IBM®

Business benefits:

Eliminates
risk of downtime and outages

Enables
easy scalability according to market needs

Helps
ensure the business can reach its ambitious growth goals

Global retail company
Building a billion-dollar business through cloud-based managed services

This growing, global retailer stocks a vast array of products in each of its hundreds of stores, spread across the world, generating annual sales of over $200 million.

"IBM Cloud Managed Services for Oracle Applications gives us the ability to go anywhere, any time."

Spokesperson
Global retail company

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Global growth without complexity

Despite being relatively young and bursting with entrepreneurial spirit, this company also runs a sophisticated, efficient retail operation. Alongside product decisions are inventory, logistics, financial and related business challenges.

A spokesperson for the retailer explains: "We are retailers, and we just happen to need IT. We work to build the best possible customer experience, not the best possible IT infrastructure and hardware."

"Our constant question is 'How are we supporting the business model?' We want solutions that give us as many options as possible, should the business need them, so that we can turn them on when the moment strikes."

At an early stage, the retailer had adopted cloud services as the best way to enable its business ambitions.

Embracing cloud helped the company avoid CapEx on infrastructure, and removed the need to hire and retain a large technical team. In particular, cloud services effectively bring vendors' technical maturity into the company, a useful bonus for a young business.

On that basis, the retailer chose to implement Oracle Financials, hosting the applications with IBM, and selected Oracle Retail Management System as the prime candidate for the next step.

"If we built the infrastructure from scratch, we would need to figure out redundancy, backup, failover, restore and similar services," comments the spokesperson. "In turn, we would need resources, people and training. Most of all, we would need maturity for those services and resources.

"We asked ourselves if we could build a platform to cope with enormous growth and deliver maturity."

Based on successful experience

Based on its successful, positive experience of hosting applications with IBM, the retailer looked at IBM Cloud Managed Services for Oracle Applications (CMS4Oracle) for the Oracle Retail Merchandising System solution. Moving to CMS4Oracle offered the ability to extend the systems environment and add extra levels of service, cloud and management functionality to the landscape.

For example, CMS4Oracle includes service-level agreements covering the retailer's critical business issues, such as data security, resilience, redundancy and more.

The cloud architecture provides the flexibility and excellent scalability needed to handle extraordinarily high growth, while the maturity of the offering ensures service quality through standardization and automation.

"We selected IBM Cloud Services as the ideal partner for this project," comments the spokesperson. "We had experience of their capabilities with the hosting environments, and it gave us great comfort to know that we had IBM on our side.

"Selecting CMS4Oracle is more than a cost decision; IBM is continuously investing in the infrastructure and resources, and it offers instant maturity," says the spokesperson. "We're a young, growing, and newly international company. We have to build platforms quickly that can handle requests from left-field. All the things that take time away from your ability to get to market that can be removed, should be removed."

With assistance from IBM Cloud Services, the retailer implemented a comprehensive suite of Oracle applications, including Oracle Retail Merchandising System, Oracle Retail Price Management, Oracle Retail Invoice Matching and Oracle Retail Store Inventory Management.

In combination, the company also implemented supporting components including Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning, Oracle Database, and Oracle User Production Kit.

Solutions to enable worldwide growth

The retailer is growing its store footprint at around 20 percent annually, and is considering opening franchised outlets to help expand its reach even more quickly.

"With Cloud Managed Services for Oracle Applications, we can flex up – and just as importantly, down – according to market needs," says the spokesperson. "IBM Cloud Services proved its ability to integrate Oracle Financials in its resilient hosted environment, and earned its place as a true partner.

"IBM Cloud Services asks the question 'How fast can you change' tempered with 'How fast should you change?' and provides a healthy balance of stability, growth, security and speed. Most importantly, we can move faster and more safely with IBM than we could on our own."

The retailer now plans to move many of its remaining Oracle applications from hosted services to the CMS4Oracle environment.

"Support, administration, maintenance, backup, restore and more are assumed as part of the package, and growth-based companies need the agility to be able to follow their decisions without the risk of downtime, outages or complete IT meltdowns. CMS4Oracle gives us the ability to go anywhere, any time, and provides the most flexible environment possible to serve the business."

The spokesperson concludes, "Cloud is a journey, not a destination. Selecting CMS4Oracle is a strategic decision. IBM Cloud Services brings a high degree of capability to the table, ready for the next colorful phase in our company's growth."

Solution components

- IBM® Cloud Managed Services™ for Oracle Applications
- Oracle Database
- Oracle Fusion Middleware
- Oracle Retail Merchandise Financial Planning
- Oracle Retail Merchandising System
- Oracle Retail Predictive Application Server

Take the next step

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