



Sun Success Story.

Oracle Corporation is using the Sun™ Customer Ready systems (CRS) program from Sun Microsystems to save enormous amounts of time and costs in deploying new software testing systems. Sun has factory-integrated and delivered 35 system configurations, each consisting of 30 rack-mounted Netra™ X1 servers (1050 Netra X1 servers total), associated connectivity hardware, and Oracle's personalized software image. Because these systems are built to Oracle's specifications, pre-configured and pre-tested at Sun and delivered as a unit, they can be deployed within a day. Each system would have taken many days to rack, cable, install and interoperability test if factory integration through the Sun CRS program was not utilized. Instead of being nearly done, Oracle's deployment would be only one-third complete.

Database Industry Leader Boosts Software Testing Resources Ten-Fold

Oracle Corporation is the world's largest enterprise software company, providing software and services to the world's most successful enterprises. With annual revenues of more than \$10.8 billion, the company offers its database, tools and application products, along with related consulting, education, and support services. Headquartered in Redwood Shores, California, Oracle® is the first software company to develop and deploy 100 percent Internet-enabled enterprise software across its entire product line: database, application server, enterprise business applications, and application development and decision support tools.

Oracle's Server Technologies Division is responsible for developing and testing database and application server products. Since these products account for approximately three quarters of the firm's licensing revenues, it is crucial that Oracle maintain its leadership position in this technology. In late 2000, with this goal in mind, Oracle saw a major opportunity to improve both product functionality and time-to-market and launched an initiative to enable its developers to test individual software changes earlier and much more aggressively than ever before. The project entailed providing Oracle's database developers with over 1000 new CPUs to serve as testing resources to complement their existing development and test infrastructure. Systems comprised of rack-mounted servers would comprise the elements of this new Oracle grid computing network.



Company

Oracle

Industry/Market

Software

Products/Services

- 35 factory integrated, personalized system configurations including:

1050 Netra™ X1 servers powered by UltraSPARC® IIe processors

2 Cisco 1313A 16-port Terminal Concentrators

Oracle's personalized software image, including the Solaris™ 8 Operating Environment configured for Oracle and Oracle's grid control software

Key Business Challenges

- Deploy systems as quickly as possible
- Minimize deployment expense
- Reduce early life system issues and maximize reliability

Key Business Solutions

- Program nearly complete that would have taken 3X as long without the Sun CRS program
- Multi-rack systems deployed in one day that would've taken weeks per rack without the Sun CRS program
- Excellent reliability record, with a reduction in early life system issues
- The Sun CRS program used as a model for similar platform programs at Oracle

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With a procurement of this magnitude looming, cost tradeoffs were critically important in making vendor decisions – both in terms of purchase costs and deployment costs.

Netra X1 Server Proves Ideal for Oracle’s Needs

“Conventional wisdom had it that only ‘commodity’ hardware could fit our needs and budget,” said John Pilat, Vice President, Software Engineering, Server Technologies. “But that would have been less than ideal since we do most of our development on UNIX® platforms. Fortunately, just then Sun announced the Netra X1 server, which had everything we needed and nothing we didn’t need. It was expressly designed for rack mounting, unlike a lot of so-called ‘rack mountable’ servers. For a price that’s favorable compared with PCs, the Netra X1 server gave us full compatibility with our development environment, and our development staff didn’t face a learning curve. It was just perfect for our requirements.”

In the Netra X1 server, Oracle knew it had solved its purchase cost problem. Next, however, came the deployment cost problem. If Oracle had purchased all the thousands of components of its systems individually, they would have arrived in thousands of boxes to be individually uncrated, mounted into racks, cabled up for power and network connectivity, interoperability tested, and debugged. After all the servers that comprised a system had been rack-mounted together, software from both Sun and Oracle would have had to be loaded and tested. Oracle’s project required integrating 35 system configurations consisting of 1050 Netra X1 servers and associated hardware and software. Given these obstacles, Oracle faced a deployment that potentially could cost dozens of man-months of labor and add many calendar months to the schedule.

Sun Customer Ready Systems Program Saves Orders of Magnitude in Deployment Time and Labor – Not to Mention Packing Materials

“If we’d really had to do the deployment the traditional way, we wouldn’t be a third as far along as we are today,” said Pilat. “Fortunately, Sun saved us from all that with the Sun Customer Ready systems (CRS) program. The Sun CRS program lets us specify just exactly the configuration we want. Sun, in its factory, rack mounts the Netra X1 servers and other hardware, loads our personalized software image, and completely tests everything.

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Oracle is now 90 percent finished deploying the equipment for the project. Sun has delivered 35 system configurations, which Oracle has deployed in two locations. Each system configuration contains 30 Netra X1 servers with a 500-MHz UltraSPARC® IIe processor, 1 GB of memory, and 80 GB of disk storage. The systems also contain two Cisco 1313A 16-port Terminal Concentrators each, racked and cabled with the cables alphabetically labeled. Oracle's specified software image, including the Solaris™ 8 Operating Environment configured for Oracle and Oracle's grid control software, are pre-loaded. All components are integrated into Sun StorEdge™ racks in Sun's ISO 9002 controlled factory environment.

Get the details.

For more information on the Sun Customer Ready systems (CRS) program visit:

www.sun.com/integration.

Sun CRS Program Reduces Early Life System Issues

“We’ve had a number of the systems up and running for some time now, and the reliability has been impressive,” reported Pilat. “We haven’t seen the usual incidence of early life system issues. That’s another good thing about the Sun CRS program. It assures that all systems are identical, and that they’ve all had the same availability measures applied in the same ideal setting – Sun’s own factory. The technology represented in these systems and the Sun CRS program methodology that surrounds them is aggressive, but at the same time mature. The systems work, and Sun has really thought through the details of the program. For example, our IT people really like the fact that the servers’ serial numbers are on the front where you can easily see them. With the Sun CRS program, Sun is providing products that are well suited for mass deployment.”

Proof Point for Volume Server Deployment

The Sun CRS program is a win-win for Oracle and its customers. The program has enabled Oracle to quickly and cost-effectively equip its database developers with a ten-fold capacity improvement in their test environments. As a result, customers can expect more functional, more timely and more predictable deliveries of new software, and Oracle finds it easier to maintain its high standards for software quality.

Oracle uses the Sun CRS program as a model for similar platform programs that are now underway at the company. “For volume server needs like ours, there’s absolutely no question that the way to go is to buy by the pre-configured rackful,” said Pilat. “The only way we’ll acquire servers en masse is under a program like this. The Sun CRS program is the proof point for the concept. It’s a first class implementation initiative that solves a very serious business problem. The economics are huge, and the Sun CRS program is an outstanding solution.”

As a key part of Sun’s Business Ready Infrastructure (BRI) initiative, the Sun CRS program is a delivery mechanism that simplifies and speeds deployment of Sun products. BRI provides an integratable infrastructure for building customer solutions based on Sun’s best-of-breed products and services that integrate into existing environments.

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