

## Re: Opinions Wanted: Dell PowerEdge Servers ... ?

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- *From:* Paul Schmehl <pauls@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Mon, 26 Jun 2006 12:08:48 -0500
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Greg Barniskis wrote:

Chuck Swiger wrote:

Second that. They're not as good as in the past, but we have had hardware assistance on a FreeBSD-driven server on the condition of proving hardware fault using Dell's own bootable diagnostics.

Also, it seems like "YMMV" definitely applies to Dell, generally. We find that their higher end desktops (mainly Optiplex), higher end laptops and PowerEdge servers to be pretty solid and well-supported.

However, our support experience may be artificially "enhanced" compared to others because we buy off a large govt. contract. We do not talk to the same support group that most other posters have grumbled about. That said, our overall experience with Dell support has actually been as good or better than with many other vendors.

From time to time we're confronted with a 1st tier "non-help" desk operator (scripted responses, incapable of deviating from script or otherwise actually helping), but we find that it's not too difficult to escalate around those individuals and actually get help.

I've been more than a little surprised to hear the uniformly negative reports on Dell hardware and support. Since they've been from people who have loads more experience than I have, I tend to respect them. However, I have to agree with Greg, our experience has been uniformly positive. Personally I only admin a handful of boxes, but they're mostly Dells with a couple of Sun's running AMD64 processors. I haven't noticed any appreciable difference in the layout or labeling, but perhaps my eye isn't as keen as some who've handled hundreds and hundreds of machines.

One thing I do know is Dell's first tier support for servers is worthless, but as Greg says, you just need to establish that you know what you're doing, and you can bypass them.

However, if you're running a big shop, maybe Dell should be avoided. We only have a little over a hundred or so, mostly running Windows. (We run Sun Sparcs on the \*nix\* side of the house, except for me. I run exclusively FreeBSD.)

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<http://www.utdallas.edu/ir/security/>

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