

Linux Desktop Education Deployments Planned in 29 US States

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4 Nov 2008 - Omni and Useful today announced that over 50 academic institutions from 29 US States and 10 countries worldwide have signed up to deploy Multi-station SUSE® Linux Enterprise Desktops through the "Free the Penguins" education initiative. Originally launched in September, "Free the Penguins" provides customers with a low-cost, high-performance alternative to stand-alone Windows® desktops and thin clients for computer labs, classrooms and libraries. Omni, Useful and Novell have agreed to extend this initiative until the end of 2008 in response to extremely strong uptake from schools in the US, Canada, Australia, South America, Europe and Africa.

Tough economic conditions have led more universities, colleges and K-12 school districts to consider the hardware, maintenance, space and electricity savings of Multi-station SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktops. Using this strategy, customers can convert existing stand-alone Windows® desktops, which spend most of the day idle, into Linux desktops with up to 10 independent, full-featured stations that consist of just a monitor, USB keyboard and mouse.

"While customers plan to deploy their free desktops in a wide variety of areas—computer labs, classrooms, libraries, outreach sites, VOIP labs, help desk areas—the number one reason why they are considering Linux instead of Windows®, Mac OS® X or thin clients is cost," said Trevor Poapst, Director of Global Marketing at Omni. "Few education customers, particularly in these tough economic times, will say no to a strategy that will allow them to deploy over twice as many desktops for the same budget."

"Stand-alone desktops sit idle for most of the day," continued Poapst. "Dual-core or, worse yet, quad-core systems are wasteful for users who typically use less than 10% of their computer's processing power. Schools cannot afford to be wasteful, particularly when budgets are tight, computer-to-student ratios leave many children behind, and landfills overflow with digital waste. For the most critical education applications—web browser, email client, typing tutor, office productivity suite, drawing programs, math and science games, remote control and management software—an open source, Linux-based alternative is something all schools should consider."

"We are very pleased with the response to the 'Free the Penguins' initiative," said Tim Griffin, CEO of Useful, the developer of Useful Multiplier™. "This free computer lab promotion lets every school experience first hand the next generation of desktop virtualization that is already in use in over 3,000 school locations. The global economic situation calls for schools to

extract as much value from their limited budgets as possible. This is an ideal opportunity for schools to save 9/10ths of their hardware and maintenance costs."

Grant Ho, senior product marketing manager for SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop at Novell, said, "The strong, global uptake we've seen thus far with 'Free the Penguins' is a testament to the value that SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop is bringing to schools and we look forward to working with Omni and Useful in the next phase of this program. Given today's tough economic climate, schools are continuing to look for ways to rationalize IT spend. By deploying SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop, schools can dramatically save on costs, while gaining a user-friendly desktop experience that enhances productivity for teachers and provides a first-rate learning environment for students."

Education institutions are invited to contact Omni for their free licenses at +1.780.423.4200 or www.omni-ts.com/contact-us.html. Computers must be deployed by December 31st, 2008. SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop licenses limited to first 30 customers.

More details on the "Free the Penguins" initiative are available at www.omni-ts.com/linux-desktop/education.html. Additional conditions apply.

About Omni

Omni delivers a portfolio of management, security, mobility, messaging and Linux desktop software products for enterprise users of Novell GroupWise, SUSE Linux, and mixed Novell and Microsoft networks. Omni is Useful's exclusive distributor of the Desktop Multiplier for SUSE Linux Enterprise Desktop and openSUSE. www.omni-ts.com

About Useful

Useful is the global developer, pioneer and industry leader in Multi-station Linux computing: the high-performance, low-cost alternative to thin clients. Useful's powerful software transforms standard PCs to support up to 10 simultaneous monitors, keyboards and users, and has brought affordable desktop computing to hundreds of thousands of users worldwide. www.userful.com

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