



HP puts the PowerCenter platform at the heart of one of the largest worldwide data operations and business intelligence centers

CHALLENGES

- Reduce computing expenses by billions
- Maintain near 100% availability of decision-support applications

INFORMATICA SOLUTIONS

- Informatica PowerCenter®
- Informatica PowerExchange®

ARCHITECTURE

- Data integration: Informatica
- Platform: HP-UX Itanium clusters (16 final servers)
- Sources: Multiple data bases including Oracle, Informix and SQL Server

BENEFITS

- Accelerated project deployment due to the Integration Competency Center (ICC)
- Automation of the migration process, with convergence of all existing deployments onto a common version of PowerCenter
- 99.9% availability of a worldwide data integration platform - setup in 18 months

“Since 2000, PowerCenter has been the data integration standard for our decision support applications. The Informatica solution has been the trump card as we have implemented a massive migration of these applications. Our Integration Competency Center is built to support 400 uses of Informatica. Moreover, with the 8.5 version of PowerCenter combined with HP technology, we will soon have 99.9 % availability, essential for such mission-critical applications.”

—Furio Lanzoni, Infrastructure Architect, HP

In 2000, HP decided to standardize its decision support applications on a worldwide scale and as part of this framework, chose to rely on the Informatica PowerCenter platform for all of its data integration needs. HP created the “BI Factory”, a dedicated platform capable of delivering decision support projects within a three week timescale to meet the needs of business teams.

In 2006, the IT organization made another strategic decision: to consolidate the 85 data centers it operates around the world into three sites – Atlanta, Georgia; Houston, Texas; and Austin, Texas. The sites each have two large data centers and are designed to failover to each other in case of a breakdown. The objective is to reduce the group’s computing expenses by several billion dollars in the coming years, thanks to a modular concept enabling rapid reconfiguration of resources and operations to support changing needs.

Massive migration of decision support applications

"Of course, this decision also affected the Business Intelligence business unit," states Furio Lanzoni, Infrastructure Architect at HP. "It meant we needed to migrate all the decision support applications and all the associated Informatica solutions. Having standardized the tools in 2000 has made it a lot easier, but it remains an enormous project."

HP's decision support applications cover all areas of the business—finance, inventory management, marketing planning, purchasing and parts re-supply, sales, large contract management, products, pricing, and credit. And, due to the breadth of the applications, the BI databases contain approximately 40 terabytes of data. *"When you move into a new house, you want everything to be clean and orderly,"* says Furio Lanzoni. *"It's the same for us: we are taking advantage of the move to do some housekeeping with the applications, switch them to new machines, and conform them to the rules of the new data centers."*

A two-stage project

For the migration, HP's Integration Competency Center (ICC) took control of all the data integration solutions up to the start of production on the new clustered HP-UX Itanium servers. Under the management of Chris Hobbs and Brian Thome, the eleven-person project team divided the project into two stages. In the first phase, started in November 2006, the team built the data integration platform, defined the rules common to all the PowerCenter solutions, and migrated twenty solutions in six months. Five of the team members implemented

PowerCenter on eight dedicated high-availability servers, distributed between Austin and Houston. *"Since these data integration solutions are mission-critical, we also put in place a support center that works 24 hours a day, 7 days a week,"* comments Furio Lanzoni. *"It communicates with the 160 people in charge of the support and development of the twenty applications migrated to date."*

The second phase, launched in April 2007 with strong support from management, addressed fifty-six supplementary data integration solutions and must be completed by April 2008, the date by which HP will have closed all the other data centers. *"There will no doubt be more, but with the projected doubling of the PowerCenter servers, we have the infrastructure required to support 400 Informatica solutions. When finished, we will have one of the largest PowerCenter platforms in the world!"* adds Furio Lanzoni.

Standardization on Informatica

One of the decisions made in the migration project was to standardize the data integration solutions on version 7.1 of Informatica PowerCenter. *"Until then, all our centers used PowerCenter, but not necessarily the same version. To create a homogenous environment, we upgraded all of them to the same version. Coupled with the new HP technology, the platform brings us the stability and level of performance required by the mission-critical data integration solutions which feed the BI applications, which are in themselves mission-critical,"* states Furio Lanzoni. *"This standardization will also facilitate the upgrade to version 8.5, which we are beta-testing. We expect to utilize many of the new capabilities*

because 8.5 was actually conceived for large-scale, mission-critical environments such as ours. Combined with HP technology, Informatica will guarantee us 99.9 % availability." Also, in addition to the Metadata Manager feature of PowerCenter Advanced Edition, which HP already uses, HP plans to implement the Informatica data quality solutions in the future.

The role of HP's Integration Competency Center

HP's ICC took charge of the whole project. Set up in 2001, the ICC allowed HP to accelerate the deployment of projects thanks to the sharing of knowledge, standardization on a small number of proven tools, and promotion of best practices. *"We have been using PowerCenter intensively for seven years and we know how to get the maximum functionality from the platform. In the framework of this project, each team member can take over the migration of several solutions, thanks to their mastery of PowerCenter, while at the same time educating those who will take over responsibility for the solutions in the future. That represents a considerable amount of work for a small team like ours, but if we had not industrialized data integration starting in 2001, thanks to PowerCenter, it would have been simply impossible,"* concludes Furio Lanzoni.

ABOUT INFORMATICA

Informatica Corporation is a leading provider of enterprise data integration software. Using Informatica products, companies can access, discover, integrate, and deliver enterprise data across systems, processes, and people to reduce complexity, ensure consistency, and empower the business.

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