

# Business News

## ■ IE Loses Share

Web analysis vendor WebSideStory reports that Microsoft Internet Explorer continues to lose market share in the browser market. The latest figures show IE's share down by 1.8 percent.

The big winners in the share game were the Netscape/Mozilla browsers, whose share went up by 1.7 percent to a total of 5.2 percent. Part of the reason for the recent rise is the immense popularity of Mozilla's Firefox 0.8, which, apparently, achieved 1 million downloads in the first 100 hours. The growing movement to champion Firefox has led Slat to ask "Are the Browser Wars Back?"

The bad news for open source advocates is that, even though Internet Explorer's market share is declining, it is still at around 93.7%. So there is still work to be done. ■

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

## ■ OpenOffice Standard Gains Momentum

Sun President Jonathan Schwartz recently threw his weight behind a proposal to establish the XML-based format used by the OpenOffice.org productivity suite as an international standard. The European Union's Interchange of Data Between Administrations unit has been studying the possibility of creating the document standard. The Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information (OASIS) is already working on an OpenOffice-based document format standard.

The establishment of common standards for document formats will make it easier for application vendors to support documents from other applications. All of this, of course, could have the effect of reducing the dominance of Microsoft Office document formats.

## ■ AT&T Tests Linux

Several news sources report that AT&T is testing Linux as a possible replacement for 70,000 PCs used by company employees. If AT&T goes with the switch, the change will be Microsoft's biggest loss yet to Linux. (By contrast, the high-profile migration of the City of Munich to Linux involves approximately 14,000 computers.)

The reasons cited for the shift include cost, reliability, productivity, and security. AT&T plans to make the final decision on whether to switch by the end of 2005.

Of course, it is possible that all this talk of migration could just be a bargaining chip in a later deal with Microsoft to lower the cost of Windows. 70,000 desktops would be strong incentive for Microsoft to cut back on their charges for licensing, and Microsoft is known for radically lowering their per-seat pricing for major clients if it looks like they could lose the sale. But lowering Microsoft's profit margin wouldn't be such a bad thing either. ■

[:http://www.att.com](http://www.att.com)

## ■ Wild West

If you're looking for the latest gossip on SCO, president Darl McBride provided it when he spoke at Cannes. As you are probably aware, SCO, which has the code rights for the Unix operating system, has accused the Linux community of unlawfully appropriating Unix code for Linux, however, he has never really specified precisely what code was borrowed. McBride spoke on his favorite topic: the perils of open source. "Once you put something in digital form, it's easy to copy. My question for you is how are you going to respond if that happens to your IP?" McBride reportedly went on to compare the situation between open source advocates and proprietary companies with the wild west.

"SCO's share has dropped from 40% to 10%," he said. "We're under attack from what I call 'hurricane Linux.'" But actually, there were no hurricanes in the wild west. Maybe it was a tornado. Or maybe it was just the heat of lots of sunlight. ■

<http://www.sco.com>

## ■ Microsoft in MySQL

The upcoming release of MySQL 4.1 will include the Microsoft Windows installer for Windows 2000 and Windows XP. MySQL will use the Windows XML (WiX) toolset, which was the first official open source code contributed by Microsoft. The WiX toolset was released under the CPL license, which is an OSI-approved open source license.

According to CNET, PostgreSQL is already working on its own Windows installer and will not use the Microsoft code.

The specter of leading open source projects adopting Microsoft code could be alarming to those who make a point of never trusting Microsoft. But this development just illustrates the whole point of the open source movement. You can't trust Microsoft, but you can trust their code – as long as you can see the source and read the license. ■

<http://www.mysql.com>



### More on PeopleSoft

Last month in this column, we reported that the U.S. Courts had issued a ruling on Oracle's bid to buy PeopleSoft. Now the European Commission is resuming its own investigation of the deal. The commission suspended its investigation last April when Oracle argued that some additional documents were relevant to the investigation and was given extra time to produce the information.

Meanwhile on the other side of the Atlantic, the United States Justice Department has decided not to appeal the PeopleSoft ruling. The courts decided against the Justice Department and ruled that Oracle's acquisition could proceed.

European and American antitrust laws are very different, and there is no reason to believe that the answers, or even the questions, will be the same in Europe that they were in the U.S, but insiders are now saying that the European Commission will probably eventually approve the deal.

<http://www.peoplesoft.com>

### Novell Defends

Novell announced that it will use its patent portfolio "...to defend against those who might assert patents against open source products marketed, sold, or supported by Novell."

The statement said, "Some software vendors will attempt to counter the competitive threat of Linux by making arguments about the risk of violating patents. Vendors that assert patents against customers and competitors such as Novell do so at their own peril and with the certainty of provoking a response.

Novell has been in a standoff with SCO for some time over the true ownership of UNIX. The statement could be read as a warning for SCO and other litigious vendors to back away from open source. But the statement could also be interpreted as a defense of the current system of intellectual property protection. Novell states at the beginning of the document, "In general, the existing system of intellectual property rights protection around the world has allowed

Novell, and other software companies, to compete, invent, and deliver the benefits of their innovation to customers and the marketplace.

Novell adds that it has previously used its ownership of Unix copyrights and patents to protect customers against open source. One way to interpret Novell's statement is they are pointing out that their standing as a patent holder allows them greater leverage to defend open source. Novell must walk a careful line between its shareholders, who want to maximize revenue and would not think of simply surrendering the company's patent assets, and the open source community to which Novell is increasingly linked due to its acquisitions of Ximian and Suse.

In a related statement, Novell came out against the proposal to "liberalize patentability standards" in the European Union, stating that they like the system as it is currently.

<http://www.novell.com>

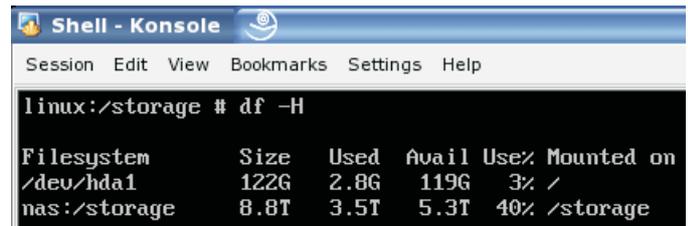
# SMASH THE 2.0TB BARRIER

**THE TERAFAULT STORAGE SERVERS** from Digital Networks provide complete networked storage of up to 9600GB in size.

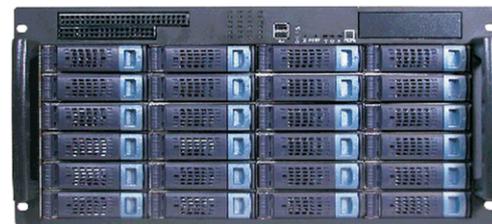
Linux servers have previously been limited to 2.0TB filesystems. The Teravault RS5240-64, pictured right, features 64-bit AMD Opteron processors and a 2.6 kernel based 64-bit Linux distribution to overcome the 2.0TB filesystem limit. 9600GB in raw storage equates to approximately 8800GB available to the network - on one filesystem.

The Teravault RS5240-64 also features multiple Gigabit Ethernet interfaces. Linux, UNIX, Windows and Apple clients are supported, and the system can be administered remotely with the included web based interface or by SSH.

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