IBM e customer relationships SIEBEL

Siebel Systems powers up with IBM:

The most advanced implementation of its software ever

Company name:
Siebel Systems

Industry:
Applications Software

Solution:
- *Siebel eBusiness Applications*
- *IBM AIX® on RS/6000® and @server pSeries™ Database Servers*
- *IBM Netfinity® and @server xSeries™ Application Servers*
- *IBM DB2® Universal Database™*
- *IBM Enterprise Storage Server™ (ESS)*
- *IBM High Availability Cluster Multi-Processing (HACMP) Software*

It's not every day you read about a technology initiative of this size and scope. Or one where two industry giants have fused their assets and expertise together into such a formidable force. But that's just what happened when Siebel Systems—the world's leading provider of e-business applications software—made the strategic decision to move its internal Siebel eBusiness deployment, eBiz, to a complete IBM infrastructure.

In fact, Siebel Systems achieved a 98 percent performance improvement for heavy-duty end-of-quarter transactions and scalability. What's more, the company is applying the knowledge gained and lessons learned to improve both its applications and implementation processes.

Banking on a scalable, high-performance platform

In the fall of 1999, IBM and Siebel Systems announced their global strategic alliance and discussed how to unite their respective technologies. At about the same time, Siebel Systems had begun porting its applications to IBM RS/6000 database servers and Netfinity application servers. The company also moved its development environment to DB2 in order to support a rapidly growing number of customers who were deploying Siebel *e*Business Applications on DB2.

But the ultimate test of the IBM-Siebel partnership began when Siebel Systems took the next step forward. It decided to move its internal Siebel *e*Business application, *e*Biz, over to DB2 on the IBM RS/6000 with the Enterprise Storage Server (ESS)—one of the largest and most complex implementations of DB2 on AIX, ever.

Explains Byron Banks, Siebel Systems' Product Line Manager for IBM platforms, "We can leverage the power of Siebel Systems' industry-leading e-business applications to provide exceptional service to our customers, with instant feedback and insight into how the applications are performing. The implementation of Siebel *e*Business Applications on UNIX® servers [RS/6000 and pSeries] running on IBM DB2 databases was a great validation for us, as well as for our customers. It also proved we could take one of the largest and most sophisticated implementations of Siebel *e*Business Applications, *e*Biz, and run it better than ever on a new IBM infrastructure."

Enhancing scalability to accommodate rapid growth

Why would Siebel Systems depart from its existing platform and choose to adopt IBM DB2 running on IBM @server? The reason is simple: growth. In 2000, Siebel Systems experienced 100 percent annual growth in its customer base, largely due to new DB2 implementations of Siebel *e*Business Applications. Its internal systems and servers were operating almost at capacity. Like many other companies, Siebel Systems recognized the need to establish an infrastructure that had the capability to scale much higher.

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– Byron Banks,
Product Line Manager,
Siebel Systems

DB2 UDB running on pSeries servers would give the company the room it needed to grow and would enable Siebel Systems to address future capacity demands and long-term growth projections. And that's not all. The DB2 databases would reside within an IBM ESS solution. IBM HACMP clustering software would maximize server availability via automatic failover from the primary database server to the secondary system. In addition, with an IBM @server pSeries database server and an ESS, Siebel Systems would be the recipient of a number of important performance benefits, including:

- Large bandwidth to support high transaction volumes and capacity on demand
- High availability, with ample redundancies to provide high disaster tolerance
- Scalability to support rapid growth

The broadest implementation of Siebel Systems' *e*Business Applications in the world, *e*Biz handles almost 100 percent of Siebel Systems' customer-related activities – including sales tracking and technical support, which drive every meeting, sales call, quote, purchase order and service request.

"This was a major decision for Siebel Systems," observes Banks. "We couldn't afford to base our business on technology that might limit our future growth. We're essentially betting our business on the scalability of the IBM platform. That's the beauty of DB2 and the IBM server and storage technology: It can scale to match our exact requirements, from pSeries servers today to zSeries servers tomorrow."

Achieving impressive scalability and price performance

As Mark Sunday, Siebel Systems' Vice President, Information Technology and Chief Information Officer explains, the move to DB2 UDB on the IBM @server platform was all about scalability, performance and total cost of ownership.

"The level of support you get is every bit as important as the software, and we've just received incredible support from IBM."

– Mark Sunday, Vice President, IT and Chief Information Officer, Siebel Systems

"In the entire history of Siebel Systems, our software has never performed better and *e*Biz was never able to scale to support over 8,000 employees as it does today," he says. "And, our total cost of ownership has dropped an estimated 50 percent compared to the previous environment."

Even though Siebel Systems' operating environment is larger and more complex than ever, software performance is outstanding. "We've never before achieved the performance we're seeing today. By moving to DB2 running on pSeries database servers, we've achieved all the performance targets we established at the outset, across a wide range of transactions," he says.

Initial scalability tests done at IBM demonstrated that Siebel *e*Business Applications running DB2 databases on IBM @server can support 19,000 concurrent users. An IBM engineering team, working closely with Siebel Systems, is now conducting additional scalability tests to demonstrate support for significantly higher numbers of concurrent users.

Combining the strengths of a top-notch team

The importance of having the right team together working on defining the architecture and the implementation plan was invaluable to this project. "You need to have confidence in the team that's going to support you," says Sunday. "Of course, technical issues are bound to come up… things within your environment that may or may not be unique to you. You need strong support across your hardware, your database platform and your software to be successful."

The team of IBM and Siebel Systems' engineers followed a three-step process:

- Changing Siebel Systems' application code to run Siebel *e*Business Applications on DB2 out-of-the-box
- Migrating the existing data over to DB2 on IBM UNIX servers
- Performance tuning

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After refining *e*Biz, the team was ready for the rollover to DB2, which took place over a single weekend: On Friday, *e*Biz was running on the previous database; on Monday, it was up and running on DB2 on IBM @server. To optimize performance, a month of fine-tuning followed.

"It was one of those rare opportunities where you had engineers from both sides participating and getting an appreciation for what was really important to the users. They could see firsthand where things were working extremely well and where there were things that could be improved, now or in future releases," says Banks.

"This initiative is an excellent example of the partnership between our two companies," notes Tania Goldszmidt, Vice President, IT Applications, Siebel Systems. "IBM was very quickly able to put a multidisciplined team together that was able to troubleshoot problems and effectively find and implement solutions. It was very impressive."

"I couldn't be more enthusiastic about the technical depth of the team that helped us through the task force exercise," she adds. "They really knew every single aspect of the DB2 platform. And, they had a way of looking at the data – for example, how you analyze queries – which was not something you could learn just from attending a course or reading a document. They were very generous and helpful in transferring that knowledge to the operations team."

Powerful performance improvements and new functionality

The changeover to *e*Biz was seamless. It looked and felt like the same Siebel e-business applications. But underneath, a powerhouse of a database engine, running on a high-performance pSeries, was delivering awesome performance improvements.

"We established key performance indicators at the outset of the project and in every case we have exceeded those goals," adds Goldszmidt. "End-of-quarter reports, which involve huge amounts of data, are taking less than five seconds – down from five minutes or more in the previous environment. That's a 98 percent performance improvement."

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The move to DB2 on IBM pSeries servers made it possible to give Siebel employees new functionality, including internal deployment of an Employee Relationship Management (ERM) portal application running off the Siebel *e*Business software. Referred to as "*my*Siebel," ERM supports every stage of the employee life cycle at Siebel Systems, from date of hire through training, performance management and retention. Within a couple of months, more than 90 percent of the company's product marketing team was using *my*Siebel at least once a day. "It has been amazing how fast the mind share has shifted, yet it's something our old infrastructure just wasn't capable of supporting," says Banks.

The future: Enhanced capabilities and new releases

Future plans include deploying a full IBM Storage Area Network solution, which will expand Siebel Systems' data storage capabilities while offering the following benefits:

- Reduced storage costs through centralized management
- Increased uptime
- Improved disk space utilization and performance
- Low total cost of ownership
- Full scalability
- Server- and LAN-less backup and recovery
- Disaster tolerance

In addition, IBM and Siebel Systems have identified a list of important enhancements that are being introduced in Siebel 7. Siebel Systems is working closely with IBM in preparing its software for general availability.

Solution Benefits:

- *An extensive, scalable and high-performance platform to support current and future capacity demands*
- *Increased functionality with a new, Web-based information portal*
- *Streamlined access to data and customer information*
- *High availability*

"Having a strategic alliance with IBM enables us to work together, continually improving our e-business solutions; that's a big win for our customers," says Banks.

"We'll continue to work with IBM to push the technology as we implement new releases," agrees Sunday. "When you select a technology and database partner, you're not just buying a product. The level of support you get is every bit as important as the software, and we've just received incredible support from IBM."

Says Goldszmidt, "In my opinion, no one else in the industry is able to provide an e-customer relationship solution that even compares."

To learn more about putting the IBM and Siebel Systems alliance to work for you, visit **ibm-siebel.com**

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