

Gould Electronics GmbH embraces switch to HP-UX



“We have defined the elements and the tools for our HP e3000 to HP 9000 migration. What I’ve seen and heard at the HP e3000 community’s conferences confirms that we’re on the right track.”

– Theo Danzeisen, MIS, Gould Electronics GmbH,
Eichstetten am Kaiserstuhl, Germany

Mix of proprietary and standard applications

Gould Electronics GmbH is the German subsidiary of a leading manufacturer and global supplier of hyper-pure, electronic grade copper foil for the PCB industry. Around 35 users rely on the company’s proprietary ERP system and sales applications as well as on a number of standard accounting and other commercial applications.

The 24x7 paradigm

“We have chosen HP-UX on an HP 9000 server as the replacement for our HP e3000 server running MPE/iX. For our 24x7 production environment, high availability is absolutely imperative. That’s why we ruled out the Windows plus PC platform as a viable option. And since controlling and running our production structure requires a lot more than mere Bills of Material and receptors, we decided against deploying one of the big ‘mainstream’ ERP systems. Our database solution of choice is Oracle,” says Theo Danzeisen, MIS, Gould Electronics GmbH.

Steady progress

Acucorp plays a key role in the migration project of Gould Electronics GmbH. The Acucorp Screen Designer is currently being used for converting the graphical user interfaces of Gould’s proprietary applications. The Acucobol compiler is in the process of replacing the HP Cobol compiler on the company’s HP e3000 server.

Consultants from B&B Unternehmensberatung are involved in the hands-on part of the migration project. The first converted applications, including Gould’s proprietary ERP solution, are already up and running on the HP e3000 server. Today, HP Cobol, Uniface and Acucobol share the same data on the same server.

“Our sales application is written in Uniface. On HP-UX, this application can be used with Oracle. Unlike most of its competitors, Oracle provides a monitor for Uniface, which helps to significantly reduce our migration effort,” notes Theo Danzeisen.

Smooth migration

Gould Electronics GmbH launched its migration project in April 2004. Until 2006, the company's server environment will reside in two parallel worlds: Physically, the IT environment will remain on the HP e3000 server, while the logical migration of the environment for HP 9000 readiness is taking shape.

Initially, the HP Cobol sources were migrated to Acucorp Cobol, while the applications remained on MPE/iX. The database access methodology will be adapted by means of ti2SQL from ORDAT. ti2SQL is Gould's tool of choice for the physical data migration to Oracle, scheduled to take place in the middle of 2005. One of the key benefits is that this migration

will not require any major code changes. The physical move to HP-UX on an HP 9000 server will take place a year later, after all functions have undergone in-depth testing in the existing MPE/iX environment.

"We will phase out our HP e3000 system near the end of the official HP support period. We are migrating at our own pace and we intend to move forward on the basis of experience gained. The idea is not to deal with any open issues any earlier than we have to – the middle or the end of 2006 will do. Otherwise, we might end up wasting precious time. The HP 9000 loaner will enable us to thoroughly test each stage of the migration before it goes live in our production environment," explains Theo Danzeisen.

Prior to migration	Following migration	Benefits achieved
One HP e3000 server using MPE/iX	One HP 9000 server using HP-UX 11i	Future-proof and scalable server platform
HP Cobol compiler	Acucorp Cobol compiler	Data sharing during transition
TurboImage database	Oracle database	Ease of migration
Image wrapper	ORDAT ti2SQL	Minimal changes in the source code for DB access
Mix of proprietary and standard commercial applications	Mix of proprietary and standard commercial applications	Cost effectiveness plus same look and feel

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