

# Valero Energy Corporation

HP Output Management solution for SAP boosts efficiency, eases administration



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— Jim Sparkman, Senior Manager I/S, Valero Energy Corporation



## Objective:

Make printer administration for SAP faster and easier, while freeing up computing cycles on the SAP instance servers.

## Approach:

Valero Energy chose an HP Output Management Solution to facilitate enterprise information delivery that included HP Output Management software and HP Integrity servers, as well as implementation, integration, software support and education services.

## IT improvements:

- Printing burden on SAP central instance servers reduced from 7-10 percent to 1-2 percent under the HP Output Management solution, freeing cycles to run the business.
- Frees up IT resources for other valuable tasks, since printer configuration for SAP now only requires a single SAP administrator, rather than a combination of SAP and UNIX administrators.

## Business benefits:

- More processing cycles available to SAP
- Less IT management time spent on printer configuration.
- Faster print delivery.

## HP customer case study:

North America’s largest refiner implements HP Output Management solution to speed printer configuration, free up SAP processing

Industry: Energy



When Valero Energy Corporation implemented SAP software to provide integrated ERP capabilities, it provided 6,000 users with the most powerful computer-based tools available. Users generate up to 8,000 reports daily, containing the business insight and intelligence Valero needs to survive and thrive as the largest refiner in North America.

Accessing those reports has presented a challenge, however. At one point, the company had more than 1,800 printers linked to SAP. Maintaining them was a major IT challenge, consuming time from both the SAP Basis Administrator and a UNIX administrator. Printing also consumed 7-10 percent of the SAP central instance server resources.

“Clearly we needed a better way to manage our SAP output, and we found it in an HP Output Management solution,” says Jim Sparkman, Senior Manager I/S,

who heads up an SAP support group at Valero. “The HP solution lets us do in a few minutes what might have taken hours in the past.”

### SAP at Valero Energy

Valero Energy is the largest refiner in North America, with approximately 21,000 employees and 2006 revenues of more than \$90 billion. From its headquarters in San Antonio, Texas the company operates refineries with a throughput of 3.1 million barrels of oil per day. Its operations stretch across the United States, Canada and the Caribbean.

Tying together the enterprise requires powerful computing resources. The company had implemented an SAP environment with more than 50 instances, including a variety of SAP modules and capabilities including mySAP, BW/SEM, HR, CRM, EBP/SRM, CUA, XI, APO/SCM, Java Development environment, the Enterprise Portal, Solution Manager and Knowledge Management. SAP supports 6,000 users overall, and roughly 1,800 concurrent users around the clock.

“It’s a lynchpin in our daily operations,” says Sparkman. “It’s a large implementation and it has to run efficiently in order for Valero to run efficiently. The last thing we want to hear is that it’s slow.”

### Output becomes an IT management headache

Report output was indeed slowing down both SAP and its users. It was also an IT management headache. Setting up a printer required an SAP Basis administrator and UNIX administrator, with additional support from remote sites to ensure the device was

correctly configured. If a printer had to be set up on several SAP systems, the UNIX administrator would define the device at the server level for each SAP system, and the Basis Administrator would do the same. It often took hours.

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To make matters worse, the IP address for each server was attached to the printer name. To move a printer, the administrators had to reconfigure it at the server level and within SAP.

Sparkman contacted several vendors with output management applications for SAP, and talked with other SAP users. He chose an HP Output Management solution based on its SAP capabilities. “We made the right choice when we chose HP,” says Sparkman. “HP Output Management is a very good fit for us. We look for highly reliable and flexible systems that provide dependable service to users without a lot of overhead. That’s exactly what the HP solution has delivered.”

Valero’s HP Output Management solution is the intelligent link that gets critical business information — including invoices, contracts, purchase orders, and

## Customer solution at a glance

### Primary applications

SAP

### Primary hardware

- HP Integrity rx4640 servers

### Primary software

- HP Output Server
- HP Output Manager for SAP
- HP Output Manager for HP Software (formerly OpenView)

### HP Services

- Implementation and integration
- Standard 9x5 software support
- HP Output Server System Administration Training

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countless refinery operations reports — to every part of the company where it is needed, reliably and efficiently. It also frees up the resources devoted to running SAP to save Valero valuable time and money.

#### **HP Services assists in implementation**

HP Output Management is an end-to-end solution, combining enterprise information delivery software with expert integration, implementation, support, and customer training. Valero took advantage of all aspects of HP's offering.

Sparkman had specific objectives in mind for the HP Output Management Solution. They included:

- Reducing the administrator overhead of managing printers within SAP and on the server.
- Defining a printer once and only once.
- Logically connecting the printer through various SAP instances.
- Eliminating print queue handling on the SAP central instance servers and moving that workload to HP Output Server.
- Freeing up server processing cycles allocated to printer management, and reallocating those cycles to the SAP system and database processes.
- Allowing users to cancel print jobs more quickly, and analyze printing problems through HP Output Server instead of the SAP server.

Sparkman brought in HP Services personnel to help install, test, and initially load the SAP printer definitions that would reside in the HP Output Management solution, which runs on two HP Integrity rx4640 servers. Software components include HP Output Server and HP Output Manager for SAP connected to

23 SAP instances; and HP Output Manager for HP Software (formerly OpenView).

HP Services also taught Valero administrators how to install, administer, and use the system, working with the in-house IT team to load and configure an initial set of SAP printers.

“We built our test system in less than a half hour. It was totally painless,” Sparkman says. “Frankly I wasn't used to that kind of efficiency. In our SAP environment, building a test system takes several very, very long days. HP Output server has a lot of flexibility that makes it much faster to work with.”

The initial implementation of software, loading some 1400 printers, and configuring test printers took three weeks. During the install, Sparkman's team worked with HP Services to create a fail-over environment using HP ServiceGuard software running on the test environment.

“We would never have implemented it in that time frame without HP Services' help,” Sparkman says. “Their tools helped us get there much faster, and helped me build a good foundation to handle additional migrations in the future.”

#### **Benefits seen every day**

Valero is seeing tangible benefits of the HP Output Management solution every day. Sparkman notes that the processing workload on the SAP servers was cut from the original 7-10 percent to just 1-2 percent today. That frees up the SAP instance servers to run SAP more efficiently. “It's hard to quantify that benefit, but giving back those processing cycles to running the business is important,” he says. Print delivery time has also been reduced, since that workload is handled by the dedicated HP Output Management environment.

But for Sparkman's team, the biggest benefit is simplified printer configuration. "Our productivity improvements were immediate. It only takes one administrator to satisfy a printer set-up request, instead of two. Most of the time, printers can be set up in minutes versus a couple of hours in the past."

Moreover, once that work is done, it's done for good. IP addresses are no longer attached to printer names. Instead, Sparkman's team uses Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP) for registering printers on the network. So once a printer is named, that name stays with the printer for life. "It doesn't matter where we move a printer now. The system will find it without any additional configuration," Sparkman says.

"HPOM has been very reliable," Sparkman adds. "The system failed once because of a power outage. And when it did, the production system immediately failed over to the test system, where it ran for nearly two weeks before being switched back to the primary system over a weekend."

"This system streamlines troubleshooting, too," Sparkman says. "In the past, one of our jobs was analyzing printing problems. That usually meant calling a support person at a remote site to see what's going on with the printer. Now we just do it from here. The HP Output Explorer feature of HP Output Server allows us to query a device and see its status and identify the problem immediately."

#### **Expanding the benefits of HP Output Management**

Looking ahead, Sparkman hopes to share the benefits of the HP Output Management solution with non-SAP operations.



"Part of the reason we chose HP Output Management is that it can support the desktop environment, too," he explains. "We're going to look at how we can use it to support desktop printing needs and other distribution options, including faxing and Web delivery in the near future." He also hopes to migrate printer support responsibilities away from the SAP Basis Administrators, allowing them to concentrate on optimizing SAP's core functionality for the company.

"HP Output Management has proven to be a very valuable tool for our SAP environment. We're hoping we can extend its capabilities and implement components to improve service and manage the costs associated with output needs in other areas, too, including faxing and Web Delivery."

To learn more, visit [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)

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