IBM Announces New Products and Initiatives to Enable Next-Generation Linux

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At the opening of the LinuxWorld tradeshow today, IBM introduced a series of new products, services and initiatives that further expand IBM's commitment to Linux and open source by enabling the next generation of Linux.

As the company marks ten years of support for Linux, IBM announced a number of cross-company initiatives to drive the next generation of Linux. Attributes of next-generation Linux include its role in green IT; use of Linux in business-critical workloads; use of Linux by midmarket customers; use of Linux on the desktop client of the future; and using the innovation-through-collaboration approach of the Linux community to bring technology advances to customers.

The announcements include the first contribution of open-source software for supercomputers based on Linux; a new ISV software appliance toolkit that will expand the reach of Linux into the midmarket; pre-loading of Novell SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 10 in Lotus Foundations, a hardware and software bundle geared for businesses from five employees on up; an expansion of its real-time Linux initiative; the introduction of a new version of z/VM with a dynamic memory upgrade feature available for Linux users; a planned initiative with Canonical/Ubuntu, Novell and Red Hat around Lotus Notes and Lotus Symphony; and more.

"IBM has been a major supporter of Linux and open source for ten years, helping to drive the adoption of Linux by millions of users, across

tens of thousands of devices and applications," said Inna Kuznetsova, director of Linux at IBM. "Linux is clearly main stream. We look forward to the next ten years, where Linux will continue to increasingly drive business-critical workloads for all sizes of organizations, while empowering the new enterprise data center through virtualization, real-time Linux, cloud computing and other advances, including liberating the desktop."

IBM Contributes Key Open-Source Code for Linux Supercomputers

IBM today released its first certified package of open-source software for supercomputers based on Linux. The IBM HPC Open Software Stack is designed to make "clusters" -- servers linked together to form a single super-fast system -- more productive and easier to manage. Included in the new open stack is IBM's Extreme Cluster Administration Toolkit (xCAT). The IBM HPC Stack is available through a software repository hosted by the University of Illinois' National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA), home to some of the largest cluster systems in the world. The repository is available at: ftp://linuxpatch.ncsa.uiuc.edu/ .

Linux-Based Software Appliances for SMBs

IBM today announced that it is enabling ISVs to deliver Linux-based software appliances to midmarket customers through an ISV software appliance toolkit.

Software appliances are ready-to-use, fully integrated solutions that can be delivered on DVDs or USB drives, reducing a company's level of IT skills required to deploy the solutions, which can be installed in as few as one-to-five clicks. This is viewed as a great benefit to midmarket

customers who are seeking ways to automate operations, but find traditional software deployments are often too complex and expensive for their resources and budgets. Linux-based software appliances have all the necessary software components in a single compact package.

The company also announced a preconfigured version of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 10 in Lotus Foundations and a toolkit that opens new opportunities for Domino software vendors (ISVs) to deliver their applications on a software appliance to the smallest businesses. IBM's first hardware and software bundle geared for businesses from five to five hundred employees, Lotus Foundations is a line of self-managing appliance servers that allow small companies to focus on running their business instead of their IT operations. Now by agreement with Novell, it just got even easier for SMBs to use Lotus Foundations and capitalize on the cost-efficiencies, reliability and stability of Linux. (See separate announcement.)

IBM System z

Also today, IBM announced a new release of z/VM with more dynamic and robust virtualization and connectivity enhancements to support rapid business growth without additional overhead. Most notably, customers will benefit from a new dynamic memory upgrade feature that allows users to add extra memory for sharing across every virtual server, without a system outage. With z/VM V5.4, customers can now grow their z/VM-hosted virtual server environment by adding hardware assets like CPU and memory without disruption. This supports IBM's Big Green Linux initiative.

"With a worldwide 24/7 SAP implementation, downtime is not an option. The new z/VM release allows us to continue to add and grow our system without any outages," said Mark Shackelford, Vice President of Information Services at Baldor Electric. "Running z/VM along with the

IBM System z Linux implementation of SAP has allowed us to support our recently expanded company with little additional resources. z/VM 5.4 continues to allow us to manage very large servers and application functionality with a minimum of effort."

Real-Time Linux

IBM is building on its support for real-time Linux, adding support for Novell's SUSE Linux Enterprise Real Time Linux with select IBM BladeCenter servers, and with WebSphere Real Time, which extends the business benefits of Java to time-critical applications. Real-time was traditionally a proprietary approach used for predictable, deadline oriented functions like financial trading or air-traffic control. IBM worked closely with Novell, Red Hat and the broader open-source community to develop real-time Linux and real-time Java, which brings openness, affordability, reusability, and scalability to this important computing function.

The predictable performance of real-time software is increasingly important for time-critical systems in every industry, from defense to financial markets, manufacturing, energy and utilities, and telecommunications. Earlier this year IBM announced similar WebSphere Real Time and BladeCenter support for Red Hat Enterprise MRG, and won the Red Hat Innovator of the Year 2008 Award along with Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems for their joint real-time work with the US Navy. This supports IBM's emerging-technologies-for-Linux initiative.

Provided by IBM