



## Unilever Gains Lower TCO Supporting SAP with SQL Server 2005 and Windows Server

### Overview

**Country or Region:** UK

**Industry:** Consumer Packaged Goods

### Customer Profile

Unilever, based in the UK and the Netherlands, is a global consumer products company with more than 400 brands, generating some U.S.\$50 billion a year in sales from operations in 100 countries.

### Business Situation

Unilever wanted to move its SAP supply chain management database to a platform that would provide a better total cost of ownership than its existing UNIX-based solution. The company also required scalability and high reliability.

### Solution

Unilever is deploying its mySAP supply chain database for North America on Microsoft® SQL Server™ 2005 Enterprise Edition (64-bit) running on the Microsoft Windows Server® 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems operating system hosted on an HP Superdome.

### Benefits

- Lower total cost of ownership
- Scalability
- Agility
- Enterprise-grade reliability

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Neil Cameron, Chief Information Officer, Unilever

Unilever, the global consumer products giant that sells some 400 brands in 100 countries, generating 2005 revenue of U.S.\$50.6 billion, needed to upgrade its SAP R\3 supply chain infrastructure that was hosted on an Oracle\UNIX solution. Seeking a lower total cost of ownership (TCO), Unilever tested Microsoft® SQL Server™ 2005 Enterprise Edition (64-bit) using 1.5 terabytes of data and double the transaction loads of its U.S. operations. The company was so impressed by the results that it is deploying Microsoft SQL Server 2005 running on the Microsoft Windows Server® 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems operating system, hosted on an HP Superdome computer to deploy mySAP 2004 to support its North American operations. Unilever expects a 15 percent reduction in TCO, and the scalability, agility, and reliability its operations require.



#### Fast Facts

Largest databases	640 GB for Canada mySAP 800 GB for US mySAP
Proof of Concept database size	1.5 terabytes
Concurrent users supported	2,000
Database	Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Enterprise Edition (64-bit)
Operating System	Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems

deploying mySAP 2004 on Microsoft SQL Server 2005 running on the Microsoft Windows Server® 2003 operating system and hosted on Intel-based servers.

#### Solution

SAP is a mission critical application for Unilever, so the company required a successful proof of concept (POC) test prior to approving a new SAP platform. Initially the POC was to be based on recreating the actual loads of Unilever Canada's SAP R/3 supply chain system at Microsoft SQL Server labs in Redmond. However, the POC was made more challenging when Unilever asked that the project be performed against twice the SAP data loads of Unilever United States.

The test platform included SQL Server 2005 Enterprise Edition (64-bit) running on Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems and hosted on an HP Superdome server with 16 Intel Itanium processors and 48 gigabytes (GB) of RAM. The test database totaled nearly 1.5 terabytes on a single instance of SQL Server 2005.

The POC found that SQL Server 2005 could handle twice the volume of Unilever's U.S. SAP operations, while providing the same throughput speeds as the company's current hardware/software stack. Unilever also estimated that a platform based on SQL Server provided the company with a TCO 15 percent lower than its existing solution. Unilever was also impressed with the ease with which data was migrated from its UNIX-based database to SQL Server 2005.

Based on the success of the POC, Unilever began deploying SQL Server 2005 for the upgrade of its Canadian mySAP ERP solution. The database for the Unilever Canada mySAP deployment is about 640 GB. The database for the Unilever US mySAP deployment is

#### Situation

Unilever, with 2005 revenue of U.S.\$50.6 billion, is a global company with 400 brands spanning 14 categories of home, personal care, and foods products, including such familiar names as Dove, Lipton, Sunsilk, and BeceL. The company, which traces its origins to the 1890s when William Hesketh Lever developed a better soap, today employs 206,000 people in 100 countries worldwide. The company's mission reads in part: "We meet everyday needs for nutrition, hygiene, and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life."

Unilever has two parent companies—Unilever NV in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and Unilever PLC in London, United Kingdom. Unilever has three global regions: Americas, Europe, and Asia/AMET (Australia Middle East and Turkey). The company's IT group manages a heterogeneous global information infrastructure that includes Linux, UNIX, and Microsoft® Windows® operating systems and Oracle and Microsoft SQL Server™ databases.

As Unilever prepared to replace the hardware supporting its current UNIX-based SAP R/3 supply chain infrastructure for North America, it wanted to determine whether it could achieve a lower total cost of ownership while retaining enterprise-grade performance by

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Roland Meier, Architecture Director for Infrastructure, Unilever

about 800. Both databases are growing rapidly.

### Benefits

From its POC testing of SQL Server 2005, and its longtime use of earlier versions of SQL Server in other parts of its organization, Unilever anticipates that deploying mySAP 2004 on SQL Server 2005 will provide a number of benefits, including lower TCO, scalability, agility, and reliability.

### Lower Total Cost of Ownership

Seeking a lower TCO was a major motivation for Unilever as it chose SQL Server 2005 running on the Windows Server 2003 operating system to support its Canadian operations.

“Our TCO methodology for this decision included all the usual things—hardware costs, maintenance costs, people costs and so on,” says Chris Turner, Chief Technology Officer at Unilever. “We gained a balanced view, and the numbers showed that we could achieve the performance we wanted for mySAP using SQL Server 2005 running on Windows Server at a lower TCO than our legacy environment.”

“We always look for step changes that can help us take costs out of our environment,” says Dan Gizzo, Vice President of Infrastructure Services for North America, at Unilever. “We’ve found that SQL Server 2005 and the whole Windows environment clearly put us in the best possible position to lower our total cost of ownership. We don’t have to have different levels of resources here that cost us a significant amount of money. It also helps us with our licensing costs. When we put all of it together, this provides a step change in reducing the cost of running the environment.”

Gizzo adds: “The company expects TCO savings of at least 15 percent, and we expect

this to be accomplished as we move forward with SQL Server 2005.”

### Scalability

The POC demonstrated the scalability of SQL Server 2005 as the testing was conducted with nearly 1.5 terabytes of data and doubled the U.S. SAP workloads.

“We did a full proof of concept and were able to scale it to twice the size of our business today, while still running through our most complicated quarter-end and month-end closes with this environment,” says Gizzo. The testing was very thorough, very in-depth. The scalability of SQL Server 2005 means that we can support more businesses in the future. If we want to add more information as we go forward to support a finer level of analysis and decision making, we’re comfortable that we can scale SQL Server to accomplish those needs also.”

The POC testing was so impressive that Unilever was surprised by the findings.

“We went out to Redmond and ported our application onto SQL Server 2005 with almost no modifications,” says Neil Cameron, Chief Information Officer at Unilever. “We were right there in the labs and frankly we were a little bit shocked with the performance and the results. We repeated the tests and tried a number of variants and came to the conclusion that SQL Server 2005 was very much an enterprise-grade database.”

### Agility

The move to SQL Server 2005 is part of a continuing effort at Unilever to simplify IT operations to gain the agility to better respond to corporate needs.

“About eight years ago we started moving off of the mainframe environment, switching into what we’ll call an open system environment which brought in the whole wave of UNIX and

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UNIX-based systems,” says Gizzo. “Now we are moving toward a Windows-based environment, which enhances ease of use and opens up our choices for the hardware we can use.”

Gizzo sees the ease of use of SQL Server as an asset in responding to business needs. “We are not an IT company,” Gizzo says. “We’re a consumer product company. So our role is to deliver a service driven IT model in the most efficient and flexible manner possible. We want to increase capacity in an environment on demand and not be limited by the need for large capital investment in proprietary infrastructure.”

Roland Meier, Architecture Director for Infrastructure at Unilever, notes: “We found SQL Server 2005 on Windows Server 2003 very easy to operate and administer. There’s a reduction in database administration complexity compared to other databases.”

Gizzo notes: “SQL Server 2005 is going to help us meet our service level agreements with the business because of its scalability, and because of the speed with which we can meet changing business needs as we go along.”

#### **Enterprise-grade Reliability**

Enterprise-grade reliability was a key requirement of Unilever as it considered replatforming its SAP supply chain infrastructure. Speaking of the need to achieve at least 99.999 percent uptime, Cameron says, “Our service level agreements require five nines, and there are times when even five nines isn’t enough. There are areas in which 100 percent uptime is the only acceptable answer.”

This need for reliability extends across the IT infrastructure. “When I first started in IT some years ago, if a system was down, people went off and did something on paper for a few

hours and waited for the system to come back up,” says Cameron. “On almost all of our systems now, if they are not working, everything stops. If people can’t access e-mail, their telephone contacts, or reach the portal to access applications, they are suddenly and absolutely stopped. In a global organization like ours you really can’t afford for that to happen.”

Extensive testing by Unilever demonstrated that SQL Server 2005 on the Windows platform would be able to provide it with the uptime it required. “The testing we have done has shown no weaknesses,” says Turner. “We couldn’t break it. SQL Server 2005 on Windows Server 2003 met all the criteria that we have for our business.”

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For more information about the Microsoft server product portfolio, go to: [www.microsoft.com/servers/default.aspx](http://www.microsoft.com/servers/default.aspx)

## Microsoft SQL Server 2005

Microsoft SQL Server 2005 is comprehensive, integrated data management and analysis software that enables organizations to reliably manage mission-critical information and confidently run today's increasingly complex business applications. By providing high availability, security enhancements, and embedded reporting and data analysis tools, SQL Server 2005 helps companies gain greater insight from their business information and achieve faster results for a competitive advantage. And, because it's part of Windows Server System, SQL Server 2005 is designed to integrate seamlessly with your other server infrastructure investments.

For more information about SQL Server 2005, go to: [www.microsoft.com/sqlserver](http://www.microsoft.com/sqlserver)

### Software and Services

- Microsoft Servers
  - Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Enterprise Edition for Itanium-based Systems
  - Microsoft SQL Server 2005 Enterprise Edition (64-bit)

### Hardware

- HP Superdome with 16 Itanium processors and 48 GB of RAM

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