For us at SSL, Linux is not currently an option for tree reasons:

1) Linux does not support multithreading at the kernel level, which we need for
   a large body of existing high performance software (c and C++) used for realtime
   satellite data acquisition. Solaris has a great (probably the best) multithreading
   implemention.

2) The Linux version of IDL does not support the CALL_EXTERNAL capability (yet) which
   we use extensively to link in C code for higher performance and data access.

3) It will be a snap to port our non-IDL software from Solaris SPARC to Solaris X86.
   Though it may not be too bad to port to Linux, it will certainly be much easier to
   port to Solaris X86. We would only need to worry about endian issues. Otherwise
   the two versions of Solaris are source code compatible.

In fact, by the same token (as with 3), it would be a snap for RSI to port IDL to X86,
since they could use common code from the SPARC version.

Thanks for your comments,

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> Hi!
> What do you think about of using LINUX? Here at University of Paderborn (Germany) is Linux
the
> system of the future. That means not, that we buy no more Sun's, but we also buy more x86
> machines. And the best: IDL run's under Linux.
> The most other software, we have for Sun (Sparc) we also have for Linux. In the many cases
it's
> GNU-software
>
> Bye
>   Christian
>
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>   // /   /   / /   // () Fachbereich 17, Informatik

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