

Business News

Virtual Servers aid Travellers

Mobil Travel Guide has picked IBM. They will provide the Mobil Travel Guide with large-scale mainframe computing and storage infrastructure on-demand over the Internet.

Under a 5-year agreement, IBM will provide the travel guide service with on-demand access to Linux-based server processing, storage and networking capacity from IBM e-business hosting centers in the United States. Instead of the physical Web, database and application servers they currently rely on, the guide will tap into "virtual servers" on IBM zSeries mainframes and Enterprise Storage Servers running SuSE Linux, paying only for the computing

power and capacity that they require and so match costs with revenues as seasonal demand changes.

The guide will utilize the IBM computing resources to support the expansion of a new Web-based service – Mobil Companion – which offers customized service for travelers. The Mobil Companion travel program targets upscale leisure travelers with benefits that include state of the art Web-based travel planning, 24-hour enroute travel support services, preferred rates from hotels, restaurants and other travel service providers. ■

<http://www.ibm.com/news/us/2002/10/042.html>

Linux Minicluster by Sandia National Labs

Parvus Corporation has helped Sandia National Laboratories to develop a portable Linux cluster computer system based on commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) PC/104 technology.

While cluster computers typically combine multiple desktop-sized PCs to work in parallel on problems too large for a single computer, Sandia's Minicluster makes use of embedded PC components to achieve a high-performance, low-cost parallel processing system.

Computers such as the Minicluster could potentially be used to demonstrate a wide variety of scientific and business applications, including weather prediction, human genome analysis, pharmaceutical design, aircraft and automobile design, seismic exploration, artificial intelligence, data mining, and financial analysis, among others.

"By utilizing parvus Corporation's components, packaging, and systems integration services, Sandia was able to quickly complete the Minicluster project," said Mitch Williams, engineer at Sandia's Embedded Reasoning Institute (ERI). "Our design successfully integrates all standard features of normal-sized rack-mounted clusters,

including individual keyboard, video and mouse access to every node, while minimizing size to barely over a foot tall and five inches wide."

The unit incorporates a Linux OS, four PC/104 processor nodes, a 10BaseT private network, power supply, KVM switch, and an external PCMCIA wireless connection. ■

<http://www.parvus.com/parvemp/LinuxC.htm>

<http://eri.ca.sandia.gov>



Huge Benefits through Open Source

By replacing its back-end IT infrastructure with open source software, a London-based construction firm has gained huge benefits in reliability, scalability and performance, plus more than halved its annual Microsoft licensing fees – saving over £200,000 this year and about £100,000 each year from now on.

Sirius IT, who implemented the solution, states that by running Open Source Software on Linux, yet keeping Microsoft Office on each desktop, its client, Killby & Gayford Group, has not only radically increased its business competitiveness but has also drastically lowered its operational costs. Killby & Gayford Group now use an entirely open source solution to run their complex network, spread over two sites.

Sirius IT claims Killby & Gayford is one of the very few examples of a fully integrated open source server/Microsoft desktop infrastructure anywhere in the world. Measured benefits Killby & Gayford have gained are: Massive reduction in software licensing costs due to the replacement of Microsoft server software with open source alternatives. Zero user retraining costs – end users continue to use the familiar Microsoft Office suite on their desktop. Simple, powerful, secure, single sign-on – staff can now logon to the network, from any desktop, using any operating system, and use any service. Vastly increased security, plus total back-end immunity to viruses. Radical improvements in file access and print serving speeds, across the network. Rock solid network stability – uptimes now measured in years, rather than weeks. ■

<http://www.siriusit.co.uk/technical/casestudies/kg.html>

UK Free Software Network

UKFSN is an ISP with a difference – all of the profits from the operation will be donated to fund Free Software projects in the UK. Profits from the service will be paid to the Association of Free software who has agreed to distribute all the money raised. ■

<http://www.ukfsn.org/>

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MontaVista increase Protocol Support

MontaVista Software has formed a partnership with Hughes Software Systems in which the SS& protocol stack and wireless GPRS/3G will be ported to their Carrier Grade Edition. This will give



MontaVista support for more network equipment providers including the 3G and 2.5G mobile phone network markets. The range of supported protocols is broad and should help MontaVista in dominating the market. All the HSS protocol stacks are available both in portable source code or binary form on a variety of hardware platforms, along with API documents and user manuals. ■ <http://www.hssworld.com>

Opera first

Following on from last month's news item about Mozilla and the Optimoz project, we have been contacted by Opera who point out that they have had mouse gestures in their web browser for a long time, both on Windows and most importantly, in the Linux version. ■ <http://www.opera.com/whyopera/>

Qtopia Upgrade

Trolltech have announced the release of Qtopia 1.6 Beta. Qtopia is based on the embedded port of Qt. Version 1.6 had better intergration for Microsoft Outlook synchronisation and an improved media player allowing skinning and better song control. The development environment has upgrade support for Asian character input and backup facilities using TCP. The product is still free to Open Source developers and can be found on Sharp Zaurus SL-5500 and SL-A300 PDA's. ■ <http://www.trolltech.com/products/qtopia/index.html>

HP set the Benchmark

HP announced that HP ProLiant servers have delivered the first Linux TPC-C benchmark results running Oracle 9i Real Application Clusters using Red Hat Linux Advanced Server.

Demonstrating the cost and maintenance benefits of running Linux based hardware and software in enterprise operating environments, an 8-node cluster of HP ProLiant DL580 servers using Intel Pentium III Xeon processors and HP StorageWorks MSA1000 storage system achieved 138,362.03 tpmC (transactions per minute) at a cost of just \$17.21/tpmC with Red Hat Linux Advanced Server.

TPC is a non-profit corporation founded to define transaction

processing and database benchmarks and to disseminate objective, verifiable TPC performance data to the industry. The complete benchmark results and test details are available to read at <http://www.tpc.org>.

Information about additional HP ProLiant servers certified for Red Hat Linux Advanced Server is available at <http://hardware.redhat.com/hcl/>.



SuSE plays in the SAP League

SuSE Linux has become a SAP AG technology partner. This allows SuSE's large enterprise customers like Siemens Business Services who run several mySAP Web Application Servers to benefit from this partnership with SAP.

This partnership enables companies all over the world to use mySAP.com on SuSE Linux Enterprise Server while taking advantage of services and support from SAP. Since May 2002, mySAP.com has been available on SuSE Linux

Enterprise Server for IBM eServer zSeries. This is the first certified offer of a scalable and reliable e-business collaborative 64-bit solution that can run in an LPAR (logical partition) or on z/VM (virtual machine). Additionally, engineers of both companies are working together to integrate mySAP.com into the new 64-bit Itanium Processor Family (IPF). ■

http://www.suse.de/us/company/press/press_releases/archive02/suse_sap.html

Instant Offices chooses Rackspace

Rackspace Managed Hosting has been chosen by Instant Offices to host its on-line business community for the serviced office space marketplace. Instant Offices is an on-line network of serviced office operators providing a comprehensive directory and database of serviced office space throughout Europe.

This allows users to view properties from their desks, make comparisons between office space and negotiate better deals. The service is free because the serviced office operators, in partnership with Instant Offices, pay a commission for the successful introduction of new business through the network.

Growth in demand for Instant Office's offering and the introduction of new

services like virtual tours, 360 degree on-line tours of available office space and facilities, meant that Instant Offices needed to ensure it had high levels of Internet connectivity to support its growing business community.

Instant Offices' server is managed by Rackspace at its Data Centre in West Drayton, near Heathrow. The Data Centre offers customers burstable bandwidth to address rapid or continuing increases in the demand for data from their housed server. Rackspace provides round-the-clock monitoring, security and technical support, backup power supply and high-speed and redundant network connectivity to ensure uninterrupted high performance and data integrity. ■

<http://www.instantoffices.co.uk/>

