

Tuesday, July 18. 2006

### **Free as in speech ... not as in beer.**

A very interesting objection from Paul Murphy : If Linux is free - why is it so expensive. Interestingly whenever i ask someone "Why do you not use Solaris?" i get an missinformed "It's toooo expensive" and when i tell them "But it's for free, you can download the full Solaris stack and use it even in production" i get an "But it's not free". When i tell them "You can download the source and participate" i get an "Oh, but it's not the GPL". When i ask "But's where is your problem with the CDDL?" i get an "Hhmpf. Well. Hmpf. Well, it isn't the GPL". This is the moment, i should opt for a strong coffee and talk with someone else.

Posted by Joerg Moellenkamp in English, Oracle at 15:31

can you, please, explain dummies like me and other ...: why should a customer use the enterprise version of suselinux instead the normal version blowed up with additional features if needed? xen, appmore is available for free as i know. and, linux people are thinkerers, spending a lot of time tuning their systems.

is using the licensed enterprise version a must or a nice to have? Maybe it depends on the server specs and the environment. Maybe the only reason is because it sounds better.

I found these specs of licensed, expensive enterprise linux at [http://www.novell.com/linux/pdf/introducing\\_suselinuxenterprise10.pdf](http://www.novell.com/linux/pdf/introducing_suselinuxenterprise10.pdf)

it seems to me there are a lot of arguments for using solaris instead. if normal decision rules would be usual.  
Anonymous on Jul 19 2006, 09:24

One problem here is that only the Enterprise versions of the Suse and Redhat distros have a patch-support lifetime of more than 2 years. For many users, this is not enough. Example: Until Lotus Domino 7, just released at the end of last year, Domino did not run on kernel 2.6 ("did not" as in "did not", not as in "wasn't supported"). This was due to the new - incompatible - thread implementation in kernel 2.6.

So you had to run a distro that still supported kernel 2.4 which left you with RHEL 3 and SLES 8. At the same time, these older distros did not fully support the newer Opteron boards. Ouch!

The same kind of problem can hit you with any kind of server software. 2 years can be pretty short.

Next problem: major server software products such as DB2, Oracle, etc. only officially support the enterprise distros (reason being: see above).

Alternative: if you can't run Solaris x86, run CentOS (unbranded RHEL with update servers).  
Anonymous on Jul 19 2006, 16:14