

## IBM Meets Demand for 'Microsoft-free' PCs

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IBM will work with Vienna-based VDEL and Poland's LX Polska to sell &quot;Open Referent&quot; systems (based on Red Hat Linux and open standards-based productivity software).

Open Referent taps into a growing demand for low-cost desktop systems that by definition have to lose the cost of Microsoft. IBM says it is responding to demand from large businesses and government agencies in Eastern Europe and Russia (including Aeroflot, the Russian Ministry of Defence and the RusHotel hotel chain). Open Referent could cut their costs in half.

The press is beating this to death as a "Is IBM Getting Back into PC Business?" issue but really...think about it? Who would want to get back into PCs?

IBM just wants to wrap their arms fuller around their customers, those big organizations that can buy SOLUTIONS instead of boxes.

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