

The Business Value of Standardizing on Red Hat Enterprise Linux



Ryan Caskey

Research Manager, Infrastructure Software Platforms and BuyerView Operations, Worldwide Infrastructure Research, IDC



Megan Szurley

Business Value Manager, Business Value Strategy Practice, IDC

Business Value Highlights

\$373,000 in average annual benefits per 100 VMs

313% three-year ROI

12-month payback period

34% reduction in Linux-based distributions

26% reduction in physical servers

32% reduction in three-year total cost of operations

34% more efficient IT infrastructure teams

33% more efficient security teams

48% faster on-premises virtual server deployment

46% quicker to complete security updates

43% quicker cloud-based virtual server deployment

47% quicker to respond to security vulnerability

33% more productive developers

48% more applications developed per year

54% reduction in unplanned downtime

76% improvement in MTTR

19% more productive compliance teams

Executive Summary

Organizations continue to find themselves at odds with striking the balance between maintaining their Linux operating system environments and the workloads that they support, all while being stretched for time and resources. Making matters more complex is the proliferation of the cloud and next-generation workloads such as AI and ML.

As a result, IT departments often find that their Linux environments have become quite unwieldy in terms of the number of distributions that require their support. This support generally includes day-to-day tasks such as provisioning, patching, and updating their Linux footprints and continuously monitoring them to make sure they are correctly configured, up to date, and secure. Automation capabilities have helped with this to an extent, but many organizations are still finding themselves struggling to integrate these capabilities across their fleet of operating systems.

This ultimately raises the question of why organizations do not standardize on a particular Linux distribution more often. In this Business Value white paper, we delve into organizations' Linux estates as they relate to their standardizations on the Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) operating system and the benefits they can expect to achieve by doing so. For the purposes of this study, we define RHEL "standardization" as an initiative undertaken by an organization to deploy more RHEL in its environments that increases the portion of its total deployments running the operating system to 50% or more.

IDC spoke with organizations that have standardized on RHEL between their on-premises and cloud infrastructure environments, with many running Red Hat Lightspeed, formerly known as Red Hat Insights, in tandem. They cited numerous benefits that they realized from their standardization efforts, including higher efficacies and efficiencies of their IT, developer, and security teams; improved oversight and risk management of their environments; better compliance; reduced downtime; faster go-to-market efforts; and better confidence in their infrastructures to support digital transformation efforts. Further, many of these operational benefits helped save staff time, which in turn allowed them to undertake net new projects thanks to these time savings.

IDC conducted research that explored the value and benefits for organizations standardizing on RHEL to simplify the deployment and management of Linux-based workloads and environments.

Based on an extensive data set and employing a specialized Business Value methodology, IDC calculates that these customers will achieve benefits worth an annual average of \$26 million on a per-organization basis (\$3.7 million per 100 VMs) and a three-year ROI of 313% by:

- Standardizing IT operations to Red Hat Enterprise Linux to simplify their VM management and the management of their Linux-based workloads
- Improving the overall performance and productivity of IT infrastructure, application development, and other teams

- Upleveling risk management profiles by improving overall security postures and the performance of security teams
- Improving application development operations to better support business operations
- Better managing business risk by reducing the impacts of unplanned downtime and optimizing regulatory compliance