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Demian Sellfors,
Chief Technology Officer
Media Temple Inc.

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boosting the reliability of Linux-based hosting activities

High-tech companies have enough worries without adding the uncertainty of unreliable computer systems to the mix. Imagine the frustration and disappointment facing information-technology (IT) staff at Media Temple, when they discovered that their production servers from Dell did not adequately support the Linux operating system. The debacle forced Media Temple to expend additional time and money to evaluate and implement a new set of computer systems.

“Our last vendor did a good job of portraying itself as a Linux leader,” recalls Media Temple’s Chief Technology Officer and Co-Founder Demian Sellfors. “In actuality, Dell’s support for Linux was only literature-deep, leading to problems with drivers and other aspects of the Linux kernel. We need systems to operate without fail, 24x7.”

protecting the interests of innovative customers

Privately held, Los Angeles-based Media Temple Inc. provides personal, reliable and highly secure web-hosting and application-development services. Its primary customers are web designers, web design studios, graphic design shops, ad agencies, brand developers, motion picture graphic experts and other new-media outfits – from small e-commerce storefronts to high-traffic Fortune 500 companies. According to Sellfors, Media Temple is “technology agnostic,” meaning it selects best-of-breed solutions irrespective of brand.

business results:

- Highly reliable ProLiant servers provide 24x7 uptime and steadfast support for the Linux operating system.
- HP Integrated Lights-Out technology (iLO and RILOE boards) decreased reactive support by 50 percent and also reduced travel costs.
- ProLiant servers deliver exceptional price/performance.
- Efficient, rack-mounted design reduces the cost of co-location agreements.



Sellfors was not about to make the same mistake twice. After the company's previous servers fell short in their support for the Linux operating system, he consulted with Ensim Corporation, a software company in Sunnyvale, CA, which supplies some of Media Temple's most important software applications. Ensim ensured Sellfors that ProLiant servers from the new HP would provide the high quality, dependable Linux support Media Temple customers required.

Media Temple placed a ProLiant server in its data center to run some of its Ensim software, and thus became familiar with the robust and reliable capabilities of the versatile ProLiant server line. "While the other servers failed, the ProLiant server kept running without a hitch," notes Sellfors. Following this clear demonstration of superior reliability – along with some additional testing and a thorough evaluation – Sellfors purchased rack-mounted ProLiant DL360 and DL380 servers running the Red Hat Linux operating system. "The cost-performance ratios of these rack-mounted ProLiant servers are unparalleled," adds Sellfors. "In addition to flawless support for Linux, they run continuously without any unplanned stops. ProLiant servers deliver the reliability our customers demand. HP has a solid understanding of the pressures facing web-hosting providers, and knows that downtime is not an option."

Media Temple retained HPM Networks, an HP reseller in San Francisco, to configure the new ProLiant servers to run its business-critical Ensim applications. Ensim Service Delivery Platform software allows the hosting company to rapidly deploy virtual servers, while Ensim WEBpliance software is used to build and manage profitable web-hosting service plans. "HP is an Internet-savvy company, which possesses valuable partnerships with companies, such as Ensim," says Sellfors. "For example, HP has laboratories dedicated to testing and troubleshooting applications in Linux environments. When you've got a 24x7 business to run, this kind of targeted testing is extremely valuable – both to us and to our customers."

managing in absentia with remote capabilities

Media Temple houses its server in a remote data center. With their space-saving design and redundant system architecture, the ProLiant DL360 and DL380 servers are the logical choice for this environment. According to Sellfors, HP leadership in the remote-management field was

another reason he selected ProLiant servers. A combination of HP Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) technology and Remote Insight Lights-Out Edition (RiLOE) boards, depending on which ProLiant model is in use, enable Media Temple's IT staff to manage their web-hosting infrastructure from their corporate headquarters. Available for all ProLiant servers, remote-management capabilities enable administrators to provision, update and maintain servers via a standard web interface.

"HP remote-management technology allows lesser-skilled workers to physically set up rack servers, while more highly skilled technicians can fully install and manage servers from a remote location," explains Sellfors. "This virtual-management capability helps us react quickly to maintenance issues. We reduced our reactive support time by more than 50 percent, and decreased our travel costs. iLO makes our whole operation more efficient, and this makes for happy customers."

HP remote-management utilities allow Media Temple to provide the equivalent of on-site service, while permitting significant savings through its remote data center environment. Being able to respond rapidly through remote management gives Media Temple a competitive advantage.

Says Sellfors: "Without these remote-management utilities, we would have to call our co-location host, find a technician, explain the problem (probably over a bad cell phone connection in a noisy computer center) and then go back and forth until the problem is solved. With iLO and the RiLOE cards, by contrast, we can take matters into our own hands. HP has the most mature remote-management tools available on the market today."

planning for an efficient future

For Sellfors, an efficient system architecture, outstanding support for Linux, mature remote-management utilities and exceptional performance all add up to one thing – the ProLiant platform is ideal for Media Temple and its demanding customer base, which continues to push the limits of media and website design. "HP has the most powerful and reliable servers I have ever used in my ten years of IT experience," he concludes. "They are easy to install, and their remote-management capabilities make our business run more efficiently, improving customer satisfaction. Nearly all of our future technology plans involve HP in one way or another."

what makes it work:

hardware:

- ProLiant DL360 and DL380 G2 servers
- Remote Insight Lights-Out Edition (RiLOE) boards
- Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) chips available on ProLiant DL360 G2 servers

software:

- Ensim Service Delivery Platform
- Ensim WEBpliance
- Red Hat Linux operating system

services:

- HPM Networks, an HP reseller in San Francisco, helped configure the ProLiant servers to run business-critical Ensim applications.





for more information

For more information on how working with HP can benefit you, contact your local HP representative or reseller or visit hp.com/solutions/linux.

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