

Cloud-first for the future

Fueling new growth for SUSE
with a reimagined IT landscape
in the cloud



Global leader in innovative, reliable and enterprise-grade open source solutions

SUSE Software Solutions, a global leader in innovative, reliable and enterprise-grade open source solutions empowers customers to innovate everywhere – from the data center, to the cloud, to the edge and beyond. SUSE puts the “open” back in open source.

When SUSE was sold by Micro Focus to investment company EQT Partners, it was a landmark in the company’s 30-year journey from enterprise Linux pioneer to global leader in open-source innovation.

The decisions it took at this key juncture would shape its future for years to come: What was the best way to manage its business and IT after the acquisition? Should it purchase the existing technology stack? What were the risks and opportunities ahead?

SUSE engaged Accenture to help it discover, plan and navigate the best way forward. Together, they reviewed SUSE’s existing IT set-up. There was an extraordinary opportunity in scope.

With a complex legacy systems and applications landscape, and a heavy reliance on manual processes, the company would be able to use this acquisition as a springboard for reinvention.

Change was essential and for SUSE, this was the perfect time to start afresh. Free to leave behind the old ways of working and challenge the status quo, it could build on its strong brand to create a new, standalone company—purpose-built for future growth.

First, SUSE asked Accenture to carve out its business from the Micro Focus group of companies. The next step? Setting up SUSE’s new business processes and IT landscape from scratch.

It was a huge undertaking. And, right from the start, the time pressure was intense. Under the transitional service agreement (TSA), SUSE would have to pay each month to use Micro Focus’s systems and processes after the legal separation. The sooner it could stand alone, the better—for strategic and economic reasons.

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When tech meets human ingenuity

Running 100% in the cloud

With the clock ticking, Accenture designed and built a greenfield end-to-end IT landscape for SUSE—running 100% in the cloud.

Accenture assembled best-of-breed applications for core business processes—where possible using standard functionality to minimize customization.

These included the SAP S/4HANA Public Cloud version (Procurement, Accounting and billing), Adobe Marketo (for Marketing), Salesforce Sales & Service Cloud (sales), Workday HCM (HR), as well as an analytics and reporting engine based on AWS S3 and Power BI and an enterprise integration middleware for harmonized and flexible integration via Dell Boomi cross the architecture.

Designed from the outset to be cloud first, the core infrastructure now runs on Amazon Web Services, featuring cutting-edge LAN-as-a-Service network technology. Naturally, SUSE runs its own leading SUSE Linux Enterprise Server operating system.

Accenture conceptualized, planned and implemented almost all of this new IT landscape—from strategy to execution. It also managed the few implementations performed by third parties; for example, working with Avanade to set up new workstations and laptops for SUSE's employees.

When tech meets human ingenuity

With such a diverse technology spread, Accenture needed to rapidly bring together the power of “One Accenture”, assembling a diverse team of 200 specialists from its businesses in 25 locations worldwide. This included strategy, business and technology, as well as specialists from Accenture Interactive.

Right from the start, end-to-end know-how, human ingenuity and deep tech specialisms across this team were synthesized and channeled into SUSE. The goal? Ensuring that the company’s own people would be equipped to “run the ship” going forward.

SUSE’s business functions worked closely with Accenture’s people. To achieve a successful outcome against such a tight timetable, communications had to be seamless as the teams collaborated to rebuild the business architecture from the ground up.

The one-team mindset helped to generate excitement around forming a lean organization, built for growth. Leaving behind the company’s legacy systems and processes provided the perfect opportunity to adopt new ways of working. And SUSE was quick to embrace the enormous potential to achieve more, smarter, through a human + machine dynamic.

As SUSE recruited new people, Accenture trained them and gradually handed over more tasks to them. By the end of the project, SUSE was able to operate independently.

Because collaboration and knowledge transfer between Accenture and SUSE had been so seamless, the transformation was soon self-sustaining. As Sander Huyts (COO) from SUSE said: “Accenture built a new house for the company. All we needed to do was move in, switch on the

lights and continue doing what we do best.”

Against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was completed within 16 months. That was 8 weeks ahead of the divestiture deadline, and 16 weeks earlier than planned. It was also much faster than the 24 months it would have taken to carve out and re-integrate the old IT stack.

In July 2020, with the new IT stack in place, SUSE went ahead with its acquisition of Rancher Labs, a market-leading, Enterprise Kubernetes Management vendor based in Cupertino, California.



A valuable difference

Ahead of schedule

By going live two months ahead of schedule, SUSE realized significant savings on the TSA fees it would otherwise have had to pay to Micro Focus. But that's just the beginning.

SUSE is now poised to grow its business in completely new directions. With new, touchless finance and sales processes, built round the customer, its partners (consultancies and tech companies) can easily buy and self-register their products online. They automatically receive an invoice a month later.

The user experience has been transformed. Most queries can now be handled automatically, with manual intervention reserved for the most complex interactions. The result? Partners enjoy a better experience. SUSE boosts its operational efficiency. And as its business grows, SUSE's cloud-based billing can scale rapidly to process many millions more invoices.

Augmented by automation and AI, SUSE's technical sales teams are also cross-selling much more effectively. Sales have already risen by 27%. As proof of SUSE's increased agility, a premium offer in SAP Endorsed Apps was established within weeks as a new route to market. Furthermore, swift integration of its acquisition of Rancher Labs was enhanced by Order to Cash/Core Finance integration in just 3 months from the day of announce.

That's not all. With a new flexible, scalable platform underpinning its operations, SUSE is well-placed to attract and retain the best developer talent from the open-source Linux ecosystem.

Innovation and productivity have been turbo-charged too. With state-of-the-art tools at their fingertips, developers across the Linux community can seamlessly collaborate and share code. And that's key to new growth for the business from now on.