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Red Hat Global Client Services

Ensuring Customer Success

Abstract

In this new era of open standards, the balance of power has been returned to the customer. Successful technology companies will be those that focus on service. Today, odds are against a proprietary software company using pure product innovation to gain a competitive advantage. Innovating with purpose, integrating responsive customer service--this is how to deliver real business results for the enterprise. Learn how Red Hat Global Client Services is ensuring customer success.

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Introduction

At Red Hat, we have created a company that ensures customer success by delivering solutions that have a lower cost of ownership, enable efficient IT process, and maximize choice. How? We leverage the innovation of the open source community to build enterprise-class products, and we package these products with high-quality service and support. The result: practical, powerful business solutions that deliver tangible results.

It's about knowing exactly what our customers want:

- Capturing the right amount of innovation to ensure long-term success.
- Creating practical ways to mitigate product risk.
- Being responsive to specific business problems.
- Allowing customers to choose the right technologies and to switch freely between them.
- Keeping costs low in the process.

Successfully implementing IT is hard. Great services make it easier. With the following four themes: Knowledge, Responsiveness, Accountability, and Proactive Approach, Red Hat Global Client Services has assembled a services strategy that defines an extraordinary customer experience.

Knowledge

Our clients expect us to be the open source and Linux experts. And they expect us to help them become experts as well. That's why we've invested so heavily in developing a team of deep technologists who can advise, support, and train customers.

Global Professional Services staffs more than 100 RHCEs who help clients design, install, and configure open source technology throughout the architecture stack. Our packaged consulting offerings and business solutions address common business issues--and we have delivered demonstrative success to more than half of the Fortune 500 companies. Hear what our customers have to say:

- "Red Hat's professional services team were key to resolving the multitude of technical issues uncovered during our port of a 20 million line, 200 transaction/second equity system from a mainframe to Intel. However, their real value was in helping to jump start the cultural shift in development and testing methodologies that open source enables. Build times are down from 24 hours to 3, and test cycles have shrunk from weeks to days." Steve Russell, Managing Director – IT, Global Bulge Bracket Investment Bank

- "Many accolades to your consultant for her professionalism. She was very knowledgeable and was a pleasure to work with. I learned a lot from her and am thankful for having had the opportunity to work with her on this project. Many thanks to Red Hat for making this happen." Al Lewis, Senior Project Manager, Global Communications Equipment Company
- "Choosing Red Hat Professional Services was easy based on our need for engineers with strong technical skills and proven experience in delivering results on similar critical and complex projects. They give us access to resources with specific subject matter expertise to help us in any system design or troubleshooting activities we encounter on our projects. The results have literally exceeded our expectations and developed a strong partnership with not only the professional services team, but all of the Red Hat organization. We can't say thanks enough for the attention and results we continue to receive." Chris McDaniels, Director of Engineering, Major Online Retailer

Successful implementation requires deep knowledge of the system's architecture as well as the business it supports. Savvy customers know that developing a deep understanding of the system ultimately reduces project risk and cost. Red Hat Global Learning Services provides technical training to help ensure customers get practical, usable information about how to maximize the power of the open source stack.

It is certainly no coincidence that our training is consistently recognized in articles, reviews, and surveys as the world's leading Linux training and certification program. The RHCE program received first place in the three most important categories in 2003 Certification Magazine quality survey (http://www.certmag.com/issues/jan02/feature_sosbe.cfm) and has produced the largest volume of performance-based certifications, more than 13,000.

The evidence is clear as this business has consistently grown at rates as high as 40% year over year. Read what some of the 100,000 people who have taken one or more of our courses have to say:

- "The RH300 course and RHCE exam are the most comprehensive and useful training and certification in the industry." Joshua Martinek, Dell
- "This was the best training experience I've had in 20 years as a VAR. The objectives were well thought out and were completely realized. The instructor's knowledge of the subjects covered is thorough, his delivery and attitude both professional and personable. After four days in class I am farther along than I could have been in two months of self-study and experimentation. Thank you all for a very profitable week." Don Woerner, Segen Corporation, Nashville, TN

- "I wanted to let you know what an immeasurable difference the RH300 RHCE program has made in terms of providing quality Red Hat Linux-based solutions to our customers. After nearly two years of working with Linux prior to the program, we realized the need for direct information rather than spending valuable time searching through manuals, newsgroups, or often inaccurate how-to's. Since taking the program we have deployed several servers for our customers that now have uptimes that far and away exceed expectations and also provide the security and performance that they demand. Well worth the trip and expense for such a great program. I truly feel that this has been the best investment that Azoni Systems has made and am certain that other individuals and business will agree. Thanks again." Bryan Fife, Azoni Systems, Inc. Scottsdale, AZ

Responsiveness

Getting fast answers and resolving issues quickly is of paramount importance. Red Hat Global Client Services has redesigned its support and escalation processes to more efficiently handle a high volume of complex issues. More than 95% of issues raised in frontline production support are resolved on first contact--an amazing accomplishment in software support. We are providing the right level of expertise to our clients on the frontline, with an efficient resolution-handling protocol that delivers results.

Online capabilities are the key to providing customers another efficient means of resolving issues. Red Hat's online Knowledge base and web ticketing capabilities have quickly matured to a level of sophistication that is delighting customers.

The more complex issues can't be solved on first contact or on the web, but they still need to be solved quickly. Red Hat has developed several processes to efficiently provide answers to customer requests for security, fixes, and new features. Here is how we handle each of these.

Security

The Red Hat Security Response Team constantly monitors for threats and vulnerabilities affecting our products and quickly fixes security vulnerabilities that could have an impact on our customers. Updates for these issues are made available through Red Hat Network, which provides a safe and trusted mechanism for obtaining and applying digitally-signed security errata. Red Hat continues to ensure responsiveness by measuring how long it takes to make an update available through RHN after each vulnerability. For the first 12 months from release of Red Hat Enterprise Linux 3, Red Hat fixed 58% of critical vulnerabilities (those vulnerabilities that could be automatically exploited to gain remote access) within a day of them being known to the public.

The fundamental nature of open source development provides a higher degree of responsiveness and faster resolution to security vulnerabilities than proprietary operating system vendors can provide. The combination of open code accessibility and the leverage associated with the large number of developers using and testing the software provide critical differentiators. Collaboration, peer review, and rapid feedback are enabled in global real time.

Fixes

To ensure we are responsive to customers needing immediate fixes for other production-related issues, Red Hat Support and Engineering partner to deliver fixes in real time. After the customer and Red Hat have jointly monitored the situation and ensured we have built the best code possible to fix the problem, Red Hat Engineering includes the patch in the next quarterly update to be included in the mainstream product, ensuring continuity of quality support for that code.

New features

In addition to our real-time support for security and production-related issues, Red Hat provides quarterly updates to all major products, available for implementation through Red Hat Network whenever convenient for the customer. Updates include feature requests and fixes from across our customer base and are beta tested internally on the Red Hat QA test grid, Red Hat Beta customer network, ISV/IHV partner network and via the open source community of users.

We've dramatically improved our capabilities to position ourselves to become the most responsive vendor in the industry. Our customers are experiencing this progress firsthand:

- "In the past six months Red Hat support has made excellent progress in improving their turnaround times. We're happy with the progress and expect more great things to come." Brian Harvell, Sr. Technical Manager, America Online
- "Collectively EMC really appreciates the professionalism exhibited by you and your support staff at Red Hat." Mike Ames, Client Solutions Lead, EMC
- "The problems I had were quickly resolved in full. I just wish that other companies could have support staff this knowledgeable!" Iain Morrison, Grampian Valuation Joint Board, UK Government

Accountability

At Red Hat Global Client Services we are committed to supporting the customer from issue identification to resolution. Our deep relationships with major software and hardware partners enable us to provide a quality of

support our competition can't match. Our Technical Account Managers (TAMs) take ownership of the problem and work with our partners to ensure successful resolution for our clients:

- "The professionalism and expertise of Red Hat exceeded our expectations during the whole project. We received advice and expert know-how going far beyond the Red Hat Enterprise Linux operation system ranging from design and implementation of a very advanced Oracle 9i RAC, tuning tips on system and application level, to troubleshooting on an even deeper hardware level. Red Hat services really were the major contributor to the successful completion of our project." Gerrit-Leonhard Stein, IT Manager at PLUS Finanzservice GmbH
- "Red Hat Enterprise Linux has worked very well, and the support was great—it made my first experience with Linux a good one—I'm now committed to Linux. If I'd been working for a company, there would likely have been an IT department set up Linux and train me how to use it. As an independent, moving to Linux without IT support was daunting, and that is where Red Hat support came in very handy." David Nelson, Integrated Circuit Designer

Proactive Approach

Heading off issues before they arise is one of the best ways to delight customers. Our consultants and support technicians do that in a number of ways. First, when we do encounter an issue that we believe could impact other clients, our support teams call those clients to help them understand the problem and the proposed fix. We also post the information in our Knowledgebase to ensure that the information is available to all customers—in an efficient way. We are committed to making this type of information ubiquitous in the open source world.

Ever received an unsolicited call from a technology support person to ask you if there is anything he or she can do to help? We have a deep understanding of our customers and their business and we are starting to reach out to them to provide just that. For example, during the 2004 holiday season, we identified the subset of our customers whose online businesses depend on systems stability and performance. We called every one of the companies to inform them that we had created a special "watch list" for customers requiring heightened support during the holidays.

In addition to reaching out to customers in advance of production support issues during critical business events, Red Hat proactively works with organizations on code auditing, testing, and vulnerability remediation to avoid security intrusion before it happens. Our security engineers are constantly innovating new technologies to help reduce the impact of future security

vulnerabilities. No doubt Red Hat's contribution to Linux and the open source community has helped make Linux the most secure operating system available.

Product and Services Health Check

Red Hat works with key customers to constantly evaluate and refine our product and service offerings. A critical component of this process is the annual Product and Services Health Check. Red Hat's Global Professional Services organization works directly with customers to build a client profile that comprehensively describes the client's IT infrastructure and needs, and provides an overview of their goals for Linux in their enterprise and for their relationship with Red Hat. We interview members of the customer's IT, application, and support staff to profile their experiences working with Red Hat.

Our Professional Services team also compiles information on support tickets the client has submitted. This process also encompasses the Red Hat solutions portfolio, and all issues or concerns with the build, release, or quality assurance tasks are logged.

Then we create a final report with recommendations for both internal process changes at Red Hat and for possible changes in the customers operating environment, product set, or relationship with Red Hat that would have a positive impact on their IT operations.

Ensuring Client Success

Knowledge. Responsiveness. Accountability. Proactive approach. Those are the qualities of service that clients expect. Those are the qualities we are striving to deliver through our customer experience at Red Hat. Providing knowledge, support, and advice are critical elements of any technology company's delivery model. Providing these services the way that customers want is how Red Hat ensures client success.

Proof of that success can be found in a recent study released by *CIO Insight* magazine. In the study, published December 2004, the magazine asked 1,050 IT executives which company does the best job at increasing revenues while lowering costs, solving the business problem it was paid to solve, and meeting ROI expectations. Their answer? Red Hat. Read the study at <http://www.redhat.com/promo/vendor/index.html>.

Learn more: www.redhat.com