort level working with a Unix/Linux type system. In addition, the Oracle Linux certification meant we wouldn't have database conflicts and the bottom line cost savings were impressive," said Mr Supple.

THE SOLUTION

TransACT chose to implement Red Hat Enterprise Linux AS on a HP Server in tandem with its previous billing data system.

The billing data system is fairly robust and has fail over systems, but processing lag can have a negative effect on billing cycles, revenue and cash flow. This system is absolutely critical to the bottom line of the business; as such TransACT has a zero fault tolerance.

For this reason, TransACT conducted extensive testing over a three-month period. The performance of its new Red Hat Enterprise Linux servers was a dramatic improvement over the older system.

"The processing time was cut down by 400%, so something that previously took us 20 minutes now only takes 5," said Mr Supple. "That combined with the accuracy of the data - the system was audited by PWC and found to be correct- meant that our choice to move to full production with Red Hat was an obvious one."

"Our decision to go with Red Hat as the Linux vendor was largely because they are a well-known brand and I am certain that they are a long-term enterprise player."

THE BENEFITS

Along with increased speed and accuracy, TransACT found the new system to be cost effective.

"We were at a point where we had to migrate the system. With our previous system we would have had to spend approximately \$140,000 for one server and one terabyte of storage. With the Red Hat solution, we paid around \$80,000 for two servers and 1.5 terabytes. It's not hard to see why we went with Red Hat," said Supple.

TransACT not only saved approximately \$60,000 in set-up costs, but also will enjoy ongoing savings because the annual subscription for Red Hat Enterprise Linux license is less expensive than Solaris support annually. "The way I see it is we have a better system taking care of our billing data, more scope for growth and all for less cost," Mr Supple concluded.

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