



## Dennis R. Cowhey

Dennis, R. Cowhey, started Computer Insights, Inc. in 1981 as is currently CEO. He served for many years on the Illinois CPA Society Computer Information Systems Committee. He is a frequent author of articles for Industry Trade Magazines. Before starting Computer Insights, he served as Central District Manager for a division of Litton Industries (now part of Northrup Grumman). That company offered Inventory Control Systems to Retailers. Prior to that, he was a Credit and Financial Analyst for National Credit Office division of Dun & Bradstreet, Inc. He received his education at Chicago City College and DePaul University.

# THE BUSINESS EDGE 2.0 LINUX OFFERS A REAL CHOICE

## Fastener Software All Looks Alike

Fastener Distributors who are looking for software to run their companies face a daunting task. The software packages are very difficult to differentiate from one another. The salespeople seem to speak a different language and the answer to every question seems to be “no problem”. Yet there are stories galore of failed installations and million dollar losses because of software that didn’t fit the bill.

## Windows & SQL Server

One thing that makes most of the software look so similar is the fact that the vendors have mostly chosen Microsoft Windows and SQL Server for their operating platforms. Conventional wisdom says that is a good choice, but is it?

Computer Insights, Inc. has chosen a different path for the latest version of The BUSINESS EDGE 2.0. We have chosen Linux and IBM. We have good reasons for our choice. Because of the Linux environment, all peripheral programs are tightly integrated. With a typical Windows system, using best effort integration, the user will not be notified of a fax that fails to go out. The record of the failure is in a separate “bolt on” program. Similarly, the Wireless Warehouse is usually not tightly integrated, so when a transaction is passed to the Wireless Warehouse module, it is no longer visible in the main system until it has been allocated and passed back. If a Wireless Gun goes down, the transaction is “stuck” in the Wireless Warehouse system. None of these issues affect The BUSINESS EDGE 2.0 since all of the add on modules are tightly integrated parts of the core program. Our intense vertical market focus means that the add on modules that our clients need are already available; we won’t have to create them as custom modules. This saves our clients time and money.



## Linux vs. Windows

Ken Hess of PC World wrote an article a couple of years ago that summed up the advantages of Linux over windows. He said:

- “Linux stability offers business owners the peace of mind that their applications won’t suffer lengthy outages due to operating system instability. Linux enjoys the same high uptimes (often measured in years) that its Unix cousins do. This stability means that Linux can support your “99.999 percent available” service requirements.”

- “Linux has the support of a worldwide community of developers who contribute to the source code, security fixes and system enhancements. This active community also provides businesses with free support through forums and community sites. This distributed community gives peace of mind to Linux users, because there’s no single point of failure and no single source for Linux support or development.”

Companies have reported saving over 85% in support and maintenance costs by switching from Windows to Linux.

Linux is everywhere – Linux represents nearly 100% domination of the cloud services industry, an industry that needs to operate 24x7.

- “Businesses that have standardized on Microsoft technology, specifically their .NET web technology, can rely on Linux for support of those same .NET applications.”

- “Fortunately for Linux adopters, there’s no hardware upgrade madness that follows every new version of the software that’s released. Linux runs on x86 32-bit and 64-bit architectures. If your system runs Windows, it will run Linux”.

To read the full article, go to: [http://www.pcworld.com/article/201731/10\\_reasons\\_to\\_dump\\_windows\\_and\\_use\\_linux.html](http://www.pcworld.com/article/201731/10_reasons_to_dump_windows_and_use_linux.html).

## Computer Insights Offers Additional Benefits

The items above are generic benefits of Linux over Windows. Just as important though is the business model that Computer Insights is offering. Together with IBM, our goal is to have our clients focus on their business while Computer Insights takes care of their computer systems.

## IBM is a Formidable Partner

For many years now Computer Insights has been committed to Linux and IBM. Other distribution software companies are following conventional wisdom and using proprietary solutions from Microsoft like SQL Server and .net. Meanwhile, Computer Insights has stayed the course with Linux and IBM in order to provide a lean and mean, highly specialized and easy to use system. It's not the conventional approach, but it has proven to be a very effective one.

- Linux brings open innovation to all IBM server and storage system platforms, freeing datacenters from vendor lock-in with choice and flexibility to scale their business on the fastest growing operating system in the world.
- IBM supports Linux on all IBM servers, storage and middleware, offering the broadest flexibility to match a company's business needs.
- IBM is a leader in the Linux community with over 600 developers in the IBM Linux Technology Center working on over 100 open source projects in the community.
- All major server and middleware vendors support the Linux platform. IBM offers the broadest range of server and middleware products for Linux in the industry.



The Customer Inquiry has many options and on the first screen there is a complete picture of the relationship.

## Hardware and Installation

Hardware acquisition + Software installation – Computer Insights will acquire the Linux server for their client. We will load the software, box it up, and send it to the client's office. The client will just have to plug it in and connect it to their network. Other software companies will either ask the client to do all this or they will charge up to hundreds of dollars per hour to visit the client's office and do this for them.

## Data Backup

Application data backup – Computer Insights will perform daily backups of your mission critical business data. The data will be backed up over the internet and will then be available should anything unforeseen happen. Other software companies will leave this up to the client. If something happens; they will answer questions over the phone. However, restoring the business data is generally the client's responsibility should anything happen.



A wealth of information is at your fingertips. The product Inquiry tells the whole story with one click.

## Upgrades

Installation of upgrades – Computer Insights will install all the application upgrades for the client over the internet. Other software companies will tell their clients about new upgrades but leave it to them to find the time in their schedule to install them. Left to their own to do the upgrades, often companies procrastinate and before you know it, the upgrades are sitting on their desk, the task seems overwhelming, and calling for day to day support becomes a challenge because they are not on the latest version.

## No Finger Pointing

Computer Insights installs and supports the IBM server at each of their clients (or in the Cloud if this is preferred). This offers several advantages.

Since Computer Insights owns the whole responsibility, there is no finger pointing and the experts are always at work on your mission critical applications. Our clients are free to focus on their business – Maintaining your computer systems does not help you sell and deliver your products to your customers. This means that you have more time to sell, more time to service your customers and more time at the end of your workday.

## A Wise Choice

The Computer Insights method is not conventional wisdom, but that sure doesn't mean that it is not wise. The advantages are significant and they mean that there is more money in our clients' pockets at the end of the day.

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