

HP Output Server helps Agilent consolidate and control its ERP environment



“We output over 1.3 million documents per month and using HP Output Server it is now all controlled centrally. It is a very flexible off-the-shelf solution, which is able to efficiently accommodate our changing business requirements. It has helped us optimize our operational efficiency associated with managing output, by avoiding the need to deal with multiple UNIX and NT environments, and gives us an excellent return on our IT investment.”
– Alan Davidson, Senior Technical Architect, Agilent

With over 32,000 employees worldwide and customers in more than 110 countries, Agilent's size gives it a distinct competitive advantage. Specifically, it has the experience, expertise and breadth to deliver innovative technologies, solutions and services to the communications, electronics, life sciences and chemical analysis industries.

Enterprise-wide challenge

In 2000, Agilent prudently realized that to continue providing customers with top-level, flexible services and innovative technologies, it needed to consolidate and improve its enterprise resource-planning (ERP) environment.

“Over time we had added more servers and different software versions to our legacy environment, all of which led to increased maintenance, management time, effort and, of course, budget. So, we set out to reduce the complexity of our enterprise, improve the manageability and lower the overall operational costs,” stated Alan Davidson, Agilent Senior Technical Architect. “We decided to re-architect our ERP infrastructure into a single-instance Oracle ERP environment. However, having made this decision, we specifically needed to source a solution for managing the data output from this new infrastructure.”

The legacy file output system comprised multiple, highly distributed Microsoft Windows® NT and HP-UX® servers, running application specific output solutions. Agilent needed to be able to reliably direct output from a single instance global Oracle ERP application to 4,000 output devices located throughout its infrastructure.

Challenge

- Implement solution to manage data output from a single-instance Oracle ERP environment and direct it to 4,000 various devices throughout the enterprise.
- Reduce management time, effort and cost.

Solution

- Deploy HP Output Server Version 3.2 and 3.3 with Envoy client for desktops and barcode printing module.

Results

- Flexible, central control of 1.3 million documents output per month.
- Optimized operational efficiency associated with managing output.

At a glance

- **Company:** Agilent
- **Headquarters:** Palo Alto, CA
- **Founded:** 1999
- **Employees:** 32,000
- **Revenue:** \$6 billion (US)
- **Telephone:** (650) 752 5000
- **Url:** www.agilent.com
- **Primary/products:** Agilent provides innovative Technologies, solutions and services to a variety of customers in communications, electronics, life sciences and chemical analysis.

HP Output Server: a single solution

Davidson didn't want his team to design an output solution in-house. He sought out and eventually evaluated two potential off-the-shelf solutions, which included HP Output Server.

"The HP Output Server proved to be the flexible, scalable output management solution we needed for our enterprise. In addition, the HP Output Server solution was easily configurable to work with Oracle ERP and was tightly interconnected with other leading ERP solutions."

HP Output Server innovates the way customers manage, distribute and share information. It includes output to print, fax, e-mail, web and file. The software receives output from a variety of sources and then routes all requests across the wide area network (WAN) or local area network (LAN) to the appropriate output queue on the network.

Soup-to-nuts innovation and implementation

Agilent began implementing the HP Output Server in October 2000 and went live in July 2002. It was configured to process data from the Oracle ERP application suite, pass it to Adobe Acrobat® software for formatting and then direct it to the appropriate output device – web page, fax, e-mail, printer, etc.

Davidson commented, "We liked the flexibility of HP Output Server being able to handle many different output formats. We even use it to print bar code labels

for our warehouse management system. Soup-to-nuts, it all goes through the HP Output Server!"

He went on to recall, "It was a fairly complex implementation because we wanted it to cover all our output format needs. The Oracle warehouse software was pretty new and HP actually developed the barcode-printing module to meet our needs."

To date, Agilent has implemented the Output Server Version 3.2, and 3.3 for two Oracle ERP applications and the Envoy client for desktops. Currently, Agilent's HP Output Server covers 18,000 users and by the end of 2004, will serve 22,000 (70 percent of the company's employees). It currently handles 4,000 output destinations, and with HP Output Server it only takes 30 minutes to add a new device versus four hours if the standard ERP functions are used.

Bottom line benefits

Davidson concluded, "We output over 1.3 million documents per month and using HP Output Server it is now all controlled centrally. It is a very flexible off-the-shelf solution, which is able to efficiently accommodate our changing business requirements. It has helped us optimize our operational efficiency associated with managing output, by avoiding the need to deal with multiple UNIX and NT environments, and gives us an excellent return on our IT investment."

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