



### Business challenge

Startup company Epic Piping saw the opportunity to build a multi-million-dollar business – but how could it create an enterprise-scale operation in a matter of 12 to 18 months?

### Transformation

Epic Piping chose Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne solutions, run entirely using IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards, enabling a hugely scalable, fully integrated business platform.



**Jeremy Turner,**  
Chief Information Officer and Chief  
Administrative Officer,  
Epic Piping

#### Business benefits:

**Standardized**  
ERP platform will support  
both organic growth and  
acquisition growth

**Leading**  
business processes leverage  
software-driven systems

**Operational**  
efficiencies and lower TCO

# Epic Piping

## Building a multi-million-dollar business in less than a year with IBM and Oracle

Headquartered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Epic Piping is one of the fastest growing turn-key industrial pipe fabrication organizations in the world. The company has total fabrication capacity of around 360,000 sq ft, expanding to 500,000 sq ft by 2016, and growing production to 12,000 spools/month at multiple facilities. Capabilities include carbon steel, chrome moly, stainless steels, duplex steels, nickel based alloys, and jacketed piping.

*“The combination of the Oracle solutions and IBM Cloud Managed Services gives us the ability to reach ambitious objectives.”*

Jeremy Turner, Chief Information Officer and Chief Administrative Officer, Epic Piping

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## Global ambitions

Epic Piping intends to become a premier global pipe fabrication company from scratch, with over one million square feet of shop space. Epic aims to focus on the oil and gas, chemical, and power markets to achieve this goal. To accomplish this the need is for a state-of-the-art seamless system for all global locations to manage all fabrication functions, from material control to pricing and billing.

Jeremy Turner, Chief Information Officer and Chief Administrative Officer, remarks: “We have great confidence in this opportunity. The management team has more than 500 years’ experience collectively, which is by far our largest strength. It will significantly impact our ability to scale and grow, and with that scale and growth comes significant operational pressure.

“How do we implement systems to keep up with a growth curve that goes from zero to a \$200-million-dollar company, in a matter of 12 to 18 months?”

Epic Piping plans to bring modern, highly automated fabrication techniques into the global marketplace including utilizing cutting edge robotic cutting and welding equipment. The management team has deep knowledge of pipe fabrication, which will be relied upon to develop this grass root business.

Jeremy Turner continues: “We identified a unique opportunity to incorporate years of lessons learned and efficiencies into the manufacturing process. Implementing new technologies and processes have been challenging in our previous experience, and Epic has an opportunity to reimagine the future which will lead to a competitive advantage.”

As a start-up, Epic Piping needed to focus on its core business – winning customers and establishing its manufacturing credentials – as well as removing administrative barriers. Selecting, implementing and configuring business management solutions, such as financial and logistics systems, threatened to drain valuable time and energy. Epic Piping looked for a business partner that could address business management issues and allow the team to devote itself to building the company.

*“We think that we will absolutely drive double-digit percentage reductions in individual indirect departments with the automation and the capabilities of JD Edwards EnterpriseOne on the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform.”*

Jeremy Turner, Chief Information Officer and Chief Administrative Officer, Epic Piping

## Selecting the strategy that leads to cloud

“It’s very difficult to find an innovator that can hit the ground running from a business concept perspective, and understand the nuances that exist,” says Jeremy Turner. “We chose IBM as our partner because it had access to resources that were extremely competent, and was very familiar with our world. Due to the speed in which we anticipated ramping up business, I felt that it was critical that we didn’t waste any time with consultants who had to learn our business model from scratch.

“We evaluated the top tiers of manufacturing ERP solutions as identified by Gartner in the leadership quadrant. With assistance from IBM Global Business Services, we specified thirty key areas for our particular business. One of our major concerns was the ability to scale for a billion-dollar business, which is our five-year goal. We did not want to build a solution that was unable to meet that level of demand or would require us to buy a new solution between now and that five-year growth point.

“We chose Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne in part because some of the dominant players in the industry use it, which makes it a natural fit. However, we had to make sure it was the right decision for us. Secondly, we aimed to roll out the financials components in six to eight weeks, and then, within the next six to eight weeks, be fully operational with the shop floor. This meant implementing the ERP solution in about five months, which is pretty unheard of in most cases.”

Additionally, Epic Piping was keen to avoid the capital outlay of implementing an ERP solution on fixed server hardware, and to avoid the ongoing costs of hiring an IT team to administer and maintain the system. A cloud-based solution beckoned, and the Epic Piping team started talking to IBM and Oracle about how to make this possible.

“Our costs, from an IT perspective, should be able to move up or down, in step with our operations, achieving that sweet spot of balance between variable and fixed costs. Part of the largest challenge with any enterprise platform is the operations side of the house, and being able to run it, host it, keep ahead of it, and keep it upgraded – and it is often difficult to find the skilled employees that you need.”

## Choosing the right cloud

Epic Piping chose the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform, providing scalable, flexible, fast, reliable and highly secure Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne and Oracle database operating environments, backed by IBM's experience as a trusted Oracle Diamond Partner. This enterprise-class infrastructure delivers fast provisioning, cloning and system refreshes, offering improved service delivery quality and speed of operation.

Additionally, the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform is designed to help reduce operational labor costs, shift CapEx to OpEx and improve service quality through standardization and automation. Within the solution offer, IBM commits to service-level agreements, providing Epic Piping with the flexibility and very high scalability needed to handle zero-to-millions growth.

Epic Piping has deployed Oracle JDE Cloud applications, including Record to Report, Order to Cash, Procure to Pay, Logistics, Project Manufacturing with One View Reporting and Mobility, supported by Oracle database technologies.

Jeremy Turner continues: "Cloud solutions are part of our core IT architecture here at Epic Piping. If available, we choose the cloud first and result to on premise only when business requirements demand.



"I am interested in a scalable, pay-per-user approach to run our ERP as a software-as-a-service product. IBM had the challenge of showing me that they could not only host, but wrap a layer of services into the mix that could provide the entire stack, including support, middleware and database, and the server infrastructure solution, and package that up in a rate structure that would keep to one of the core creeds of keeping costs in line with the business.

"The result is that I am not the CIO that worries about infrastructure, and how many servers I have, and are they up and running. Working with IBM and the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards solution, we have clear service-level agreements, performance metrics, and pricing that matches the way we thought it should be delivered."

## Working with IBM

Epic Piping's ramp-up is off to a swift start; moving from the four original employees to 250 personnel in the first 6 months, ultimately peaking at over 900 within 18 months, all sharing the Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne solutions. To make this possible, Epic Piping relies on IBM Global Business Services as a true partner.

"IBM brings with it a level of professionalism and capabilities that I trust, and the IBM team has the industry experience to understand the business fully," says Jeremy Turner.

"The way that IBM partnered with us on how we evolve from 'build' to 'run' was very attractive, showing how they would keep the continuity through development to operations and support. While the cloud-based solution is the core, it is important to layer in the services that replace the in-house IT organization.

"With help from IBM, Epic Piping is the first in our industry to deploy the latest version of JD Edwards EnterpriseOne on the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards solution, and we know that both IBM and Oracle are committed to the platform. The speed in which we were able to build, host and evolve was extremely fast, and we could never have done that on our own."

Select applications for research and analytics purposes remain as on-premise solutions at the company headquarters site.

Data integration is handled by a third-party application hosted on the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform, enabling a hybrid cloud solution that provides the most appropriate capabilities for Epic Piping.

# Scaling the business for \$500+ million within the first 5 years

Epic Piping involves IBM in the strategic planning cycle – from designing the initial deployment through to potential integration with iPads on the production floor and deploying advanced IBM Analytics, Mobility and Internet of Things technologies.

“For example, controlling and managing manufacturing systems often relies on paperwork, with notes handed back to personnel behind the scenes,” says Jeremy Turner. “IBM brings to bear capabilities to move those interactions onto iPads, removing the need for back-end manual processing and creating a fluid, natural workflow.”

“IBM ‘connects the dots’ from a partner perspective, to make sure that we have access to the right people, exposing Epic Piping to creative technologies that could make a difference in our business.”

The early implementation phases focused on embedding solutions that are essential for Epic Piping to run the business. As the go-live for pipe fabrication approaches, the company is moving its manual processes to the appropriate Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne solutions, and deploying additional services to the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform as the business evolves. The final phase will add increased automation, with self-service capabilities for supply chain management, and process enhancements that are designed to drive operational efficiency.

“We measure our progress by comparing what we said we would do in the business plan against what we actually achieve in the real world, showing us how we perform against our estimated headcount and administrative expenses, for example,” comments Jeremy Turner.

“The ROI is based on our ability to undercut that original plan, which in turn was based on experience in previous companies that says, ‘If we produce this much product, traditionally it has taken this many people to produce.’”

“We think that we will absolutely drive double-digit percentage reductions in individual indirect departments with the automation and the capabilities of JD Edwards EnterpriseOne on the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform.”

The cloud approach at Epic Piping plays right into the heart of the company’s growth strategy, whether organic or by acquisition, concludes Jeremy Turner: “Most of our financial growth will come from organic growth. But the ability to ingest businesses into one integrated ERP is simpler, from a business perspective, because it’s so flexible. The combination of the Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne solutions on the IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards platform gives Epic Piping the ability to reach its ambitious business objectives.”

## Solution components

- IBM® Platform and Infrastructure Services (IBM Cloud Managed Services for Oracle Applications)
- IBM JD Edwards Implementation Services
- IBM Cloud Managed Services for JD Edwards
- IBM Global Business Services® – Application Management Services
- Oracle JD Edwards EnterpriseOne 9.1.2
- Oracle 11G database
- Oracle Software as a Subscription Business Process Services

## Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Global Business Services solutions, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: [ibm.com/services/us/gbs/consulting](http://ibm.com/services/us/gbs/consulting)

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