

Trader Publishing Company



Oracle Database Consolidation Solution Delivers 20% Lower TCO while Increasing CPU and Storage Capacity by 400%

Company

Trader Publishing Company
www.traderpublishing.com

Vertical Market

Publishing

Key Challenges

- Enhance customer service by enabling real-time database access with 24x7 availability and eliminating existing data discrepancies
- Reduce operating expenses and lower maintenance costs

Solution

- Database consolidation with storage backup and restore solution

Business Results

- 20% reduction in TCO through database consolidation and redeployment of Sun Fire 4500 servers
- 400% increase in CPU and storage capacity
- More than 99.999% system availability, supporting 29 million searches each month
- Enhanced customer service through real-time data access
- Diminished downtime and faster recovery

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– Joe Fuller, CTO, Trader Electronic Media

Server Consolidation Eases Growing Pains for World’s Largest Classified Ad Portal

As the nation’s largest firm devoted to classified advertising publication, Trader Publishing Company’s portfolio includes vehicle, real estate, employment and parenting magazines.

In 1996, in an effort to expand its audience and sales beyond print media, the Norfolk, Virginia-based company launched the largest classified advertisement portal in the world.

Known as Traderonline.com and developed through the company’s Trader Electronic Media division, this portal—powered by Sun servers—provides access to a collection of 14 high-traffic Web sites. With a total of 540,000 online advertisements drawing more than 7.5 million visitors each month, Traderonline.com quickly exemplified the power of the Internet to give advertisers maximum exposure to target audiences. “We have always been dedicated to creating efficient media to bring buyers and sellers together,” says Joe Fuller, Chief Technology Officer at Trader Electronic Media. “With more than 92 million page views and 29 million searches each month, Traderonline.com is an excellent example of the clout of online advertising.”

Its high volume of online searches and large database of ads running on Oracle[®] calls for a highly available and scalable computing environment. After all, customers expect to be able to access the company’s Web-based information 24x7. While the Sun servers supporting the portal are powerful and scalable, Trader Electronic Media realized that it could grow its capacity more cost-effectively if it had fewer servers to manage. Server consolidation seemed like the obvious answer, but the company knew that it wasn’t going to be a simple task, given the criticality and size of its databases. Trader Electronic Media also sought a robust storage environment that would provide secure, reliable backup and restore facilities. That’s why it sought expertise from a vendor who could provide not only the technology it needed but also architectural direction and implementation assistance. Says Fuller. “By consolidating our hardware environment to a larger Sun platform, we knew we could keep up with our growing data capacity and demanding service levels while reducing costs and improving overall manageability.”

Trader Electronic Media reduced TCO by 20 percent through a comprehensive consolidation solution from Sun.

“Oracle developed its Oracle9i database to run optimally on Sun—a very important consideration since our database is at the heart of our business. Sun and Oracle have joined forces to deliver excellent 24x7 support, helping to keep our applications working.”
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Demonstrating due diligence, Trader Electronic Media evaluated consolidation solutions from several different vendors, including IBM, HP and Sun. It ultimately determined that Sun offered the most attractive solution, with Sun’s close working relationship with Sun iForce ISV Partner Oracle Corporation a key factor in its decision. Working with Sun Services, the company migrated its Oracle9i database, which manages all of its advertising information, from its two legacy Sun Fire™ 4500 servers to a single Sun Fire 6800 server running the Solaris™ 8 Operating System. The move has enabled real-time Web site querying and reduced Trader Electronic Media’s operational costs. A Sun StorEdge™ 3910 system provides the back-end storage environment.

“By consolidating our Sun servers running the Oracle9i database, we benefit from the combined performance and the strength of the alliance between Sun and Oracle,” says Fuller. “Together, these companies deliver tightly integrated and secure enterprise solutions that keep business-critical systems like ours up and running.”

What’s more, Trader Electronic Media has gained a complete solution that helps its maximize the utilization of existing storage resources to reduce costs and complexity and support long-term scalability to handle future growth. So far, its consolidation solution from Sun has resulted in 99.999 percent system availability and a 400 percent increase in CPU and storage capacity. The company has also

reduced the total cost of ownership (TCO) of its server environment by 20 percent. And service levels are vastly improved, since customers has 24x7 access to real-time information from the company’s voluminous collection of advertisements.

Sun Services Helps Optimize Infrastructure

To facilitate the company’s migration to the Sun Fire 6800 server, Sun consultants conducted a SunReady™ Availability Assessment, that helped the online advertiser to pinpoint quality-of-service requirements associated with the applications supported by the consolidated data center environment. Sun consultants began the effort by identifying system availability issues and making suggestions to reduce the risk of outages. “The SunReady Availability Assessment revealed that we needed to improve organizational processes,” notes Fuller. “The assessment also provided insights that have helped us improve system performance. In addition, we have raised our own skill level by taking advantage of Sun training courses and, during the engagement, Sun’s technical expertise.” Trader Electronic Media has taken training courses on the Sun Fire 6800 server, Sun StorEdge 3910 system, Sun StorEdge Availability Suite software and the Solaris 8 Operating System.

Sun consultants also delivered an Application Readiness Service for the configuration, testing and implementation of the Sun Fire 6800 server. The Application Readiness Service took into account the configuration and testing of the application environment and the storage environment. “Through the Application Readiness Service, Sun consultants designed a complete hardware, software and storage solution that delivers high availability, scalability and security,” comments Fuller.

Delivery of the Application Readiness Service was done in conjunction with Storage Infrastructure Services associated with the configuration, testing and implementation of the Sun StorEdge 3910 system. Sun Services provided overarching project management based on the SunTone Architecture Methodology, which includes Prince2 methodology and the Information Technology Information Library (ITIL). To ensure the timely implementation of its new Sun environment, Trader Electronic Media invested in Sun Enterprise Installation Services to install its Sun Fire 6800 server and Sun StorEdge 3910 system, delivering reliability and performance from day one. The expertise of the Sun Services team was an added benefit for Trader Electronic Media: “Sun kept our implementation on schedule and with absolutely no downtime,” notes Fuller. “As first-time users of Sun Services, we are very impressed by the caliber of the Sun consultants. This deployment has been one of the most successful to date.”

Meeting Key Objective of Continuous Data Access

As with many e-businesses, Trader Electronic Media is pressured by its online customers to deliver real-time services through its Web site. “Customers expect to see their advertisements online immediately after paying for them,” Fuller explains. Each Sun hardware and software component in the company’s consolidation solution has the high availability that enables it to meet these stringent service demands. Fuller says, “Consolidating the two servers onto one eliminated the lag time associated with replicating the data from one server to the other, so we can deliver faster, better service. Not surprisingly, our call center now receives significantly fewer complaints.”

The high-availability features of the Sun Fire 6800 server also enable the company to meet its customers’ expectations. The server’s Dynamic System Domains, as well as dynamic reconfiguration and full hardware redundancy features, deliver continuous uptime and facilitate rapid recovery in the event of system failure. “Leveraging Dynamic System Domains, we can reallocate system resources on the fly to meet changing workload demands,” notes Fuller. This was a key selection criterion for Trader Electronic Media because of its need to provide continuous online access to its database.

To further ensure stellar system performance, availability and scalability, Sun partnered with Oracle to provide fast, secure and direct access to critical business data. “Sun’s close relationship with Oracle was a key benefit,” says Fuller. “Oracle developed its Oracle9i database to run optimally on Sun—a very important consideration since our database is at the heart of our business. Sun and Oracle have joined forces to deliver excellent 24x7 support, helping to keep our applications working.”

Solaris Operating System: Ideal for Unpredictable Online Environment

For Trader Electronic Media, scalability is especially important since it operates in a Web-based environment where transaction loads vary tremendously.

“Enabling continuous real-time computing, the Solaris Operating System helps us maximize our resources to handle heavy traffic and a growing data set,” says Fuller. “By consolidating to a Sun platform running the Solaris Operating System, we eliminate the need to invest in multiple systems, reducing the cost of deployment and future expansion.”

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Efficient Storage Makes Ads Easier to Access and Manage

A reliable storage component was also critical to Trader Electronic Media’s needs, since continuous data availability is a key enabler in helping it meet its service level expectations. Optimized for the Solaris Operating System and the Sun Fire server family, the Sun StorEdge 3910 system delivers the scalable performance the company requires. “The system’s enhanced scalability and availability features help match storage resources to application needs, lowering our equipment costs,” says Fuller.

Trader Electronic Media has leveraged Sun StorEdge Availability Suite software to further ensure continuous data access in the event of unplanned downtime. Specifically, with Sun StorEdge Availability Suite software, Trader Electronic Media has created effective service level agreements that outline acceptable levels of availability and storage service quality. “The Sun StorEdge 3910 and Sun StorEdge Availability Suite software together provide a complete storage solution that improves storage efficiency, simplifies backup and recovery management and increases availability,” comments Fuller.

Boosting Performance, Reducing Costs

From the powerful Solaris 8 Operating System to industry-leading servers, storage, software, services and support, Sun has provided Trader Electronic Media with a rock-solid data continuance environment for strong system performance. Trader Electronic Media can now deliver faster access to its database of online ads, eliminate the data discrepancies it experienced previously and enable real-time Web site querying.

“By consolidating our database on the Sun Fire 6800 server, we’re enjoying vastly simpler system administration, which reduces costs,” says Fuller. “With the new configuration, we will also be able to postpone the purchase

of new Oracle licenses to improve performance and further reduce our TCO.” Finally, Trader Electronic Media has been able to redeploy its two Sun Fire 4500 servers, saving the company from having to make an additional investment.

Most importantly, Trader Electronic Media has invested in a computing environment that delivers continuous availability to its database of online advertisements to help ensure faster, more effective and enhanced service to its customers. “Sun delivers the highest level of system performance, availability and scalability possible to enable us to continue growing our online advertising business,” concludes Fuller.

Sun Technology

- Sun Fire 6800 server
- Sun Enterprise 4500 servers
- UltraSPARC® Processors
- Sun StorEdge™ 3910 system
- Sun StorEdge Availability Suite
- Solaris™ 8 Operating System

Sun Services

- SunReady™ Availability Assessment
- Application Readiness Service for Sun Fire 6800 server
- Sun Storage Infrastructure Services
- Sun Storage Management Services
- Skill assessments and training on Sun Fire 6800 server, Sun StorEdge 3910 system, Sun StorEdge Availability Suite and the Solaris 8 Operating System
- SunSpectrum Gold™ agreement

Partner

- Oracle Corporation

Third-party Products

- Oracle®i Database

Get the details.

For more information on Trader Electronic Media, visit www.traderpublishing.com. And for more information on Sun Services, please visit sun.com/service.

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