

*An open systems server has a wealth of free features that no one software vendor could ever provide*

## The open systems advantage

### **Your web server can be the foundation for your local or global business**

The penetration of *open systems* into the world of the Internet has been so profound that the term scarcely requires definition here. Free and technically superior equivalents to monopolistic operating systems and application software are responsible for nearly all of the breadth and richness of the Internet environment.

But you may not have known that an open systems Internet server can host a broad array of business and marketing software, whilst fulfilling the infrastructure needs of your business itself, without costing a cent in subscriptions or software licensing fees.

### **The origin of open systems excellence**

Open operating systems such as Linux were conceived in university environments rather than in software businesses. As a result, they were developed as technologies rather than products.

Superior functionality, instead of mere market dominance, was the

original goal. This principle manifests today in an accumulated wealth of features that no single company's software offerings will ever be able to surpass.

### **Open systems for the virtual corporation**

The organization of open systems allows greater flexibility and control over computer system and network resources. This is especially important when business web sites grow in size, networking demands, and complexity.

When *businesses experience the same growth pattern*, a Linux hosting service can expand to meet these needs with fully scalable services including:

- POP and IMAP email facilities
- FTP for local and remote file sharing and document archival
- Tools for developing dynamically shared content
- Server-side scripting capabilities for network-based applications

In the *virtual corporation* model, a business is operated and managed by individuals or small groups working in potentially remote locations. Such a business can grow unchecked with an open system at the heart of both its business infrastructure and its marketing efforts.

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*Hundreds of software tools are free to be adapted to the marketing needs of your business*

## **"Package" vs. "Product"**

An open systems server will help your business escape from the limitation of having to buy new software products whenever you need to expand the capabilities of your Internet server.

When you identify a feature that you would like to make available to your customers or use internally in your virtual business, you simply download a *package* file that works much like a self-extracting archive on a PC client.

Some packages must be purchased or licensed, but most are available free. Here are some examples (all free) that provide excellent tools for marketing:

- **mailman**: a manager of opt-in email lists via a web interface and autoresponse addresses
- **phpBB**: a discussion forum tool (to identify/anticipate customer needs)
- **mambo**: an automated Internet content creation and management system
- **OScommerce**: a package to create and manage online shopping carts
- **phpWebLog**: advanced blogging software allowing multiple threads
- **MySQL**: the most comprehensive, rigorously tested, and widely capable database software available



Robert Phair is a marketing designer and consultant with fifteen years of experience providing businesses with innovative strategies for success.

A good marketing design consultant, especially one with IT experience, can help you install and configure these packages as necessary to meet the specific needs of your business.

## **An example of a custom marketing application**

The native scripting facilities of open systems will give you the flexibility to provide features for your web server that may not be available either commercially or with a free package.

For instance, suppose you have produced a PDF newsletter (see [Issue 01](#)) with old issues you would like to use as offerings to draw new customers.

Rather than simply posting the old PDF files to your web server and hoping that customers contact you after reading them, post descriptive web pages asking for customer email addresses before emailing the links to their chosen documents.

## **Two "invisible" benefits**

Never mind the propaganda you may get from a certain software monopoly.

Open systems are unrivaled in their *security*, since flaws are more easily identified and more quickly repaired, and *ease of support* — translating into increased uptime, reduced business costs, and more customer satisfaction.

## **Become part of a higher web server standard**

Contact CoTangent today for a wealth of marketing resources and to design a powerful, cost-effective open systems server for your business.

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