

SALADINO'S

Standardizing on HP Desktop PCs, Server Blades and Storage



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HP customer case study: HP Compaq dc7800 PCs link employees to new SAP environment running on HP ProLiant Server Blades, HP EVA4400

Industry: Foodservice

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Objective:

Provide reliable IT infrastructure for growing foodservice distributor

Approach:

Saladino's has standardized on HP products from the data center to the desktop

IT improvements:

- dc7800 Small Form Factor PCs are easily deployed
- Improved desktop security
- Flexibility to resize hardware for SAP environment
- Easy to manage HP BladeSystem and EVA infrastructure

Business benefits:

- Improved reliability at desktop
- Blade servers reduce cost of hardware refresh



A small food distributor might have a few PCs in the main office. But for Saladino's, a \$385 million company that supplies restaurants up and down the west coast, sophisticated and reliable technology infrastructure is critical to meeting customer needs and tight delivery deadlines. As the company prepared for a major technology shift and SAP rollout in recent years, it has moved to standardize from the data center to the desktop on HP hardware.

“I came from the world of consulting, where I was a huge HP fan,” explains Craig Urrizola, chief information officer at Saladino's. “HP systems are flexible and reliable. They have solid desktop PCs and the best server technology on the market. For me, coming from consulting and knowing the different vendors, HP was an easy choice.”

HP infrastructure supports far-flung business

Saladino's, based in Fresno, Calif., serves restaurants throughout California, as well as locations in Nevada, Idaho and Oregon. The company's nerve center is its data center in Fresno that hosts the majority of Saladino's mission-critical applications on HP ProLiant BL460 blade servers and an HP StorageWorks 4400 Enterprise Virtual Array (EVA4400) storage system.

Saladino's uses the Cadec DeliveryTracker transportation logistics application, which links to onboard PCs in all its delivery trucks with live GPS tracking; and the Microsoft® Dynamics HR application. But the heart of the business has just been moved to SAP for Wholesale Distribution, including the ERP, CRM and Business Warehouse modules, all running on HP blade servers and the EVA storage array. SAP Business Objects implementation is planned as the next phase of the project.

In planning the transition, Urrizola talked with SAP and became confident HP was the best hardware solution when he learned about the large installed base of SAP on HP hardware. He called Pat Pendergast of Western Blue, a local HP partner. "She convinced me that the best solution was to go with HP blade servers and the EVA," Urrizola recalls. "She came up with a solution that was cost effective and flexible for our future needs." As a result, he says, Saladino's has become a poster child for SAP deployment in the wholesale distribution/food service industry.

The flexibility of Saladino's new HP infrastructure was proven almost immediately. When the CRM application was sized for future growth, it called for more system resources and storage than had been originally planned. Notes Kurt Jost, a systems analyst with Saladino's, "We had to do a huge architecture

change mid-stream primarily due to the CRM module, and without the flexibility of the EVA and blade servers, I can't imagine how much more time and cost it would have taken. That flexibility saved us time and money at a critical juncture."

"We don't have anything that's particularly challenging for a PC to run. But we demand reliability. The desktop PC is our employees' link to the tools they need to do their jobs. The PC has to run. That's why we chose HP."

Craig Urrizola, chief information officer, Saladino's

He says expanding the EVA was "the easiest hardware implementation I've ever done. We just popped in two more shelves, and we were done."

Jost says the benefit of the HP infrastructure will continue long after the original outlay. "I really don't have formal SAN experience, but I can easily manage the whole infrastructure using web tools. And with HP's System Insight Manager (SIM), I know that even if there's a problem when I'm not there, it's going to call HP and create a traceable case."

The EVA4400 simplifies installation by employing EVA virtualization capabilities that improve management resources.

The new architecture also accommodates growth and change, important flexibility in today's business. If in the future the SQL server approaches capacity, for example, the technology team can add additional resources without even taking the system down. The HP BladeSystem and EVA architecture runs VMware ESX to virtualize servers and storage, allowing Saladino's to run additional applications on virtual servers using

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Customer solution at a glance

Primary application

Foodservice distribution

Primary hardware

- HP Compaq dc7800 Small Form Factor PCs
- HP ProLiant BL460 G5 Server Blades
- HP StorageWorks 4400 Enterprise Virtual Array

Primary software

- Genuine Windows® XP Professional
- Microsoft® Office
- HP Insight Control for HP BladeSystem
- SAP ERP 6.0
- CRM 2007

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Craig Urrizola, chief information officer,
Saladino’s



the same blades. Jost says the company will simply add more server blades as needed to accommodate future growth and other applications.

The company has an aging HP ProLiant server that will be replaced soon. Now the team can simply add an additional blade server to the current BladeSystem enclosure. Virtualization will enable Saladino’s to size the HP BladeSystem and EVA infrastructure over time for actual needs, rather than over-provisioning each time a new application server is required.

Western Blue provided vision for implementing the solution with affordability and expandability. “Pat and our Western Blue solution architect put a solution together based entirely on our needs. We were advised on how to build our blades, interface the EVA, and plan for the future,” Jost says.

Urrizola adds that HP products provide a real advantage in manageability. “We find HP Insight Control for HP BladeSystem is a core component for managing servers and storage, and HP SmartStart for provisioning the EVA is superior to competitive products. Based on what we need to do, the performance and manageability of our HP infrastructure is a better match to our needs than other choices.”

HP desktops complement core infrastructure

Outside the data center, users are gradually being standardized on HP desktop PCs—most recently the HP Compaq dc7800 Small Form Factor PC. “We were using another vendor’s PCs and having a lot of

reliability issues. Systems were routinely overheating,” Urrizola explains. “So we started purchasing HP PCs from then on as older desktops come up for replacement. We’re improving reliability with every purchase.”

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Kurt Jost, systems analyst, Saladino’s

In most cases, PCs are refreshed every three years or so. Users typically run server-based applications over the local area network or via a Citrix farm or Microsoft® Office from their local hard drive. “We don’t have anything that’s particularly challenging for a PC to run,” Urrizola notes. “But we demand reliability. The desktop PC is our employees’ link to the tools they need to do their jobs. The PC has to run. That’s why we chose HP.”

Urrizola says the dc7800 Small Form Factor PC fits nicely in tight spaces, both on employees’ desks and in warehouses. Saladino’s configures its dc7800 PCs with up to three gigabytes of memory and the newest Intel® processor available, running Genuine Windows® XP Professional. The company images the PCs in house with a combination of client software and local productivity applications including Microsoft Office.

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Jost adds, "Our other vendor had some weird SATA drivers, so we couldn't image them easily. With the HP PCs, there are standard SATA drivers. We just plug them in, hit a button, and minutes later they're ready to be deployed."

The HP Compaq dc7800 series Business Desktop PCs can also be configured to take advantage of Intel vPro processor technology to provide proactive security against malicious software attacks.

Looking ahead, Urrizola notes that with a struggling economy, his challenge is to be more efficient than ever. "With every blade server we use to replace older

servers, we save power and improve efficiency." The company is also working to deploy additional infrastructure to improve business continuity and provide disaster recovery. Again, Saladino's has turned to Western Blue and HP to help architect the appropriate solution.

"HP is deeply connected with us as a technology partner, and Western Blue is our local consulting partner and first point of contact," says Urrizola. "Together, they're a great technology team to have on our side."

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To learn more, visit www.hp.com
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