

Travis Perkins



“All of our critical UniVerse-based point-of-sale and back-office applications run on the HP Integrity Superdome servers under the HP-UX 11i v2 operating system. HP and IBM Software worked well together. The UniVerse database runs smoothly on Integrity servers and the switchover from Pa-Risc to Itanium processors caused no problems at all. HP’s hardware is the most stable and reliable platform Travis Perkins has used.” Frank Smith, Group IT Director, Travis Perkins

Objective:

Travis Perkins and Wickes wanted to complete an IT overhaul to provide redundancy and disaster recovery capability. In addition, the new hardware had to be easy to manage to reduce support costs and needed to be highly reliable to support longer opening hours with minimal downtime.

Approach:

- Equip its new data centres with a consistent set of hardware and software to support the entire business and provide mutual redundancy and failover.
- Selected HP Hardware working with reseller – Logicalis – for both data centres.
- HP collaborated closely with IBM Software and JDA to ensure existing software ran smoothly on the new hardware.
- Installed HP Systems Insight Manager to manage the server estate.

IT improvements:

- Ability to monitor performance, reliability and energy consumption as a result of HP Systems Insight Manager.
- HP Mission Critical Support ensures that vital hardware is fixed within hours.

Business benefits:

- High levels of redundancy making planning for disaster recovery easier.
- The new arrangement has enabled Travis Perkins to merge Wickes’ IT infrastructure into their own, reducing costs and improving management.
- Streamlined systems management.



Travis Perkins is a leading supplier to the building and construction market. The company can trace its roots back over 200 years and has over 850 branches and 100,000 product lines today. In 2005, the company acquired Wickes, another chain, with a further 177 stores.

Complete IT overhaul

At the beginning of 2006, Travis Perkins had a single data centre and Wickes had another. Neither was ideal for the future growth of the company and, although there were two of them, they provided no redundancy or disaster recovery capability. Outsourcing the disaster recovery function was increasingly expensive. Frank Smith, the Group IT Director, began looking for a better solution.

At the same time, Travis Perkins was looking to upgrade its older-generation HP Superdome and

Customer solution at a glance

Primary hardware

- 300 HP ProLiant c-Class blade servers
- StorageWorks XP12000 Disk Arrays
- StorageWorks EVA 8000
- Virtual tape libraries

Primary software

- HP Systems Insight Manager

Primary services

- HP Mission Critical Support

Blade Servers with the latest technology as part of a wider refresh. Once refreshed, the new hardware had to run the company's Microsoft infrastructure: Exchange Server etc. It also had to provide a platform for two separate Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) suites, one based on the IBM UniVerse database (for Travis Perkins) and the other running JDA Software (for Wickes).

Both ERP systems are business-critical software, and the transition and support had to be seamless and transparent to end users. In addition, the new hardware had to be easy to manage to reduce support costs. It also needed to be highly reliable to support longer opening hours with minimal downtime.

The HP solution

Travis Perkins decided to build two new data centres, one at its Northampton headquarters and another about seven miles away. The company planned to equip them with a consistent set of hardware and software so that they could support the entire business and provide mutual redundancy and failover.

HP, working in a joint engagement with reseller Logicalis, supplied Integrity Superdome Servers. In addition, HP supplied 300 HP ProLiant c-Class blade servers, StorageWorks XP12000 Disk Arrays, StorageWorks EVA 8000s and virtual tape libraries for both data centres. In doing so, the HP team beat off strong competition from other vendors.

To make sure Travis Perkins software runs smoothly on the new hardware, HP had to collaborate closely with IBM Software and JDA. In fact, Travis Perkins has one of the biggest deployments of IBM UniVerse in the world, with over 8,000 users.

Seamless transition and greater efficiency

HP Systems Insight Manager (a plug-in module for HP OpenView software) helps Travis Perkins manage

their new servers much more efficiently. It monitors performance, reliability and energy consumption and helps system managers pre-empt problems. This is backed up by HP Mission Critical Support, which ensures that vital hardware is fixed within hours.

Now that they have two data centres running similar hardware configurations, Travis Perkins has a high level of redundancy. It makes planning for disaster recovery easier. The new arrangement has also allowed Travis Perkins to merge Wickes IT infrastructure into their own. As a result, it is easier to manage and cheaper to run.

"All of our critical UniVerse-based point-of-sale and back-office applications run on the HP Integrity Superdome servers under the HP-UX 11i v2 operating system," says Smith. HP and IBM Software worked well together. The UniVerse database runs smoothly on Integrity servers and the switchover from Pa-Risc to Itanium processors caused no problems at all." Smith says that HP's hardware is the most stable and reliable platform Travis Perkins has used.

"The users just didn't notice the switch [from the old data centres to the new ones]," says Smith. It's an understated analysis of a complex project but, ultimately, it is also a tribute to the team that achieved it. As Travis Perkins upgrades to the latest version of JDA's software, it too will migrate into the HP environment just as easily.

"We're there. Everything's working," says Smith. Thousands of users have been migrated. Systems management has been streamlined. Wickes's IT infrastructure has been merged into Travis Perkins. The company has a robust, two-site disaster recovery plan. The whole project was completed on schedule and without disrupting users. Finally, and crucially, the company can run the software it needs on the best possible hardware for the job.

To learn more, visit www.hp.com

© 2008 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The only warranties for HP products and services are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty. HP shall not be liable for technical or editorial errors or omissions contained herein.

Publication Number: 4AA1-8515EEW Written: March 2008

