

CASE STUDY

INTERNATIONAL BANK OF AZERBAIJAN CHOOSES RED HAT ENTERPRISE LINUX FOR ITS MAIL AND INTERNET SERVER

The International Bank of Azerbaijan is Azerbaijan's leading financial institution. It is at the forefront of the country's banking industry and economic development, and has fostered Azerbaijan's integration into the world economy. Founded in 1992, the bank now has 40 branches throughout the country and is based in the capital, Baku. It also has two subsidiary branches in Moscow and is represented in several European countries.

When the existing systems for Internet and email reached their capacity, the bank chose Red Hat Enterprise Linux to create a unified external communications solution, and to provide a basis for its future IT infrastructure.

AGING IT SYSTEMS UNDERPERFORMING

The bank's email and Internet systems were previously running on an IBM AS/400 platform. The platform, which consisted of an integrated hardware and software package, presented problems when the email system reached its capacity and needed upgrading. Furthermore, the old system did not provide adequate reliability and security for the bank's planned expansion into e-banking, causing the drive to replace the bank's IT systems to become acute.

LOCAL RED HAT CHANNEL PARTNER DELIVERS RED HAT SOLUTION

VDEL Ltd., based in Vienna, Austria, is a Red Hat dedicated channel partner serving customers throughout Central Europe, Eastern Europe, and Russia (CER). Since April 2005, the master distributor has supported Red Hat Enterprise Linux solutions with services and training. VDEL worked with Red Hat to approach the International Bank of Azerbaijan and advise its IT department about the benefits of deploying an open source solution in terms of cost, security,

and reliability. VDEL's technological expertise and experience, coupled with a strong understanding of the local market, enabled the bank's IT department to fully utilize the opportunities created by the implementation of a new infrastructure based on open technologies.

RED HAT ENTERPRISE LINUX CHOSEN TO UPDATE EMAIL AND INTERNET

From the outset of the project, the goal of the bank's IT department was to create a unified "external communications module" to handle the Internet, intranet, and email services for the entire organization. The requirements of this module were primarily security and reliability, although the system also needed to be cost-effective and well supported. Red Hat Enterprise Linux was chosen as the solution that could best satisfy these requirements.

"We investigated what is available on the market, and we were truly impressed with Red Hat Enterprise Linux for its cost savings, reliability, security, and the extensive support network provided by Red Hat. We chose Red Hat because we believe it's the best platform and the best solution for our current and future projects," said Rauf Najafli, manager of the IT Security department at the International Bank of Azerbaijan.

"We investigated what is available on the market, and we were truly impressed with Red Hat Enterprise Linux for its cost savings, reliability, security, and the extensive support network provided by Red Hat. We chose Red Hat because we believe it's the best platform and the best solution for our current and future projects."

NEW IT SYSTEM DELIVERS UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

Fujitsu-Siemens RX200 servers running Red Hat Enterprise Linux were selected as the replacement for the aging AS/400. Email systems at the bank's head office were the first to be migrated and, following their successful deployment, the entire company's email system was transferred over to the new servers running Red Hat Enterprise Linux. The bank is now running a total of 20 Red Hat Enterprise Linux servers across the organization.

Although it was initially designed to handle only the email and Internet tasks, the Red Hat Enterprise Linux deployment has since enabled the International Bank of Azerbaijan to further improve its IT infrastructure in a way that it could not even attempt before, including the installation of a Cistron RADIUS server, BIND (DNS), and VPN routing. The new system has enabled the International Bank of Azerbaijan to create VPN-channels with their branches throughout Europe (Frankfurt-am-Main, Moscow, St-Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, and London) that are all based on an OpenVPN architecture.

RED HAT SATELLITE SERVER PROVIDES GREATER CONTROL OVER DEPLOYMENT

The functionality and customization of the deployment has been further increased with the implementation of a Red Hat Satellite Server. This has enabled the functionality of Red Hat Network to be administered from the local network. The Red Hat Satellite Server connects with Red Hat Network over the public Internet only to download new content and updates, enabling the IT department to retain

complete control of when and how to maintain its systems. The Red Hat Satellite Server even allows the bank to take its Red Hat Network solution completely off-line if desired.

Other features of Red Hat Satellite Server:

Instantly update systems for security fixes or provide packages or applications as soon as they are needed
Distribute custom or third-party applications and updates
Create staged environments (development, test, production) to select, manage, and test content in a structured manner
Access Red Hat Network Monitoring Module to track system and application performance.

RED HAT PROVIDES PLATFORM FOR FUTURE EXPANSION

The new email servers have allowed the bank to increase the number of email users from 120 to over 700. The servers have also increased productivity and security, and support entirely new functions such as VPN routing and Reuters applications. The new IT infrastructure based on Red Hat Enterprise Linux not

"It's very hard to quantify the improvements because many of the tasks we are now able to perform simply did not exist before. We have only had improvement, and can confidently say that Red Hat Enterprise Linux is providing an amazing amount of choice, security, and reliability for our applications and operations."

only enables the International Bank of Azerbaijan to compete at an international level, but also provides a platform for future growth.

"It's very hard to quantify the improvements because many of the tasks we are now able to perform simply did not exist before. We have only had improvement, and can confidently say that Red Hat Enterprise Linux is providing an amazing amount of choice, security, and reliability for our applications and operations," said Najafli.