



Reducing Risk and Improving Security of Cloud Deployments: Why Choose Vendor-Supported Linux Over Self-Supported Linux



White Paper

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Sponsored by: Red Hat
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IDC OPINION

Operating systems (OSs) are a central pillar of the enterprise infrastructure stack. They are the glue that binds together software applications and the physical system hardware that sits underneath them. Over time, OSs have continued to evolve with the changing needs and dynamics of the enterprise IT space as organizations undergo digital transformation (DX) aimed at better serving customer and stakeholder needs, which have allowed them to unlock greater business value. As enterprise IT consumption patterns have changed over time and incorporated cloud technologies, the OSs in support of these workloads have adapted as well to further meet these needs.

For the major enterprise OS platforms, Linux has become increasingly popular among customers over time, which is a trend that has been long documented by IDC. Linux boasts a variety of benefits, including performance, security, flexibility, and cost, which makes it an appealing choice over other operating system types, which customers can expect regardless of location (traditional datacenters, private clouds, and public clouds) or deployment type (bare metal, virtualized, and containerized). With this in mind, it should come as no surprise that Linux has become quite ubiquitous within organizations over time. In fact, IDC research shows that Linux now sits on more physical servers than any other OS platform¹. It also has long since overtaken the majority of the virtualized OS installed base, particularly in the public cloud.

The rise of the public cloud cannot be understated in today's enterprise IT ecosystem as organizations around the world have been able to take advantage of compute and storage services on demand in support of their workloads. The explosion in demand for public cloud services has persisted for over a decade and was only further amplified over the past several years during the global COVID-19 pandemic. Its trajectory since then has remained largely consistent as organizations continue to create and move workloads into the public cloud. As a result, we estimate spending on public cloud infrastructure will exceed that of traditional IT deployments for the first time in 2023.

Many of the top concerns around performance, security, and cost are shared among operating system and public cloud services users. Some will attempt to use self-supported software solutions in addressing these needs to minimize initial costs but often fail to realize the intrinsic and other

¹See Worldwide Server Operating System Environments Market Shares, 2022: Steady Growth Persists (IDC #US5308623, July 2023) for more details.

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