



### Business challenge

Due to the rapid growth of its business, a large US health product provider needed to accelerate the performance of its JD Edwards EnterpriseOne environment to meet increasing demand from more users.

### Transformation

A large US health product provider upgraded its Oracle® JD Edwards™ EnterpriseOne ERP applications and database environment with IBM® Power® Systems servers and IBM FlashSystem® V9000 storage systems. Supported by IBM Business Partner Sirius Computer Solutions, the complete system is designed for high availability, greater performance and more scalability.

### Results

#### 40% improvement

in workload performance

#### Saves costs

of buying more software licenses by using processor cores more efficiently

#### From hours to minutes

to backup data and restore processes

## Large US health product provider

## A healthy alliance—how integrated IBM solutions optimize Oracle software performance

One of America's largest manufacturers of high-quality vitamins, minerals and other dietary supplements, the provider markets its products through major mass retailers and drugstore chains under a variety of popular brand names.

*"We've seen great results with IBM systems running Oracle software. IBM allows us to keep the promises we make to our customers."*

—Platform services manager for a large US health product provider



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## Meeting the demands of a growing business

Increased public awareness about nutrition. Faster-paced lifestyles. More people living with chronic conditions. A growing geriatric population. Because of these and other factors, a 2019 Harris poll reported that 86 percent of adult Americans take vitamins or dietary supplements. Annual sales for vitamins, minerals and dietary supplements (VMS) in the US now exceed USD 14 billion.

As it sold a growing volume of VMS products through more retail stores, a large US health product provider needed to expand its production capacity to serve more customers. Expansion also placed greater demands on the provider's IT infrastructure, making it necessary to start planning a systemwide upgrade.

In addition to [Oracle Database](#), the provider used JD Edwards EnterpriseOne software as well as other Oracle software for planning, budgeting, forecasting and supply chain management. Each time the system needed to be backed up, updated and refreshed, users were unable to access the system or retrieve data for hours.

"We needed to enable our business customers, analysts and other IT team members to get fresh data much faster," says the large US

health product provider's platform services manager. "We also needed to consolidate our database and systems on a single platform to use with a new JD Edwards implementation. That was the challenge."

Long waits for system access created other issues. "We didn't want to pay a team of five or six engineers to just sit there and wait for the data to be refreshed," says the platform services manager. "And sometimes, our impatient customers would tell us, 'I can't wait, let me start looking inside,' and that could cause more problems. We needed to do it faster."

## Launching an optimization program

The provider recognized that optimizing its Oracle software environment would require an integrated solution built on existing IBM products already customized for its IT system. To manage the upgrade process, an enterprise solutions delivery team launched an optimization program and worked with the platform services team, systems team, IBM and Sirius to develop a system migration plan. The key system performance goals included faster data replication, faster database cloning and the ability to stand the system up every morning without human intervention.

Along with the IBM solution, the provider was presented with a

hardware proposal from another vendor. The competitor indicated that, no matter what price IBM offered, it would match the price. "That made it much easier because now we knew that we were not going to pick a solution based on price," says the platform services manager.

"Once we looked at what it would take to implement what the other vendor proposed, it was clear that was going to be a monumental task," says the platform services manager. "We were just not as confident with them as we were with IBM engineers, with the help they were going to give us and with our knowledge of IBM systems. Having a single vendor and a product that actually performs made it easier to decide to stay with IBM."

Prior working experience also factored into the decision to choose IBM. "We have been using IBM products for a long time and we already had success with running Oracle databases on IBM Power Systems," says the platform services manager. "So now we just wanted to expand running Oracle databases to our JD Edwards implementation."

"When I started with the company, we were running on POWER5 and POWER6 systems," says the provider's senior systems engineer. "We consolidated to POWER7 with IBM i and with the optimization program, we consolidated everything on POWER8."

The company chose FlashSystem V9000 storage to take advantage of the speed and scalability of IBM FlashCore® technology which enhances storage functionality through simplified data management, data reduction and storage tiering. To improve application availability and efficiency, V9000 also insulates applications from physical storage.

"IBM has a track record of delivering when they say they are going to deliver," says the senior systems engineer. "IBM usually exceeds the performance parameters they set, so that was very appealing."

To support their Oracle environment, the IT team decided to migrate from IBM i to IBM AIX® operating system software, taking advantage of their in-house expertise with AIX systems. "We already had very solid processes for backups, restores, copies and management for our Oracle offerings," says the platform services manager, "so it made it a lot easier for us to consolidate our databases for JD Edwards into that environment."

With such a complex implementation involving so many components, the optimization program occasionally encountered technical issues related to performance tuning. "If you have bad SQL code, if you're not asking for data the right way, you're going to have performance issues," says the senior systems engineer. "IBM has great resources for when issues are caused by things 'in between' and all of IBM's internal expertise on Oracle stuff has helped a lot."

## A healthy boost in performance

“Every morning at 6AM, without human intervention, we refresh the Oracle environment so anyone in IT can come in and start working,” says the platform services manager. “This is such a big win for us to do a backup in five minutes instead of hours and provide a clone of the environment. If there’s a problem, we can work on solutions right away without having to touch production. If anyone requests data refreshes for a particular project, that happens in a really fast manner.”

After upgrading to POWER8® processor-based servers, the provider is seeing a 40 percent improvement in workload performance. Memory overhead is also reduced through virtualization. “We’re able to put many more databases into a single box without having to build another server cluster and buy more Oracle Database licenses,” says the platform services manager.

Storage virtualization, supported by IBM SAN Volume Controller server virtualization, enables the system to scale up according to demand. “When we first got FlashSystem V9000, we were able to hang disk drives on the back end when we needed extra capacity,” says the senior systems engineer. “Things also run much faster on flash than they do on spinning disks.”

With Power Systems servers and FlashSystem storage arrays integrated in an IBM PowerHA® cluster, the provider also takes advantage of IBM Global Mirror technology, a storage-based disaster recovery solution designed for high availability. The platform services engineer says: “Global Mirror is one of the main ingredients in this magic, so we can take a snapshot of a production environment and clone it into a development environment. And when we perform disaster recovery exercises, we are able to bring up all of our systems from Nevada to California in minutes.”

With the completion of the optimization program, the provider’s enterprise solutions delivery team has successfully upgraded its Oracle environment and met all of its long-term goals. “If you want to improve the system and get the performance that you really feel the system can give you, you have to spend a little more time,” says the platform services manager. “We did that and it was worth it, thanks to the IBM engineering team.”

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***“IBM is a great partner for whenever you have questions. You can call when you have a problem and their engineers will reach out right away and say, ‘we’ll get you some answers and get this taken care of immediately.’”***

—Senior systems engineer for a large US health product provider

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### Solution components

- IBM® FlashSystem® V9000
- IBM PowerHA®
- IBM Power® Systems
- IBM SAN Volume Controller
- Oracle® Database
- Oracle JD Edwards™ EnterpriseOne

### Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Services for Oracle Applications please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit: [ibm.com/services/oracle](http://ibm.com/services/oracle)

### About Sirius Computer Solutions

Founded in 1980 and headquartered in San Antonio, Texas, IBM Business Partner Sirius has over 2,600 employees and is one of the largest IT solutions integrators in the US. Specializing in IT strategy, security, business innovation, cloud computing and managed services, Sirius deploys dedicated teams of certified experts to serve over 5,500 active clients and offers integrated multivendor technology to small businesses with fewer than 500 employees as well as large enterprises with thousands of employees and hundreds of locations.

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