

Future-Proof Your Business

The information age is here. But are you ready for the information demands of tomorrow?

“Data volumes are growing at exponential rates. With these vast stores of data, businesses are seeking ways to turn data into useful information that can be exploited for competitive advantage. The 2005 WinterCorp TopTen survey results reveal significant strengths for Microsoft SQL Server in the very large database market for both data warehousing and OLTP systems.”

— Richard Winter
President
Winter Corporation

For many companies, access to information means everything. Not just market and financial information, but also customer buying trends and competitive intelligence. Information needs to be instantly available anytime, day or night. Building an information architecture that will meet today's demands and will easily scale for future needs requires a team with experience building highly advanced data center solutions. HP, Intel and Microsoft have proven solutions that deliver enterprise-class performance and reliability at lower cost through the use of the latest industry-standard technology.

Ten Terabytes of Customer Data And Growing – No Problem for PREMIER Bankcard

For PREMIER Bankcard, Inc. (PBI), rapid access to customer information is vital. With more than 5 million customers and over 10 terabytes of data, sifting through it all for just the right information is no easy task. PBI is constantly adding customers and additional data to support analytics, which increases the size of its database by over 300 gigabytes each month. In order to design a robust system that could handle its current data and transaction loads, and scale well into the future, PBI chose a solution from HP, Intel and Microsoft.

PREMIER Bankcard needed a complete data warehouse to conduct complex analyses of its credit card customer base. PBI chose the HP Integrity rx8620 server powered by 16 Intel® Itanium® 2 processors, an HP StorageWorks EVA5000 SAN system, Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2003 Datacenter Edition and Microsoft SQL Server™ 2005. The deep analysis is completed in layers, with over 30 power users performing elaborate queries directly in the data warehouse and over 2,000 users running hundreds of unique reports via SQL Server 2005 Reporting Service. PBI is using all aspects of Microsoft's Business Intelligence offerings including SQL Server Integration, Reporting and Analysis Services and Microsoft Office BI products.

While the single 16-processor server provides more than enough power for PBI's current needs, the opportunity to move to an HP Integrity server in the future with 64 or more multi-core Itanium processors gives PBI the option to scale to virtually any level. “This solution is proving to contain the perfect combination of flexibility, scalability and performance required to support the high growth rate that we have been enjoying,” says Dan Zerfas, vice president of Software Development at PREMIER Bankcard, Inc.



A Major Transformation Toward Standards-Based Platforms

One reason PREMIER Bankcard has been so successful in building a scalable, yet affordable, database solution is that it leveraged industry-standard components. Standards-based computing systems have matured to the point where they

can now handle the most demanding enterprise applications and workloads at lower cost and with greater flexibility than proprietary RISC and mainframe systems. This fundamental shift in computing capability is helping many of the world's largest companies substantially reduce their total costs. Standards-based computing systems are also helping companies to future-proof their data centers by enabling them to easily scale up or down in response to business needs and market dynamics.

Enterprise server solutions from HP, Intel and Microsoft are at the center of this transformation. HP Integrity servers with dual-core 64-bit Intel® Itanium® 2 processors and the Microsoft® Windows Server 2003 operating system not only cost less than traditional enterprise systems — they also deliver comparable or better performance, scalability and availability. They are supported by a larger community of vendors, and reduce life-cycle costs through simplified management.

Standardization can also provide substantial benefits for users who need to access business data. By using a standardized reporting system based on SQL Server Reporting Services, reports have a consistent look and feel, and users are more productive. As a result, PBI has reduced the time-to-market of its analytic work by more than 90%. A report that took a week to do manually can now be completed in as little as three hours. In addition, round-the-clock system dependability means analysis is available whenever PBI needs it. “A data warehouse is only as good as the data provided to the end user,” says Zerfas. “The reliability and performance of Reporting Services running on an HP Integrity server allows our users to spend their time analyzing and managing information instead of pulling data.”

For PREMIER Bankcard, rapid data access is everything. With the help of HP, Intel and Microsoft, the company has built a solution that will carry it successfully into the future. ■

Future-Proofing at Work: PREMIER Bankcard, Inc.

With more than 5 million customers, PREMIER Bankcard, Inc. (PBI) is one of the leading credit card companies in the United States. PBI needed online transaction processing (OLTP) and data warehouse solutions that could handle over 10 terabytes of customer information spread across several databases. With its new IT infrastructure using an Itanium®-based HP Integrity server running Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2003 and SQL Server™ 2005, PBI is able to handle its current and future data management needs.

“The technology in this HP/Intel/Microsoft solution is built to grow with our business. We don't have to worry about it,” says Ron Van Zanten, managing officer of Business Intelligence at PREMIER Bankcard, Inc.

Challenges

- A system to handle over 10TB of data that grows 300GB per month
- Performance and reliability to allow instant, anytime access to customer reports and data
- A standards-based system to simplify management and the user experience

Solution

- HP Integrity rx8620 server with 16 Intel® Itanium® 2 processors and 64GB of RAM
- HP StorageWorks EVA5000
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Datacenter Edition
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005

Results

- Expandable infrastructure
- Stable environment with data that's more accessible
- Easier-to-use database systems that increase employee productivity
- Mission-critical system availability
- 90% faster production of data reports
- 64-bit power resulting in 100% to 800% increase in performance for data warehouse queries

To find out how to extend volume economics to your most mission-critical computing, visit www.futureproofnow.com

To find out how solutions from HP, Intel and Microsoft can help future-proof your company, visit www.futureproofnow.com

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