

Edmonton Public Schools



Sun and Oracle Power Web-based Administrative System

Institution/Organization

Edmonton Public Schools, Alberta, Canada

Vertical Market

Primary & Secondary (K-12) Education

Key Challenges

- Enable online entry of financial data for processing by individual schools.
- Improve efficiency of processing of financial transactions.
- Give individual school administrators personal access to the financial system.
- Speed delivery of accounting system data.

Solution

- Oracle Financials
- Sun Fire™ 3800 server
- Sun Enterprise™ 450 servers
- Sun Enterprise 250 servers
- Netra™ T1 server
- Ultra™ 10 servers
- Ultra Enterprise™ 1 servers
- Sun StorEdge™ disk arrays
- Solaris™ 8 Operating Environment

Business Results

- Schools enter their own data online and generate their own up-to-date reports
- Increased user productivity
- Reduction in data center staff
- Reduction in month-end processing-cancer.

Edmonton Public Schools (EPS), the public school system of Edmonton, Alberta consists of 208 schools where 2,600 non-teaching and 4,400 teaching staff members provide K-12 instruction to 82,000 students. EPS was looking for an administrative solution which would:

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In a competitive process EPS chose Sun, said Bob Maksymic, Manager of Computer Centre Services for EPS. "The requirements we stated are all strong points of Sun — reliability, scalability, and price/performance among others. Besides, we'd already chosen Oracle as our database vendor and so the strong relationship between Sun and Oracle was a big plus."

To improve efficiency and quality of information, and to cut costs, EPS migrated from the main-frame environment first to client/server and then to an Internet architecture. Sun and Oracle products served as the technological foundations for both of these moves.

The school system continually upgraded both hardware and software as Sun and Oracle introduced improvements. In the current Financials system a Sun Fire™ 3800 server fulfills back-end needs, managing an Oracle database that is housed on Sun StorEdge™ disk arrays. A Sun Enterprise™ 450 server runs the Oracle 10.7NCA Financials applications as well as Oracle Applications 11i version 11.5.7.

"Sun and Oracle have a seven-year track record of delivering stable, reliable service to the school system," said Brenda Boychuk, Senior Data Base Analyst for EPS. "We haven't had any unscheduled downtime to speak of for years. And the service that Sun and Oracle personnel provide has been excellent."

Furthermore, added Boychuk, "a lot of our success is due to the excellent synergy between Sun and Oracle, one of the reasons why we've standardized on them for all our high-end administrative computing needs. There's never any finger-pointing between their service personnel. The Oracle Web site tells Solaris™ Operating Environment users like me exactly what we need to

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- Brenda Boychuk, Senior Data Base Analyst,
Edmonton Public Schools.

know, what levels of Oracle software are needed for particular Solaris OE versions for example.”

The synergy between Sun Microsystems™ and Oracle® is paying off in many ways for the school system. Compared with the previous mainframe-based applications, the Sun and Oracle solutions have greatly increased user productivity, significantly reduced month-end processing and allowed data center staff to be reduced by half. Additionally, individual schools can access financial information more easily and quickly, which enables better control over financial resources.

“The effect of our new Financials solution has been to enable online processing by the schools themselves,” said Sultan Ibrahim, Manager of Financial Operations & Accounting for EPS.

“They always have an accurate, up-to-date picture of where they stand relative to their

budget, which is essential if they are to effectively control their financial resources,” said Ibrahim, who estimates that user efficiency has jumped 10 to 20 percent.

The solution has also greatly reduced the time it takes to generate month-end financial reports. Bob Maksymic, Manager of Computer Centre Services for EPS, pointed out that just one move—to the Sun Fire 3800 database server from a Sun Enterprise 450 server—slashed the report generation time by 75 percent.

Furthermore, staffing requirements have been cut in half by simplifying and shortening many of the data center personnel’s tasks, and by moving a lot of activities out of their hands to the users. “In the mainframe days, we had 20 staff in Computer Centre Services, and now we’re down to ten,” Maksymic said.



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