

# Sony Online Entertainment Replaces Oracle with EnterpriseDB



Massively multiplayer online games leader chose EnterpriseDB because of its compatibility with Oracle, enterprise-class stability and performance, and extraordinary technical support.

## Massively Multiplayer Online Gaming

Sony Online Entertainment LLC (SOE) is a recognized worldwide leader in massively multiplayer online games, with millions of gamers around the globe having enjoyed the company's products over the years. SOE has developed or published many ground-breaking and genre-defining games, including EverQuest<sup>®</sup>, EverQuest II<sup>®</sup>, Star Wars Galaxies<sup>®</sup>, PlanetSide<sup>®</sup>, The Matrix Online<sup>®</sup>, and many more.

SOE's database needs are considerable, and its database applications are the very definition of mission-critical: hundreds of thousands of online users play SOE's games around the clock, and each game is an extraordinarily database-intensive application. Before SOE selected EnterpriseDB, dozens of Oracle 9i RAC clusters were in use. In addition, SOE deploys databases in its back-office operations and to support its user forum and online auction websites.

Examining its business, SOE found that its Oracle databases were extremely expensive and that Oracle's licensing practices were inflexible and restrictive. At the same time, the company experienced a constant demand for the creation and maintenance of additional databases. Like many other companies today, SOE hoped that open source software might provide a solution to this business challenge.

## Building on a History of Open Source Success

SOE has a history of success with open source software. The company has already successfully deployed Linux, Tomcat, Apache, and Hibernate. As early as 2005, the company began to investigate open source alternatives to Oracle that would have both a lower TCO and greater licensing flexibility. SOE also sought to leverage their valuable asset of in-house Oracle talent. SOE used four primary criteria in its selection of an open source database:

- Ability to leverage its existing database administrator and developer talent
- Ease of moving SOE's existing Oracle applications to the new database
- Commercial-grade quality and reliability, including backup and recovery standards, to support mission-critical applications
- Scalable, high performance execution

## **EnterpriseDB: A Clear Winner**

At the end of a thorough review and selection process, SOE chose Postgres Plus<sup>®</sup> Advanced Server. An important factor in SOE's decision was Postgres Plus Advanced Server's ability to run database applications written for Oracle. SOE found that 80% of the applications it had selected to move from Oracle ran on Postgres Plus Advanced Server with little or no modification and that its Oracle-trained staff could immediately work comfortably and efficiently with Postgres Plus Advanced Server. Another important factor was Postgres Plus Advanced Server's PostgreSQL foundation, which guaranteed the reliability and stability that SOE required. Finally, Postgres Plus Advanced Server was available for only a small fraction of the cost of Oracle.

## **From Oracle to EnterpriseDB**

SOE has evaluated the move of the massively multiplayer game The Matrix Online from Oracle to Postgres Plus Advanced Server, and the transition is planned for later this year. SOE is very pleased with the results of its testing to date, and it anticipates that new massively multiplayer online games will be deployed on EnterpriseDB in 2009. When the deployments are complete, Postgres Plus Advanced Server will be running on hundreds of SOE servers around the world.

## **High Availability on Postgres Plus Advanced Server**

SOE's online games require high-availability database solutions. To achieve this, SOE will run Postgres Plus Advanced Server on a multi-node cluster with an idle node available for failover. Tests run by SOE have shown a very reasonable failover time using EnterpriseDB in this configuration when scripted at the operating system level. The renowned stability of PostgreSQL additionally means that Postgres Plus Advanced Server's failover capability will seldom be needed.

## **Online Game User Forums on Postgres Plus Advanced Server**

SOE uses custom J-Forums to power the user forums for its online games. Previously, SOE used a hosted forum solution that ran on MySQL. When SOE found that the hosted solution couldn't easily be modified and new features couldn't easily be added, J-Forum was brought in-house and run on Postgres Plus Advanced Server. The deployment so far has been a resounding success. Half of SOE's online forums are now live on Postgres Plus Advanced Server, and the remainder will go live on EnterpriseDB in the coming months.

## **World-Class Technical Support**

SOE is receiving terrific technical support from the EnterpriseDB team. Callbacks have been rapid, and the abundance of helpful solutions and example code compares very favorably with the technical support SOE receives from Oracle.

## **What's Next for SOE and EnterpriseDB?**

SOE is extremely pleased with the success it has already had with EnterpriseDB and plans to continue moving applications from Oracle to Postgres Plus Advanced Server to realize even greater cost savings. SOE's future massively multiplayer online games are expected to be deployed solely on EnterpriseDB and, within 18 months, hundreds of servers around the world will run Postgres Plus Advanced Server. Open source software from EnterpriseDB has provided SOE with a solution to its

business challenge: SOE has found a way to reduce its database TCO by nearly 80% and has realized a licensing flexibility that is critical to its organization.