

# IDC STUDY: WINDOWS NT\* IN TRANSITION FROM OFFICE TO ENTERPRISE

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While Windows NT\* continues to gain ground in European companies, it is still mainly used for office automation and file-and-print applications, and emerging for business applications, according to a new European survey by International Data Corporation (IDC).

User intentions to migrate their core business applications currently running on S/390, Unix, or OS/400 to NT are still modest, says the IDC study, "The Challenge of NT's Transition from Office to Enterprise."

In conducting the survey at the request of IBM, IDC polled 849 small, medium, and large companies in September in European countries including Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, and the U.K.

Calling the decision for NT adoption "no longer a passionate issue" either for users or for vendors, IDC says that NT users praise the operating system for its ease of use and broad availability of applications. The study also identifies these areas where NT should develop to facilitate its transition into a core enterprise operating system: high-performance middleware, allowing NT to run mission-critical applications and connect with existing information systems; ease of integration, security, scalability, and manageability; skills and vendors needed to integrate complete NT solutions into the enterprise.

IDC reports that the market is "wide open" for NT suppliers capable of responding, and notes that companies such as IBM are well-positioned to become "complete solution providers, especially in the e-business context." "These positive considerations are even higher for surveyed companies having multi-OS architectures which, as we have seen, are in the majority," said IDC.

Key findings of the IDC study include:

- 89% of the respondents use, or plan to use, Windows NT within the next 12 months.
- Nearly 80% of sites surveyed rely on multiple operating

systems, with 10% NT-only sites, and 11% other OS-only sites.

- 61% of respondents said they had no application migration plans from other OS to Windows NT in the coming 12 months.

- 70% of respondents use NT for office applications, compared to just 23% who use it for industry-specific software.

- e-business applications such as Web transactions require an operating system that can link to core business applications.

- NT users rate the OS highly on ease of use and applications, but express desire for improved middleware and integration.

- The market is "wide open" for large-scale NT solution providers as no vendor has dominant mindshare.

IDC said the study was designed to provide an in-depth understanding for the rate of progression of the Windows NT operating system, the factors driving or inhibiting market development, and the application context.

According to the IDC study, the position of Unix is potentially threatened by NT coming from "loosely structured applications and connectivity services." But Unix is also "relatively well protected" by its strong integration with business applications and its key relationship as the preferred OS for database management systems (DBMS) applications.

IDC concludes by noting that users "strongly desire" complete NT solutions, meaning they do not want to spend too many resources on partial solutions for Windows NT administration and middleware tools. At present, the mindshare of vendors and partners able to supply complete NT solutions is "highly fragmented," IDC said.

Users cited vendor names in relation to suppliers of servers and software tools, IDC said. It is noteworthy that IBM was cited as among the few suppliers of complete NT solutions. "These scores indicate that the market is wide open for a

large company able to bring credibility, solid integration methodology, and an easy-to-implement portfolio of management and middleware tools," IDC said.

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