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Red Hat set to Advance further with its channel

Vendor stresses the importance of loyalty from its partner base as it shifts more business indirect

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Linux vendor Red Hat is planning to use its Advanced Partner network to shift more business indirect.

Red Hat has claimed its partner base in Europe has increased by 450 per cent since the launch of its Advanced Partner Programme in 2004.

Werner Knoblich, vice-president EMEA at Red Hat, told CRN: "Red Hat was a very direct business, but over the past three years we have moved from a 90 per cent direct firm to 60 per cent indirect in Europe. The channel is essential for Red Hat."

Knoblich said Red Hat is planning to become 70 per cent indirect in Europe as part of a constant shift.

"We now have more channel managers across Europe. This is giving us more local coverage. We are also doing a better job of educating



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the channel on understanding our product and value proposition," Knoblich said.

He stressed the importance of the Red Hat Advanced partners that have shown a huge amount of loyalty to the vendor. These partners have been rewarded for such an approach, he said.

"These committed partners make

up 80 per cent of the indirect business, and another 500 resellers make up the other 20 per cent. We don't want more than the 20 to 30 Advanced VARs we currently have in the UK, but we want these to be fully committed," Knoblich added.

Simon Mitchell, sales manager at Red Hat reseller LinuxIT, said: "I heard last year that Red Hat was moving to a 70 per cent indirect model. That was very encouraging and has helped our relationship."

Mitchell said Red Hat has gathered the reputation as the main provider of enterprise Linux, and it has also been supportive with marketing.

Nigel Wright, UK sales director at Red Hat VAR Abtech, said: "Red Hat has backed up its plan to move indirect, and it has given direct customers to us. We have also worked with Red Hat on marketing initiatives. It is keen to support us." **CRN**

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