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Why Migrate off of the Unisys 2200 to UNIX or Windows?

Migration to UNIX/Windows should be seen as a 'first step' in the modernization of legacy systems to new hardware and software technology. It allows for a smooth transition, without upsetting existing business processes that are so critical to an organization's operations, and in many cases, provide its competitive advantage.

Migration to UNIX/Windows opens the door to industry standards, low cost hardware, standard tools and easy integration of new technology; such as the Internet and Relational Databases, and true three-tier architectures in which presentation management, business logic and data storage are independent.

Financial Considerations

1. Hardware maintenance on 2200 Series systems is very expensive. Parts are available from just one source and a high premium is paid to service proprietary technology. By contrast, UNIX/Windows servers are assembled out of commodity components, much lower in cost to maintain.

2. Software licensing is very expensive for the 2200 Series. Many separate software components, all proprietary, must be paid for on a subscription basis. Costs escalate rapidly for adding capacity, such as users or CPU's. By contrast, UNIX is available as a "public domain" offering at no cost, or very little cost for branded offerings.

3. HVAC and electrical costs are very high for mainframe-style systems like the 2200. They also require sophisticated raised-floor environments and take up a lot of space. By contrast, UNIX/Windows servers are small and do not require special HVAC capacity or space.

Hardware Considerations

1. Unisys appears to be slowly getting out of the mainframe hardware business, the future for the 2200 Series is limited as some models are now under announced obsolescence.

2. Hardware performance is lagging industry developments, especially on non-ClearPath machines.

3. Hardware pricing is at a premium, due to uniqueness of the components.

4. ClearPath provides better price performance, but there is still a surcharge for components that, if bought separately, would be less expensive and provide more functionality.

5. System maintenance from the vendor is more and more difficult to obtain as more and more older engineers retire or leave the field.

6. There is little granularity when expanding systems, with only a few models to choose from.

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Why Migrate … (continued

Software Development

1. There are few modern development tools available. Language support and development by the vendor is at a standstill. There have been no significant additions to the 2200 Series development environment in many years. All new development has been focused on "surrounding" technology.

2. Using separate small test or development systems is prohibitively expensive. This in turn makes required technology experimentation for new applications next to impossible. This forms a major obstacle to application maintenance and improvement.   It also significantly increases project risks.

3. Compile times on UNIX/Windows are measured in seconds, rather than minutes. It is possible to compile all your source code in the time it used to take to compile one program.

4. Hardware and software limitations make it harder, and more expensive, to develop new applications.

5. Migrating preserves the programming API's, and allows retention of existing programming skills.

6. New applications on UNIX/Windows can be created for the Internet and WWW.

Staffing/Operating Issues

1. Software development, on mainframes in general, and on the 2200 specifically, is perceived to be a "dead-end" career path. The 2200 is definitely not 'cool', and attracting young and creative talent is difficult.

2. It is hard to find people with the skill set required to run the exiting system.

3. You have to train your own staff, since there are few education offerings left.

4. As it is perceived to be a "dead-end" career path, it is hard to retain people with the skill sets you need.

5. There are few tools to provide automation of operations. Most organizations are forced to use local OS 2200 modifications and other "parlour tricks" to work around the operational limitations of the 2200.

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