



TECH TOOLS

Professional users are always searching for an edge. Whether you work with Linux as a webmaster, programmer, system administrator, or security consultant, you know the best solution depends on finding the right tool for the job. We thought you might be interested in the following new products and updates.

Enterprise Cluster Management Solution

Platform Computing released Platform Manager 5.7. This product was formally known as Scali Manage, which was acquired from Scali Inc. Platform Computing has integrated Platform Manager with its workload management software, Platform LSF, which now enables HPC customers to utilize a single enterprise solution for both cluster and workload management.

Platform Manager 5.7 offers support for small and large clusters and minimizes the complexity of cluster management tasks by supporting deployment, configuration, administration, monitoring, and reporting. According to the company, key advantages to this product include reducing cost of ownership and accelerating time to production, maximizing system uptime, and reducing problem resolution time. Platform Manager 5.7 is specifically tailored for multi-vendor Linux HPC environments and allows customers freedom of choice in selecting from a wide variety of systems from multiple vendors.

To learn more about Platform Manager 5.7 and Platform Computing, go to: <http://www.platform.com>.

Real-Time Linux Kernel Support for ARM9 CPUs

Timesys, an embedded Linux developer services provider, is now distributing a real-time Linux kernel for ARM9-based Atmel processors. The 2.6.24.4-rt4 kernel offers the RT_PREEMPT patch and patches for high-resolution timers, as well as other board-specific features. The RT_PREEMPT patch is currently used by such Linux distributors such as Monte-Vista, Novell, and Red Hat in the real-time versions of their products. This patch is not generally available in the mainstream Linux kernel but is expected to be integrated eventually.

This patch has been eagerly awaited by the health care, military, and telecom industries because it guarantees hard timing deadlines.

The new kernel provides support for full kernel preemption, schedule-able interrupt handlers, high-resolution timers, and mutexes with priority inheritance, according to Timesys. Specific ARM-based microcontrollers supported by this kernel include AT91CAP9, AT91RM9200, AT91SAM9260, AT91SAM9261, AT91SAM9263, AT91SAM9G20, and AT91SAM9RL.

Timesys states that the features and capabilities provided by the kernel are better POSIX compliancy, fully preemptible Big Kernel Lock (BKL), full real-time preemption, threaded Interrupt Service Routines (ISRs), high-resolution timers, mutex priority inheritance support, and debugging and tracing.

The Atmel real-time kernel LinuxLink subscription is available immediately, and full details can be found at: <http://www.timesys.com/products/processors/atmel/overview>.

Sun Netra T5220 Virtualization

The Sun SPARC Enterprise T5220 offers 64 virtual systems on a single box, which equates to approximately 1,250 secure virtual domains per rack. The Netra T5220 is part of Sun's Netra carrier-grade line and has greater network throughput designed for telco customers; however, it is not designated only for those customers. According to Sun, "Our server design and architecture meets telco requirements, like 20-inches depth, PCI-X cards legacy support, and NEBS compliance, but it is open to other markets." These markets include government and military customers, in addition to other market segments.

Deployments of the Netra T5220 include semiconductor test equipment and network imaging systems, application and web servers, network proxy servers, base station controllers, and DNS services. Other roles include firewalls for virtual private network/IP security (VPN/IPSEC), IP traffic management systems, security systems, and streaming media.

The core of this server appliance is the UltraSPARC T2 chip, which unites features usually connected to several different chip types. In addition to virtualization, the list includes processing power, networking, security, floating point units, and accelerated memory access. Sun's CoolThreads chip multithreading (CMT) technology allows the UltraSPARC T2 to consume less than two watts per thread of power, which helps this chip have a very "green" reputation.

To find out more about the Sun Netra T5220 Server, visit: <http://www.sun.com/servers/netra/t5220/specs.xml>.

SpringSource Application Platform

SpringSource announced the release of the SpringSource Application Platform, an enterprise Java application server. In the past, Java developers have had two choices for deploying web applications: Java EE servers and servlet containers. According to the announcement, the SpringSource Application Platform features seamless application and resource library upgrades, side-by-side version deployments, and application monitoring and analysis from URL throughput to query, cache, and transaction statistics.

The SpringSource Application Platform is now available under the GPL open source license.

For more information, visit: <http://www.springsource.com/>.

Win4Lin Desktop 5

Virtual Bridges announced the release of version 5 of its Win4Lin Desktop, a desktop virtualization system. The current incarnation of Win4Lin Desktop is based on the Qemu processor emulator, which is used by other virtualization projects including kernel-based Virtual Machine (KVM) and VirtualBox. In addition to Qemu, Win4Lin Desktop also uses the Kqemu Linux kernel module to provide x86 acceleration on x86 hardware platforms.

This new version includes support for 64-bit Linux, can interface directly with KVM, provides broader application support, and runs applications developed “in-house.” The primary target for this product is smaller businesses with relatively simple interface requirements.

Virtual Bridges has entered into a partnership with Canonical and is offering a lower priced edition of Win4Lin for Ubuntu, priced at US\$ 29.99 (UK£ 15).

The Professional Edition is priced at US\$ 49.99.

In the enterprise, Win4Lin is designed to run customized and vertical Windows applications on Linux. Windows can be run as a complete desktop displayed in the interface either as a “floating window” or in full-screen mode. The newly released version provides support on Fedora, openSUSE, Mandriva, and other Linux distributions. Win4Solaris 5 is also available and based on the same code.

Learn more at: <http://vbridges.com/vbdownload/dllinux.php?reltype=ga>.

SLED 10 Service Pack 2 Released

Novell announced that Service Pack 2 is now available for SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop (SLED) and Server 10 customers. SP2 offers a number of enhancements, including virtualization advancements, desktop improvements, updates to real-time services, and a SUSE Linux Enterprise SDK. Server enhancements include Xen-based virtualization with full support for both Microsoft Windows Server 2003 and 2008 in virtualized environments. Xen version 3.2 offers live migration of these Windows Server guests across physical machines. Updates for Heartbeat 2 and OCFS2, which provide advances in high-availability and storage management, are also included in SP2.

The SLED 10 SP2 offering includes enhanced NTFS support, resulting in better Microsoft Windows and Office interoperability and improved Active Directory integration. OpenOffice.org 2.4 Novell Edition is also included and offers VBA macro support within Calc and embedded audio and video services for Impress.

SUSE Linux Enterprise Real Time better reduces latency and improves predictability of time-sensitive mission-critical applications via support for adaptive locking, OpenFabrics Enterprise Distribution (OFED) 1.3, and the Precise Timing Protocol. According to the announcement, this makes Novell the first Linux-based company to offer support for OFED 1.3.

The Software Development Kit (SDK) allows developers and technical enthusiasts additional ways to create new software utilities on the SUSE Linux Enterprise platform, including appliances such as KIWI, YaST2 Add-on Creator, and YaST2 Product Creator.

The Subscription Management Tool (SMT) that comes with SP2 can help Linux customers manage their SUSE Linux Enterprise software updates more easily and effectively and, at the same time, maintain corporate firewall policies and regulatory compliance.

Service Pack 2 for SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 10, SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop 10, and SUSE Linux Enterprise 10 SDK are all available immediately, and SUSE Linux Enterprise Real Time 10 and Subscription Management Tool will be out soon.

To find out more, go to: <http://www.novell.com/linux>.

AmberPoint Runtime SOA Governance App

AmberPoint's SOA runtime governance software now encompasses the transactions flowing across increasingly complex heterogeneous systems, enabling organizations to elevate the business value of their SOA-based applications.

SOA systems, which define how two or more entities interact in such a way as to enable one entity to perform a unit of work on behalf of another entity, has long held the promise of greater agility and reduced costs by reliably executing transactions across distributed, disparate application components. Previously, enterprises did not have the ability to gain an overall view of the status of these transactions.

The AmberPoint runtime SOA governance application provides the customer the ability to track each transaction across all SOA infrastructure. AmberPoint's specialized “message fingerprinting” method avoids altering any messages or message headers and, thus, does not damage the system's dependent applications.

The result is non-invasive instrumentation allowing transactions to flow freely across the system. Capacities include real-time transaction tracking, managing quality of service, diagnosis and root-cause analysis, and more.

Learn more at: http://www.amberpoint.com/releases/pr_190.shtml.

