



Ubuntu provides a secure and easily accessible system for German Pilots

Enhanced security, outstanding support and reduced maintenance times – Ubuntu was the optimal choice for Contact Air GmbH.

Requirements

- ⚡ Easy integration
- ⚡ Strong hardware support
- ⚡ Enhanced security
- ⚡ Reduced maintenance
- ⚡ Easy deployment and use

Background

Contact Air is a regional airline operating exclusively for Lufthansa German Airlines. They run a fleet of 13 turboprop aircraft flown by 120 pilots using notebooks for performance calculations, logging, training, documentation and communication.

Issue

Early in 2006 Contact Air needed to upgrade all 120 notebooks and find a Linux distribution that would support their new hardware. The data presented to the pilots is safety critical, and the chosen system had to be proven and demonstrated to the airline authorities for certified use in the aircraft.

“Proprietary operating systems don't offer the same integrity and security as Linux, so we knew we had to stay with Linux. However, the Linux operating system we were running didn't work with the new notebooks. Plus, we always found it too big, too slow and it didn't distinguish between server and client needs.” said Jens Technau, Software Developer at Contact Air.

Solution

Jens chose to install Ubuntu across all 120 notebooks. Jens continues, “The new hardware (DELL Latitude 420) is completely supported by Ubuntu which 'just worked' when other Linux operating systems didn't even get off the ground.

To conclude Jens said, “The user experience is vital and Ubuntu has helped to close the user-friendliness gap with proprietary software that our pilots often complained about. Ubuntu saved us from throwing in the Linux towel and using proprietary software instead. The superb hardware support and short boot time of Ubuntu finally led to the decision to stay with Linux.”



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*Jens Technau
Software Developer,
Contact Air*

Results

The pilots at Contact Air have been using Ubuntu since early 2006. It has provided a robust, stable, secure platform that enables them to work within a paperless cockpit environment. The pilots use G3/UMTS in their hotel rooms to connect to the network and to make performance calculations before take off. There are many thousands of flying charts stored on the notebooks and these are updated from the central server each time the pilot logs on to the system using the WLAN.

