

Novell Layoffs Cast A Cloud Over Big-Business Linux

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Created 07/11/2005 - 8:53pm

Submitted by srlinuxx on Monday 7th of November 2005 08:53:16 PM Filed under [OSS](#) [1]

For big companies that want to use the Linux operating system and get business-level support, there are only two main options: Red Hat Inc. and Novell. And one of those looked shaky last week.

Novell hasn't found the trick to combining its once-successful NetWare business and the opportunities presented by Linux and open source. The company in August reported a 5% drop in fiscal third-quarter revenue from a year ago, to \$290.2 million, and a 91% plunge in net income, to \$2.1 million. In contrast, Linux rival Red Hat reported a 42% year-to-year increase in its most-recent quarterly revenue, to \$65.7 million, with net income of \$16.7 million.

In a tech market that likes to have choices, big-business Linux is looking more like a one-horse race.

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