



IBM Customer Reference

Homebase Ltd.

Synopsis:

IBM e(logo)server pSeries 680 Model S85, IBM RS/6000 Model M80, an Enterprise Storage Server, SAN Data Gateway and IBM Global Services create comprehensive SAP solution for retail company

Location:

London, United Kingdom

Industry:

Retail

Focus Area:

Enterprise Resource Planning

URL:

<http://www.homebase.co.uk>

Customer Background:

Homebase Ltd. is a Home Enhancement retailer with 260 stores in the UK. It is the second largest retailer, next to B&Q, in its market in the UK. Homebase was originally part of the J. Sainsbury PLC but was sold to the present owners, effective March 2001.

Business Need:

The customer was looking to replace its mainframe legacy applications with an SAP/UNIX based solution. The current systems, mostly running mainframe applications, do not address the current needs of the business, especially in the customer's stores. As a result, many manual tasks are associated with Supply Chain activities carried out in the stores. These tasks are labor intensive and inaccurate by definition. If a new solution was not quickly implemented, expanding business margins and therefore profits would have continued to be squeezed by the cost of these processes.

Solution:

Looking to address the customer's needs, IBM provided a hardware platform with pSeries 680s as database servers and RS/6000 M80s as application servers for the SAP solution. An IBM Enterprise Storage Server (ESS) was implemented to meet storage requirements and a SAN Data Gateway was used for the Head Office network.

The net result was that the customer received a cost effective solution for its SAP solution, mySAP.com - Sales & Distribution. Another key requirement was the need to trickle feed the sales data from Homebase stores into the SAP application. To do this, IBM used MQSeries Everyplace running on IBM 4690 POS Store Controllers (IBM x200s). The data is fed into the SAP pSeries 680 database servers where it can then be interrogated by users via the RS/6000 M80 application servers. This provides users with the ability to view data in near real time with the company's sales performance. By having more accurate and timely views of the supply chain, Homebase can reduce its stock holdings.

IBM Global Services provided the SAP project planning skills, Network Consultancy, Infrastructure resources, Hardware maintenance and Installation services to set up the SAP platform.

Benefits of the Solution:

The business benefits are in excess of \$16 million per year and represent an increase of over 20% to the bottom line of the business. The solution will remove the need for much of the manual activity associated with current Store Systems. It will also enable Homebase to switch off mainframe systems. This produces a large savings as the new UNIX based system will have a much lower TCO.