

PROFIT

THE EXECUTIVE'S GUIDE TO ORACLE APPLICATIONS

GLOBAL SUPER POWER

CUMMINS POWER GENERATION
SYNCHRONIZES GLOBAL PRODUCTION
WITH ORACLE SYSTEM

DRIVING INTELLIGENT DATA

POLK DELIVERS SUPERIOR INSIGHT
TO THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY WITH
ORACLE EXADATA AND BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE SOLUTIONS

4 WAYS
TO ADOPT
ORACLE FUSION
APPLICATIONS

FOCUS ON: GLOBAL BUSINESS

"WE DON'T REQUIRE ALL KINDS OF
DATACENTER INFRASTRUCTURE TO
RUN IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE
WORLD. IRRESPECTIVE OF WHERE OUR
PEOPLE ARE SITTING—IN EUROPE, IN
ASIA, OR ANYWHERE IN AFRICA—THEY
ARE ACTUALLY CONNECTED TO THE
SAME INSTANCE IN NAIROBI."

—KEVIN KINYANJUI, CIO, KENYA AIRWAYS



Got IT Covered

Sherwin-Williams delivers corporate control and
local flexibility with global Oracle systems



Extra-Value IT

UPGRADE HELPS QUICK-SERVICE LOGISTICS PROVIDER DELIVER THE GOODS.

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) of 2011 contains new rules designed to curtail the food-borne illnesses that have troubled the United States in recent years. When President Barack Obama signed the legislation into law in January 2011, he enacted new regulations protecting consumers of food products ranging from chicken and eggs to papaya and salsa.

For the Martin-Brower Company, a supplier of everything from napkins to French fries for restaurant chains around the world, the law also meant new business processes that would tax an already aging IT system.

"It requires us to have full look-back and look-forward capability," says Melissa Jacobsen, vice president of information technology at Martin-Brower. "When we receive product, we'll have to know where it came from, who sold it to us, and what the lot codes are."

For more than a decade, staff from the Rosemont, Illinois-based company relied on an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system based on Oracle's JD Edwards EnterpriseOne applications to manage every part of its ful-

fillment process—from accepting, routing, and assembling orders to delivering and invoicing for them. And while that system was managing core operations admirably, Jacobsen says, the FSMA has had food suppliers across the U.S. playing IT catch-up in an effort to keep costs under control while contending with the new regulations.

But in the case of Martin-Brower, the FSMA was only part of the justification for an ERP upgrade. Even without the new regulations, the company was confronted by an array of converging business needs that forced IT staff to consider moving to the latest version of JD Edwards EnterpriseOne software.

"Not only is Martin-Brower facing increased pressure from new regulations, but we're also consolidating our U.S. and Canadian businesses onto a single JD Edwards instance," says Jacobsen. "Having our ERP upgraded to the latest and greatest has better positioned us to tackle these initiatives."

In powering from initial assessment to go-live in just eight months, Martin-Brower's management brought 17 U.S. facilities into compliance with the FSMA and updated IT-driven busi-

ness processes in an industry that Jacobsen describes as severely desperate for technological innovation. In the process, her team gave Martin-Brower employees access to more business data than they had ever dreamed of.

INTERNAL DRIVERS

The external demands of new government regulation were only part of the motivation behind the upgrade of the JD Edwards system. For starters, senior management at Martin-Brower launched a new IT strategy that promoted the use of a single platform for the entire global business, which has been built largely through mergers and acquisitions. Martin-Brower management felt that it was imperative to move forward with the upgrade before bringing the company's sizable Canadian operations onto the decade-old JD Edwards system.

This was an especially sound strategy because Martin-Brower's Brazilian operations had already upgraded to Oracle's latest JD Edwards release, JD Edwards EnterpriseOne 9.0, and were happy with the results. Martin-Brower's plan leveraged Brazil's success by upgrading the company's U.S., Canadian, and European operations to the current JD Edwards version and then standardizing the entire global business on that platform. Once it has finished upgrading all of its facilities outside of Brazil, Martin-Brower's IT team will consolidate the company onto a single instance.

The company's leadership is committed to growth, and a

common—and more modern—ERP system would simplify the integration of additional business and facilitate supporting new customers. A long-term technology strategy was key to resolving these issues. But so was having the right tools. "Having a very solid IT platform is critical," says Jacobsen.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

And then there's the FSMA, which eventually will compel food suppliers to track edible products and trace their origins. This would allow the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure more transparency in the nation's food delivery system, and improve the FDA's ability to prevent future outbreaks of food-borne illness. Jacobsen says the warehouse management module in Martin-Brower's upgraded JD Edwards system will enable the company to develop those capabilities, but with the FDA expected to spend the next two years preparing to implement and enforce the law, the company is focused on acquainting the entire team with the new platform.

Martin-Brower management followed an aggressive plan to ensure IT systems would be in place and operational well ahead of another self-imposed deadline—the arrival of summer, the company's busiest season. Rather than approach Martin-Brower's executive team with a best-guess estimate of the project's anticipated cost and impact, Jacobsen employed consultants from Oracle Certified Partner CSS International to spend a month performing an exhaustive assessment.

Oracle Optimized Solution for JD Edwards EnterpriseOne

While many companies are able to successfully tap the capabilities of Oracle's JD Edwards EnterpriseOne solutions on a wide range of technology platforms, Oracle's comprehensive lineup of complementary technologies is designed to help organizations get the most out of their JD Edwards EnterpriseOne deployments. By combining a finely tuned JD Edwards implementation with the right Oracle server, storage, operating system, and middle-ware layers, enterprises can achieve superior reliability and security, while benefiting from peak performance and lower total cost of ownership.

But small and midsize enterprises often lack the IT resources needed to bring all these pieces together in a single deployment. That's where the Oracle Optimized Solution for JD Edwards EnterpriseOne comes in. Designed to be economical and scalable turnkey solutions for small and midsize enterprises, Oracle Optimized Solutions

combine hardware architecture and a software stack that can run on a single SPARC T-Series server. Backed by Oracle's flagship database technology and its next-generation Oracle Fusion Middleware application infrastructure, Oracle Optimized Solutions are built to mitigate risk, accelerate business agility, and improve user productivity.

Companies that choose the Oracle Optimized Solution for JD Edwards EnterpriseOne quickly see results. The solutions are packaged as portable virtual environments, enabling them to be installed using verified best practices that simplify tuning and configuration. And because the cost is much lower than what is customary for a full hardware and software stack, companies will find that they have extra funds for expenses such as software licensing.

Despite its economical design, the Oracle Optimized Solution for JD Edwards EnterpriseOne scales effectively. Even at 1,200 users, the system

preserves up to 50 percent of memory and 70 percent of CPU space, providing the ability to grow as the business dictates and opening the door to additional consolidation of computing workloads. What's more, Oracle's Sun FlashFire technology dramatically improves application performance, delivering as much as a 300 percent improvement over conventional storage technologies when reading data in JD Edwards EnterpriseOne.

With power and space at a premium in today's datacenters, IT executives are looking to squeeze every drop out of their resources in order to maximize service delivery and minimize server and storage sprawl. The Oracle Optimized Solution for JD Edwards EnterpriseOne enables CIOs to achieve these objectives quickly and effectively by availing themselves of a documented and tested plug-and-play environment that has been integrated and optimized by Oracle.

>>SNAPSHOT

The Martin-Brower Company
www.martin-brower.com

Headquarters: Rosemont, Illinois

Employees: More than 4,000

Oracle products: JD Edwards EnterpriseOne 9.0, including distribution, advanced pricing, financials, and inventory modules

The CSS team studied Martin-Brower's existing system in September 2010, cataloging extensive customizations and providing a thorough upgrade plan. According to Bill Franklin, vice president of business solutions at CSS, this is an increasingly popular approach for compa-

nies upgrading older systems. "The whole idea is for a CIO to get a better handle on exactly what it's going to take to do the upgrade, so they can go and get the money for the project and tell the business what it's going to take," says Franklin.

This approach earned the project critical executive support. "It was crucial," says Jacobsen. "When we went to get funding for the project and communicate to the sponsors the timeline of the project, we had a very good handle on what our scope was."

She plans to secure a similar assessment before upgrading Martin-Brower's Canadian operations, a process that will occur during the first half of 2012. The company's IT staff will upgrade its sole Irish facility during the first quarter of 2013.

With the budget secured, Jacobsen launched the U.S. upgrade project with CSS in November 2010. Jacobsen continued to employ CSS consultants to serve as project support, establishing a sizable team with designated leaders for each component of the project. "While CSS was there to provide guidance and knowledge transfer throughout the project, Martin-Brower took ownership from the beginning," says Franklin. "The Martin Brower project manager ran the meetings, and their team leaders conducted their parts of the meetings. That kind of leadership is very rare, in my experience."

CUSTOM BUILT

It didn't hurt that Martin-Brower opted for a streamlined deployment, focusing on performance gains while sticking with the exact functionality the company was using in the old system, including a huge number of existing customizations. "They made no changes to any business processes," Franklin says. The most-significant technical hurdles were the integrations that had to be built into the company's business intelligence application and its customer portal.

Whereas many ERP upgrade efforts are designed specifically to get rid of mass customizations, Jacobsen decided to preserve most of them, not only to make the transition easier for users but also because they had proven their value in a transaction-intensive business.

Martin-Brower's complex order process makes clear the need for many of the customizations. Orders come into the company's JD Edwards system via electronic data interchange and enter a routing system, which then assigns each order to a truck. Then the order moves to a warehouse management system that assigns tasks for warehouse employees who will prepare the order. Once the order is ready to ship, warehouse staff uses JD Edwards to trigger the shipping, confirmation, and invoicing processes. This level of complexity often demands a customized front end designed to reflect the way people work.

According to Franklin, the project was the smoothest he's experienced in 26 years of working on JD Edwards deployments. Part of that was due to the initial assessment Jacobsen ordered from CSS. "We kind of hit the ground running; we didn't have to do a lot of planning or a lot of design

because that was already done," says Franklin. This allowed IT staff to see the numerous customizations Martin-Brower had built into the old system and how they were deployed. "They were all much more transferable than if they had actually gone in and modified an actual JD Edwards program," says Franklin.

While it was essential to replicate the customizations, Jacobsen's team found ways to retire many that didn't have an impact on users—such as long-dormant custom reports. "We're a business of volume, so we do the same thing over and over again millions of times a year," says Jacobsen. "If you can take a few seconds out of that by changing your system, it's well worth it."

MANAGING CHANGE

But any big IT project requires change management considerations. If users do not see the value in an upgrade or are not properly trained in the new functionality, the business may not see the benefits initially expected of the project.

The decision to simplify the implementation and preserve so many customizations was driven in part by the project's aggressive time frame: having started in November, the upgrade had to go live in May, before the company's busy summer season kicked into high gear. With such a tight schedule, it made sense to minimize the technology modifications and focus instead on those change management factors, which so often derail even the most technically precise IT projects.

Jacobsen—who in a previous job had worked on an upgrade that was characterized by poor change management and resulted in very dissatisfied users—approached the issue in a number of ways. She assigned a business leader to oversee the change management aspects of the project, such as ensuring employees were adequately certified and trained. She also made sure the project team made good use of the company's learning management tool to test the workforce before going live. And she spurred 100 percent compliance by having a contest pitting the various distribution centers against each other.

"If you've got a workforce that isn't ready when you go live and flip that switch, your business is at risk," says Jacobsen.

The workforce proved to be ready. The advantages of the new system quickly became clear, and employees who were initially fearful that an upgrade would do little more than force them to establish new routines were suddenly realizing how much more they could do.

"Every day we question the way we're doing things," says Bart Lawson, vice president of shared services at Martin-Brower. Lawson manages a team of 16 people who process transactions through the JD Edwards system; they oversee master data

repositories housing everything from pricing files to vendor and customer address books. He says his team has only gotten to the low-hanging fruit, but that it plans to reach higher in search of ways to use the new system to improve efficiency.

One of the immediately apparent improvements was the new system's download speed, which Lawson estimated is 100 times faster than the old system's. "I could go out to lunch and come back, and the data would still be downloading," he recalls of the old system. Now, he says, "we have more data and are certain of accurate assured orders."

Indeed, Lawson can analyze 100,000 lines of direct expenditures data from the supplier ledger in minutes—an impossibility in the old system. His staff can analyze that data to make more payments to vendors with a credit card, compare vendors to spot potential savings, or identify possible efficiency improvements based on transactional volume.

And it's not just about simplifying data collection; the upgraded system also is changing the way data is organized and viewed. It allows the creation of customized grids, enabling staff to survey data more quickly and hone in for a closer look, even letting them color-code fields as reminders to go back and see if there have been improvements in shipments or deliveries, for example.

Lawson's team was heavily involved in the planning, testing,

and rollout of the upgrade, and that process tore down organizational walls that had developed between shared services and IT. "Working with IT strengthened the relationship between the shared services center and IT, opening up lines of communication that didn't exist before," says Lawson. "The collaboration educated the entire team on how our work impacts each other's work and fostered a cross-functional team culture."

With such widespread impact already being felt from a system upgrade just a few months old, and a platform that will ratchet up efficiency and make future integrations much less onerous, it's clear that Jacobsen's initial instinct—that Martin-Brower needed to upgrade its ERP system before integrating its six Canadian distribution centers—was on the money.

"Before we went out and put other areas of the world onto our instance, we needed to make sure we were on the latest and greatest," says Jacobsen. "It seemed like the logical thing to do. <>

TONY KONTZER is a freelance writer based in Albany, California.

>> FOR MORE INFORMATION

Oracle's JD Edwards EnterpriseOne Applications
oracle.com/us/products/applications/jd-edwards-enterpriseone



Polar Bears International is a trusted voice focused on funding scientific research for the survival of this magnificent animal. Polar Bears International also funds educational programs that are inspiring people to reduce their carbon emissions.

Conservation through Research and Education
www.polarbearsinternational.org



Help Us Help the Polar Bear

PHOTO © R&C BUCHANAN