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Maharam is a New York based company offering commercial architects and interior designers a comprehensive collection of contract textiles, including products for seating, walls, drapery, cubicle curtains, and panel applications. Five specific "influences" shape Maharam's design efforts, which include archival textiles, new technical materials, fabrics drawn from innovation in fashion, environmentally conscious products, and classics that are evocative of the earliest contract textiles.

In keeping up with its computer services, Maharam provides a Web-based interface that enables their clients to order product samples, check on inventory, and monitor the status of their orders. The back-office ERP system that was set up to manage all these transactions depended only on one Unix-based server, which had suffered from hours of downtime due to hardware failures.

To remedy this situation, Maharam's IT team started looking for a robust, low-cost Linux clustering solution that would insure the high availability they required for their ERP system. A similar solution on Unix was just too cost prohibitive to consider.

During the LinuxWorld Expo in New York City, they came across SteelEye's LifeKeeper demo at the Compaq Computer pavilion. "In seeing a live demo of LifeKeeper," said Salvatore De Augustino, Maharam's network administration manager, "I was impressed with its ease of configuration and its GUI interface. Also, it met the requirements we were looking for in a clustering solution. SteelEye's LifeKeeper, Compaq Computers, and Linux provide us with a powerful solution at a fraction of the cost of a Unix solution."

After a short evaluation phase, the IT team deployed SteelEye's LifeKeeper for Linux with Data Replication in production on two Compaq Proliant ML 530 servers running RedHat. "We now have piece of mind," Salavatore added. "In case of a hardware or software failure, we will have only 40 seconds of downtime instead of up to 4 hours that we have experienced in the past."

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