



# Linux ISV Forum: ISV Inhibitors

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Nelson Pratt & Craig Thomas

*LWE*  
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# Linux in the Enterprise

**OSDL's mission is to accelerate the use of  
Linux for enterprise computing**



***Issues facing the ISV eco-system represent one of the largest  
barriers to Linux adoption***

**Premise for this meeting:  
Linux is not as ISV friendly as it should be  
And Linux adoption would accelerate if it  
were more friendly**



# OSDL Qualitative Research on this Issue

## End-Users

- Feedback from OSDL User Advisory Councils
- 45+ F1000 companies (US, EMEA)
- Questions focused on Linux application deployment on different distros within the same organization

## ISVs

- 20+ ISV's surveyed so far
- Questions focused on identifying most significant Linux porting/support barriers

***Ongoing OSDL study in progress to discover ISV issues with Linux***



# End-User Feedback

**Vendor lock-in (at any level) is not desirable**

**End-Users who deploy multiple Linux distributions want an application to run the same on each distro they use**

**Linux application development standards are a good thing**

- LSB is on the right track
- LSB does not go far enough (today) to ensure #2 above

Source: OSDL, 2004



# ISV Feedback

## **Value of Linux openness counter-balanced by lack of consistency**

- Linux installed base is not homogeneous
- Lack of homogeneity results in higher cost, lower ROI

## **Development tools and developer support programs are inadequate**

## **Documentation for Linux system is not adequate compared with commercial Unix systems**

- Documentation of new features typically lag the development of the code
- Example: printing sub-systems, device drivers

Source: OSDL ISV Forum; ISV Survey, 2004



# ISV Issues List

## **Poorly communicated changes between minor releases within a single distribution hurts ROI**

- Testing costs rise
- Complete re-validation of apps for each minor revision
  - Two particularly painful areas: glibc & driver changes

## **ISV porting and maintenance efforts**

- Differences in optional APIs/ABIs between distributions creates multiple development and test environments
- Different application installation, packaging methodology and locations
- New revisions of Linux Distributions may break application code

Source: OSDL ISV Forum; ISV Survey, 2004



# ISV Issues List (cont)

## **Complexity of assessing which Linux distribution(s) to support**

- Default ISV behaviour: support limited number of distributions
  - Falls short of 100% coverage
  - Severely limits global market potential
- Some ISVs choose to wait until market size grows



# OSDL Objective

Create an environment where  
ISV's can easily support and  
run their applications on  
multiple Linux distributions



# Steps Toward the Goal

## Review/expand issues list

**What are we missing?**



# Next steps

## **Establish OSDL ISV Forum to “work” issues list with appropriate parties**

- A “place” where ISVs, distributions and end-users come together to address enterprise-Linux application issues

## **Potential ISV Forum activities**

- Collectively define a “value line” of features that are common throughout all distributions
- Vehicle to share common commodity programs and utilities
- Identify packages most commonly installed/deployed by end users

