success story

“The result of this infrastructure consolidation is that we can respond to business requirements more quickly and with more agility as competitive pressures increase. In the run-up to the winter holiday period our business enjoys major upswings in volume, and PRM’s ability to quickly modify resource allocation policies, even under load, permits critical applications to continue to perform to our expectations.”

John Joubert
Director of Technical Systems
Stuller, Inc.

hp process resource manager is the jewel in the crown of Stuller, Inc.’s new infrastructure
Diamonds are forever…
And Stuller, Inc.’s goal is for everyone to be able to own exceptional jewelry. The company is one of the world’s leading manufacturers and distributors of fine jewelry and related products. The Louisiana-based business has always been true to its founder’s goal to “satisfy the customer” and provide a compelling experience for everybody associated with the enterprise.

The focus on customer satisfaction has created a flourishing business, however, it has been under constant competitive pressure to become more agile and operationally efficient. The legacy IT infrastructure was rapidly becoming unable to meet the needs for growth and responsiveness.

The original homegrown, COBOL-based applications – running on outdated systems – were beginning to hamper Stuller’s everyday operations and were incapable of accommodating significant change within acceptable timeframes. It became eminently clear that an adaptable infrastructure able to support swift changes in business direction was quickly needed.

a gem in the making
Prior to making the decision to upgrade its legacy infrastructure, Stuller already had chosen to move its accounting onto Oracle Financials hosted on an HP-UX® server, and had been acquiring additional Oracle modules at a measured pace. The planned move to Oracle Order Management, Advanced Pricing, Inventory, Purchasing, Manufacturing, Product Configurator and Accounts Receivable was anticipated to be the largest transition of applications the company had ever undertaken and required a larger HP-UX server.

“For the production environment, we were leaning towards the deployment of a powerful single server. We were enthusiastic to bring the hardware in-house as soon as possible to give the operations staff time to become familiar with the system. However, we didn’t want to have a large system sitting idle for a lengthy period prior to going live,” recalled John Joubert, Stuller’s Director of Technical Systems.

Traditionally, developers are given a dedicated environment to perform their tasks, once code and data migration are complete and fully tested, the systems can easily become underutilized. Joubert’s vision was to create a consolidated environment, where development staff, operations personnel and application end-users could co-exist. One of the challenges to achieving this was to objectively ensure the controlled allotment of system resources. Without being able to consistently provide an appropriate allocation of system assets to the production environment, the concept of a harmonious co-existence of users would be a failure.

a perfect setting by design
Stuller was very content with the HP-UX server infrastructure supporting its Oracle applications and decided on the purchase of a 24-processor HP Superdome with an HP StorageWorks xp512 disk array to host the central database instance. Two HP server rp7410 8-way systems – deployed to service the Oracle front-end application requirements and configured with HP Serviceguard – complete the configuration. Attention was turned to identifying appropriate supporting software to optimally control the Superdome’s resources and to provide the necessary IT flexibility and scalability to the company.

“After evaluating alternatives, it rapidly become obvious that HP Process Resource Manager (PRM) software exceeded all of our requirements. It had the huge benefit of being the simplest way for us to accomplish our goal of fully optimizing the Superdome’s computing power,” noted Joubert.

PRM allows system administrators to define allocation policies for the utilization of CPU, real memory, and disk bandwidth on a server. The ability to

industry manufacturing

challenges

- inability of legacy infrastructure to support change and rising business volumes
- desire to consolidate development, testing and production activities on one server without negatively impacting business-critical tasks
- requirement for a robust fail-over environment to ensure continuation of mission-critical applications

solution

- consolidate all production and development activities onto a 24-processor hp Superdome, two HP rp7410 8-way servers and an hp StorageWorks XP512 disk array
- implement hp Process Resource Manager for control of server resources
- maintain high availability via hp Critical Systems Support and hp Serviceguard

results

- maximum control over resources with minimal administrative overhead
- all user expectations are either met or exceeded
- guaranteed allocation of resources, without the need to add additional hardware
- optimal system utilization provides the ability to comfortably handle peak workloads and rapidly react to changing business demands
- development, testing and production activities productively co-exist on single system
control these three critical resource categories ensures that key applications and users get a guaranteed allocation of resources, without the need to duplicate hardware.

HP’s industry leading server-partitioning continuum provides choices from hard, virtual and resource partitioning tools, which provided Stuller with a flexible alternative to choose the optimal solution for their specific needs. With PRM in place, Joubert elected to run without need for any physical partitions.

Stuller has fully leveraged PRM’s ability to assign the appropriate levels of resource based on a set of management-defined policies. These policies govern resource consumption by users and/or applications. Interactions with PRM, including the real-time creation and modification of policies, can be performed using a text-based configuration file or via an easy-to-use Graphical User Interface (GUI). System administration is further simplified by being able to use a single GUI session to configure multiple servers.

To maintain the high availability of mission-critical applications, one of the rp7410 servers has been enabled through HP Serviceguard to expediently pick up the production backend database processing tasks from the Superdome and PRM has been configured to accurately control the back-up system resource allocation.

To further complement the resilience of the infrastructure, Stuller has contracted with HP Services for Critical System Support (CSS), providing comprehensive proactive and reactive services to ensure the sustained availability of the mission-critical environment. “The support from HP has always been good, but under CSS it’s incredible,” Joubert observed.

**PRM – a jewel**

PRM allowed Stuller to consolidate its previously disparate IT systems, and ensure that resources are available based on pre-agreed priorities. Commenting further on the act of optimally balancing key resources, Joubert stated, “The goal is to give each production application the space and capacity that it needs and have nothing else impact it – with PRM I can specify exactly that.”

The utilization of PRM throughout the consolidation project has enabled a major reduction in complexity over the previous environment. Joubert reflected, “It’s a much simpler infrastructure now that we have the Superdome in place.”

The capability to run multiple, mission-critical applications concurrently on the same system, without any need for modification, also has yielded positive returns on the IT budget. “PRM gives me the most flexibility, with the least expense, and the lowest administrative overhead,” Joubert commented.

He summarized the business impact of project, “The result of this infrastructure consolidation is that we can respond to
One of the fundamental design characteristics of PRM is its ease of use. Nowhere is this more evident than when adding extra applications – each will work with PRM with just a few administrative modifications. “It’s a powerful tool that is so easy to get up and running and is a pleasure to work with,” Joubert concluded, “everyone should consider deploying it.”

For more information on HP Process Resource Manager, please visit: http://www.hp.com/go/prm