



MCKESSON ADOPTS RED HAT ENTERPRISE HEALTHCARE PLATFORM

Red Hat solutions lower costs and ensure quality patient care

FAST FACTS

Industry:	Healthcare
Geography:	San Francisco, CA
Opportunity:	Integrate disparate software applications on one unified platform to provide a comprehensive solution to improve patient care
Software:	Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform: Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL), Red Hat Network, JBoss Enterprise Middleware Suite, and Hibernate
Applications:	McKesson healthcare solutions, Oracle RAC
Hardware:	Intel® dual and quad-core Xeon server platforms
Benefits:	Gained huge efficiencies, saved customers up to one million dollars in total cost of ownership, and provided a reliable, enterprise-ready solution that helps provide high-quality patient care

BACKGROUND

McKesson Provider Technologies is a \$2.6 billion division of McKesson Corporation, the world's largest healthcare IT services company specializing in the development of healthcare systems, distribution of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, and disease management solutions. McKesson Corporation, currently ranked 18th on the FORTUNE 500, is dedicated to helping its customers deliver high-quality healthcare by reducing costs, streamlining processes, and improving the quality and safety of patient care. McKesson has grown by providing pharmaceutical and medical-surgical supply management across the spectrum of care; healthcare information technology for hospitals, physicians, homecare and payors; hospital and retail pharmacy automation; and services for manufacturers and payors designed to improve outcomes for patients.

OPPORTUNITY

McKesson Provider Technologies wanted to create a comprehensive underlying architecture for its

clinical information systems that support a full range of patient care and administrative processes within a healthcare organization. To address evolving requirements over the years, however, McKesson had developed a number of different applications, built on several different architecture platforms. "We wanted to improve the integration between these systems and reduce the cost of ownership and system management for our customers. To do this, we needed to create one enterprise architecture strategy," said Michael J. Simpson, Senior Vice President and General Manager for McKesson's Horizon Clinicals suite of solutions.

As a component of integrating its patient care software onto one platform, McKesson decided to migrate from mainframe Unix to Linux. The healthcare community had been using Unix for 20 years, so McKesson had to educate its customers on the support, efficiency, and ROI benefits of Linux. The company needed a highly reliable, scalable, and cost-effective solution to assure a risk-averse customer base that migrating from a known system and process would maintain the levels of mission-critical reliability required for patient care.

SOLUTION

Prior to this project, McKesson was already employing Red Hat solutions in specific areas throughout the company. "Red Hat had



become the standard Linux solution among our employees and had always provided cost-effective ways to implement customer solutions quickly. We knew we wanted to leverage Red Hat's excellent support and high performance for this project," said Simpson.

Working with Red Hat, McKesson became the first company to adopt the Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform, a new solution featuring Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL), Red Hat Network, and JBoss Enterprise Middleware Suite. "We chose Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform because it provides a high-value open platform specifically designed to meet the mission-critical demands of healthcare IT," he said.

Using the solutions within the Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform, McKesson was able to integrate the many healthcare applications it provides to its customers on a single middle-tier architecture. The flexibility of the Red Hat and JBoss solutions enabled the company to leverage all of its existing software and hardware and contributed to lowering the total cost of ownership for McKesson's healthcare organization customers. In addition, The Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform was optimized for the Intel dual and quad-core Xeon server platform, enabling McKesson to adopt an affordable, high-performance architecture for its customers.

To support a wide range of hospitals and healthcare providers of different sizes and with varying hardware, McKesson runs a variety of configurations of Oracle on RHEL in the database tier. For each hospital, McKesson also operates between five and 90 application servers running Red Hat Enterprise Linux, JBoss Enterprise Middleware Suite, and Hibernate.

BENEFITS

As a result of implementing the Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform, McKesson was able to realize tremendous cost-savings on behalf of its customers. "Migrating to Red Hat enabled us to lower the total cost of ownership for our

solutions significantly. We've saved customers in large mainframe environments up to a million dollars in combined software and hardware costs," said Simpson. Red Hat's dedicated customer support and services also helped improve McKesson's customer relationships. In one instance, Red Hat flew its engineers to a McKesson customer location to provide on-site help. And JBoss solved one technical issue within two days, a vast improvement over the four-month turnaround time the company had experienced previously with a competitor.

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Red Hat solutions enabled McKesson to gain significant efficiencies in product development and testing. Prior to implementing Red Hat, McKesson supported multiple variants of Unix, which caused the company to spend time and resources testing products on each individual system. Red Hat eliminated the need for McKesson to buy mainframes to test its products on a wide range of systems. Now, the company only tests on one system, and all of its engineers speak a common Linux language across the organization. This has resulted in enormous productivity and cost savings, enabling McKesson to re-provision its resources more effectively.

Finally, the reliability of the Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform enables McKesson to support its customers' delivery of safe, high-quality patient care. "Our healthcare customers depend on our solutions to care for patients 24/7. They require highly reliable systems with highly responsive support, and the Red Hat Enterprise Healthcare Platform fits seamlessly with our commitment to product quality and customer service," said Simpson. "Red Hat is designed to provide a very flexible approach to business continuity, giving us the mission-critical reliability we need for patient care at a much lower cost," he said.

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