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MKS Toolkit Case Study

Cross-Platform Solution Helps Organization Speak Members' Language

Ironically, the European Network of Excellence in Human Language Technologies (ELSNET), an organization dedicated to bringing together the key players in language and speech technology, had a language problem of its own. To maximize its resources, the organization needed a tool to develop applications so that its Windows and UNIX platforms could talk to each other.

The Situation

One of the greatest challenges developers face today is supporting their applications across different platforms. The growth of Windows and the continued demand for UNIX in today's global organizations has created a need for robust and reliable administrative solutions. To be efficient and perform well, a mixed computing environment demands a consistent set of commands and utilities. A significant number of corporate developers are fluent in the UNIX environment, so utilities that are UNIX-based yet operate in Windows can instantly leverage the skills of UNIX-trained people onto new platforms. To solve this problem, officials at ELSNET chose MKS Toolkit for Developers, a product that offers the flexibility of using both UNIX commands and Windows commands in the same script, which let them significantly reduce maintenance overhead.

Scripting languages and familiar tools ensure that the valuable programming expertise of UNIX developers, and the power of commands such as scp, sftp, secure X, KornShell, CShell, awk, telnet server, xterm, rsh, rlogin, secure utilities and Perl, do not have to be compromised because of the introduction of Windows. Such utilities also reduce the immediate need for cross-platform training.

The Solution

ELSNET was in dire need of just such a solution. One of the organization's main activities involves running a large international network of private and academic institutions computers in the field of language and speech technology. Based in Europe, they could no longer afford to pretend that seven bits are enough to express themselves properly in all languages of the European Union (currently more than 20 and growing).

"The editor is probably the tool that one uses most," said Steven Krauwer, project manager for ELSNET. "The more flexible and customizable it is, the better it is, both in terms of quality and of productivity. The enhanced Vi and Viw features give our people the ability to customize their development environment, the way they like it," Krauwer added.

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