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The move would affect 7,500 desktop users next year

News Story by Roland Kissling, Computerwelt Oesterreich (Austria)

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AUGUST 11, 2004 - VIENNA -- Next year, users of 7,500 of the 16,000 desktop workstations in the municipality of Vienna will have the choice of moving to Linux, according to Erwin Gillich, head of the city's information services. An evaluation of the test will follow in 2006.

Vienna is one of several European cities and organizations to switch to the open-source operating system.

Compared with the decision made by the city of Munich, which plans to fully replace Microsoft Corp. operating systems with Linux, the municipality of Vienna is opting for a slow transformation. The cost will be about 1.1 million euros (\$1.3 million U.S.) over five years. One of the main differences compared with Munich is that there will be no new hardware purchased in Vienna. Many servers and security-critical applications have been running Linux for a long time.

Munich has briefly delayed its planned move to Linux while officials there

investigate concerns over how new European Union software patent legislation might affect the operating system, but that delay is expected to last only a few weeks ([see story](#)).

Gillich, who wants Vienna to be less dependent on Microsoft, said he expects personnel with strong IT knowledge to be among the first movers. Some departments will change to Linux for monetary reasons as well.

In Austria, members of the Social Democrats and the Green Party advocate a quick change to Linux. The Social Democrats' spokesman for science, Josef Broukal, said the main advantage of open-sour

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is the possibility of free programming expertise. Broukal believes that Europe should reduce its dependency on U.S. software and is demanding that the Austrian federal government also implement open-source software.

"It is a pity that the city of Vienna hesitates to migrate completely to Linux," said Marie Ringler, technology spokeswoman for Vienna's Green Party. She claims that the municipality should give incentives to those migrating to Linux and criticized the fact that the results of a survey on Linux conducted by the city of Vienna aren't available to the public.

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