

Story of book club's migration to in-house SAP and storage consolidation makes thrilling reading

ECI



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– Enver Tanriverdi, Manager of Information and Communication Technology, ECI

Executive summary:

To enable the use of new direct marketing techniques, maintain close relationships with its 1 million customers, and support new service introductions, the Netherlands-based ECI book club had to solve numerous IT challenges. ECI needed to consolidate storage, migrate and upgrade its SAP application, and develop a more reliable, failure-resistant approach to critical backups and business continuity.

To achieve these goals, ECI chose to migrate its critical SAP environment from an outsourced Sun/UNIX/EMC platform to a robust, in-house HP infrastructure using consulting from HP Services and third-party SAP consultants. The solution included HP ProLiant DL585 servers running Microsoft® Windows® Server 2003 – and a highly reliable SAN based on HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Array storage arrays, a StorageWorks Enterprise Systems Library E-Series tape library, and HP OpenView Storage Data Protector software.

In less than three months, consultants from HP Services and Ctac (an SAP integrator) in the Netherlands helped ECI successfully design and implement a new in-house infrastructure and migrate its SAP ERP and CRM environment, including a 3 TB SAP database. ECI



estimates it now saves approximately 40 percent over the previous outsourced solution – primarily by avoiding costly replacement of the outsourced legacy infrastructure. The company also avoids outsourcing fees and enjoys greater efficiency through server and storage consolidation. In addition, the firm now has a full, physically separate SAP standby system for near instantaneous failover, and the staff has cut full backups from two days to approximately six hours.

Book club writes new chapter in IT story

ECI is a member of DirectGroup Bertelsmann, one of six divisions of Europe's largest media company, Bertelsmann AG. With 32 million customers and 2004 sales of EUR 2.2 billion (US \$2.6 billion), DirectGroup is a major player in its regional markets. At the heart of the business are book and music clubs in 22 countries – including famous brands such as Book-of-the-Month Club in the U.S., Der Club in Germany, and ECI in the Netherlands and Flanders.

Media-product consumers in the Dutch language area have many options, including conventional stores and online outlets. One of the key ways to promote growth and cement customer loyalty is through service differentiation by means of personalization and relationship development. This level of service requires a strong, highly reliable, and responsive IT infrastructure, which can support advanced CRM, data warehousing, business intelligence, and ERP applications.

In 2000, ECI and four other Bertelsmann companies joined forces to develop the Common Club Information Technology (CCIT) platform to support their joint needs. The companies based CCIT on standard SAP R/3 solutions, third-party products, and custom-developed applications. The platform assists the companies in market planning, clear targeting, budgeting, customer





segmentation, and offer design. Using CCIT, the individual businesses can monitor and evaluate campaigns based on customer interaction, service management, and results analysis. A Bertelsmann site in Germany remotely hosted the shared CCIT infrastructure based on a Sun/UNIX/EMC platform.

Turning the page past outsourced IT

By 2004, the aging CCIT hardware and software infrastructure needed an overhaul. In particular, backups of critical SAP databases and vital CRM information were exceeding the weekend target window, major hardware components were nearly out of lease, the core SAP R/3 system needed upgrading, and ECI wanted to consolidate storage islands and streamline data-storage management.

One of the first decisions that ECI planners made was to move the CCIT functionality from Germany to the firm's home base in Vianen, the Netherlands. ECI hoped to achieve numerous goals with this bold move, including improved system performance, greater flexibility and support, disk storage consolidation, and significant overall cost savings.

- **"We believed we could save money by moving to a standardized, Windows-based infrastructure,"** explains ECI's Manager of Information and Communication Technology Enver Tanriverdi. "But many advisors, both inside and outside our company, thought that our 3 TB SAP database might overwhelm Windows. However, HP, Ctac and ECI experts believed it could be done. Moreover, we planned for every contingency, just in case."
- **"ECI evaluated proposals from Sun and HP. We selected the HP plan, which called for a highly flexible, scalable architecture built on HP ProLiant DL585 4-way servers."** The plan also featured a Fibre Channel SAN fabric based on HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays

(EVAs), and the Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition operating system. The HP proposal addressed two key ECI requirements: a mirrored backup site to provide a failover production environment and a dedicated backup server.

Binding teamwork with careful analysis pays off

HP consultants and Ctac SAP experts worked closely with ECI experts to carefully evaluate the existing CCIT SAP environment in Germany and correctly size the new in-house infrastructure intended for ECI's Vianen headquarters. In particular, the team needed to verify that the new HP infrastructure would accommodate the initial migration, as well as the subsequent upgrade from SAP R/3 4.5 to SAP R/3 Enterprise 4.7.

Beginning in February 2005, the HP consulting and integration team began configuring and installing the new infrastructure at ECI's facilities. First, they installed a primary site consisting of two HP ProLiant DL585 servers – one for production and the other for testing and development – each equipped with four AMD Opteron™ processors for outstanding 32-bit and 64-bit computing.

The primary-site ProLiant servers share a Fibre Channel switched-SAN fabric that features an HP StorageWorks EVA array equipped with 12 TB of raw capacity, expandable to up to 36 TB per EVA system. The SAN features HP StorageWorks SAN Switch 2/16 Power Pack switches for 2 GB connectivity on every port.

The team implemented a nearly identical secondary site in a separate building located approximately 500 meters from the primary site. This secondary site includes two ProLiant DL585 servers and a second EVA equipped with 12 TB. ECI uses one of the ProLiant servers at the secondary location as a hot-standby SAP system. It dedicates the other server to backup duties, including collecting data from servers throughout the enterprise and

streaming data to an HP StorageWorks ESL322e tape library. Tanriverdi notes:

- **"Our HP SAN allows us to consolidate much of our critical enterprise storage and manage it under a single interface. That saves us time, improves our flexibility in adapting to new demands, and allowed us to eliminate several servers."** ECI consolidated storage for its many HP ProLiant DL380 G4 servers, which power its critical web site, call center management, and office applications. ECI is also an avid user of VMware for server virtualization and recently began using HP BladeSystem servers with AMD Opteron processors.
- **"The integration with our existing HP systems here in Vianen was so seamless – it made the implementation and migration fast and painless."** Tanriverdi says that the entire migration from outsourcing to an in-house system took less than three months. A month after that, the company upgraded its SAP core applications from SAP version 4.5 to 4.7.

Moving to bestselling system backups

The inclusion of a distant, secondary IT site was a key goal for ECI. The secondary site would provide a physically separate recovery infrastructure, along with the necessary resources for fast, overhead-free backups.

With the former outsourced infrastructure, full backups ran well over the allotted weekends, and full database recovery from tape generally took at least a week. The legacy systems' hardware reliability and availability also concerned the staff. According to Tanriverdi, the new HP storage infrastructure solved numerous issues – and did so with no net increase in staff:

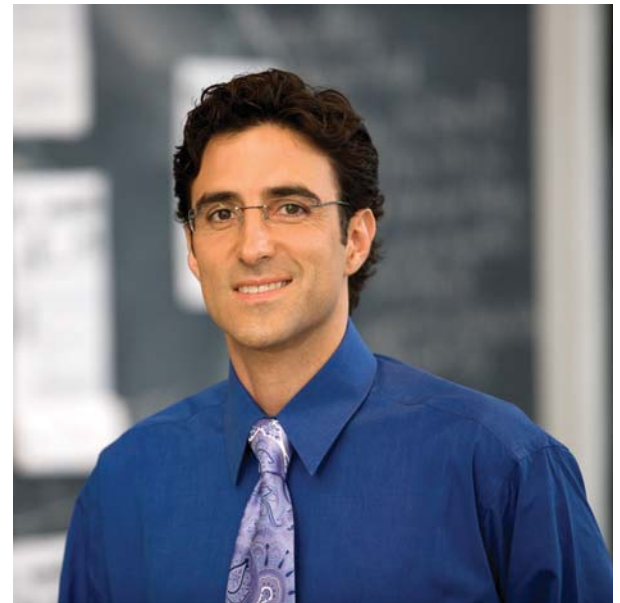
- **"We were actually quite surprised that we have not had to increase our staffing to bring this very substantial infrastructure in house. It is a greater challenge, of course, but the payoff in increased flexibility, and improved security, availability, continuity and performance has been well worth it."** With a dedicated ProLiant DL380 server running HP OpenView Storage Data Protector software, the staff can perform backups without disrupting normal operations. To keep the backup database current, the production system sends SAP-related Oracle database log files every few minutes over the ECI corporate network to the hot standby server and supporting HP SAN.
- **"We decreased the time required for full backups to about six hours. In the very unlikely event that all of our backup systems failed, we can recover completely from tape in just 12 hours. That's very reassuring."**
- **"The new, completely automated HP ESL322e tape library – with 322 tape cartridges and four LTO2 drives – frees staff to focus on other chores."** The ESL E-Series library can scale to 712 cartridges and 24 drives in a single cabinet. The powerful ProLiant backup server

keeps the ESL library streaming for effective performance.

A happy ending

According to Tanriverdi, the ECI IT team is thrilled with its new, in-house HP infrastructure: "We've built a strong, flexible foundation for continued growth, and we are providing data security and business-continuity preparedness." ECI is experiencing a variety of benefits, including:

- Automated backups spare staff time and require no unplanned downtime.
- In-house SAP infrastructure saves the firm approximately 40 percent over alternative outsourced solutions.
- Increased performance and control virtually eliminated batch window concerns.
- DAS islands consolidated to the new HP SAN improved efficiency, disk utilization, and security.
- Failover protection of critical SAP production systems provides nearly seamless continuity.



About ECI

ECI (www.eci.nl), part of AG Direct Group Bertelsmann, is one of the major players in the book and music markets in the Netherlands and Flanders. Founded in 1967, the club provides books, music CDs, movie DVDs, games, and multimedia products to more than 1 million members. Club members benefit from discounts, special offers, gifts, targeted newsletters and more.

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At a glance

Hardware

- 2 HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Array systems with combined raw capacity of 24 TB
- 4 HP StorageWorks SAN Switches (2/16N Power Pack 2 GB)
- HP StorageWorks ESL322e (E-Series) Tape Library with 4 LTO Ultrium 460 drives and 322 Ultrium2 tape cartridges
- 4 HP ProLiant DL585 with AMD Opteron™ processors
- 7 HP ProLiant BL25 server blades with AMD Opteron™ dual-core processors
- 20 HP ProLiant DL380 dual-processor servers
- HP Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) boards and software

Software

- HP StorageWorks Command View EVA, Secure Manager ESL access control, Business Copy EVA, Secure Path for Windows
- HP OpenView Storage Data Protector and Storage Operations Manager EVA
- HP Systems Insight Manager
- SAP R/3 Enterprise Release 4.70 (64-bit)
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition operating system
- Oracle database 9.02
- VMware ESX Server

HP Services

- SAN sizing, installation, and training
- SAP migration analysis, sizing, and consulting
- 3-year HP Care Pack with Support Plus 24
- HP consulting and integration services

Ctac N.V. SAP consulting

Business needs

- Reduce costs and improve overall IT flexibility and adaptability
- Improve backup practices and business continuity resiliency
- Consolidate isolated storage islands to centrally managed SAN infrastructure
- Migrate and upgrade mission-critical SAP applications
- Improve business processes

HP solution

- HP consulting, installation, training, and support services helped ECI get up and running quickly
- Powerful HP ProLiant DL585 servers and Fibre Channel HP SAN yield a strong foundation for mission-critical SAP ERP migration and upgrade
- HP StorageWorks EVA SAN and HP StorageWorks and OpenView software provide failover protection, fast backups, and single-pane-of-glass management
- HP StorageWorks ESL322e tape library delivers scalable, lights-out backup and recovery management

Customer results

Simplicity

- Virtually eliminates batch window concerns through improved performance
- Saves time and effort in storage management with virtualized, centralized HP EVA SAN
- Consolidates isolated DAS islands to centrally managed HP SAN

Agility

- Provides capacity for continued growth and flexible support for business goals
- Strengthened business continuity with mirrored failover site
- Moved from outsourcing to a new in-house storage infrastructure without increasing staff size

Value

- Reduced overall IT infrastructure replacement costs by 40 percent
- Cut tape backup time from 48 hours to about 6 hours

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