

Retailer Revitalizes Multichannel and In-Store Shopping Experience with Support Savings

Department Store Chain

Client Profile: Chain of upscale department stores with 60 locations in the U.K. and Ireland, providing clothing, electronics, home, garden and beauty products, both in-store and online.

Industry: Retail

Geography: Headquartered in London, United Kingdom

Revenue: \$1.046 billion USD

Employees: 6,800 staff plus 13,000 concession staff

Products Supported: Oracle E-Business Suite 11.5.10, including HR/Payroll, Oracle Technology on Exadata, multiple Oracle databases

Technology Platform: Oracle Linux

"With Rimini Street, our EBS applications and Oracle Databases will be a solid and secure platform for our business needs moving forward, and a perfect fit for our strategy to optimize IT costs and better align IT to drive business innovation and competitive advantage."

*Director of IT Service and Operations
Department Store Chain*

Founded in 1849, the company offers clothing, furniture, electronics and home and garden products to its customers at more than 60 upscale department stores in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

The Retailer's Challenge

As part of a comprehensive cost optimization effort in preparation for being acquired in 2014, the company needed to reduce operational expenses while retaining premier-level support for its Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) and also considering how it would fuel its growth strategy. Because 11.5.10 was about to go into full sustaining support, IT would not receive any new fixes, patches, certifications or tax and regulatory updates. An upgrade to R12 just to stay supported with Oracle would be costly and disruptive to the business, diverting vital resources from strategic revenue generating initiatives. The alternative to this was to seek out a third-party support solution for the existing implementation.

That EBS implementation was highly customized — the IT director called it "unbelievably complex" — with more than 50 database instances chained together in a single application. And in retail, uptime is critical — an outage could mean millions in lost revenue.

Those applications were virtually "desupported" because they weren't based on current Oracle products, the IT leader said. As a result, he set out to find a premier-level support provider that didn't balk at highly customized EBS applications and complex database systems. Ultimately, the company decided on Rimini Street for third-party support of its EBS systems.

The Rimini Street Solution

That decision transformed some immediate operational challenges into benefits, starting with saving 50 percent of the previous annual vendor support fees. In addition, the retailer received tax and regulatory updates as part of the annual support fee to Rimini Street, which reduced the pressure to upgrade just to maintain vendor support levels. Because of its success with its EBS support from Rimini Street, the retailer decided to move much of its database support to Rimini Street. Even faced

Benefits

- **Achieved strategic flexibility:** Third-party support means reducing operational costs and freeing money for future goals, including the licensing of new Oracle technology.
- **Gained premier-level support for highly customized Oracle environments:** Rimini Street's Primary Support Engineer model and the tenure of its engineers ensures familiarity with the company's interconnected systems.
- **Receives tax and regulatory updates:** Rimini Street provides Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) updates as part of the annual support fee.

"Everybody I've worked with from Rimini Street has been very positive, very accommodating and genuinely wants the client to be happy, which is great. In the heat of battle, the Rimini Street team doesn't stop and worry about the gray areas. They know when to pull out the stops and just find a solution, and I'm really grateful for that."

*Director of IT Service and Operations
Department Store Chain*

For More Information

To learn more about this department store chain or to read other client success stories, visit www.riministreet.com/clients.

with an all-or-nothing mandate from Oracle support, following the purchase of an Oracle Exadata system, the retailer decided to move those databases to Rimini Street's coverage, too.

Capgemini is also in the picture as a provider of tier-1 support. "When Rimini works on an issue, they are usually engaging with Capgemini, with our own technical people, as well as our service team, our IT department and business users in Finance or HR — and they work well with everyone," the IT director says.

"This is important because we have an integrated environment in which we've had some incidents where we weren't sure if we had a core Oracle problem or if it was something else," the IT director explains. "And I have to say, in the heat of battle, the Rimini Street team doesn't stop and worry about the gray areas. They know when to pull out the stops and just find a solution."

Third-party support provides the retailer with a foundation of technical expertise that ensures stability. Better yet, that expertise is augmented by familiarity with complicated environments. IT personnel have direct access to a named local Primary Support Engineer and receive Rimini Street's premium-level support services with 24/7/365 support coverage and a 15-minute response guarantee for Priority 1 issues.

In one incident that occurred just before the Christmas holiday — a critical time for a retailer — "everyone was on conference calls all through the night," the IT director recalls. "After Rimini Street came in, we found that a user had uploaded five duplicate prices. Because Rimini Street understands the environment so well, they are better able to sort things like this out more quickly."

After optimizing its support and maintenance spend in exchange for superior service, the retailer turned its attention to new strategic initiatives. The company plans to move much of its infrastructure to the cloud, revitalize its multichannel customer strategy and build out a platform to better onboard acquisitions of other companies. Embracing third-party support has not prevented consideration of how new Oracle technology might fit into the company's growth plans.

"We have an enormous capital investment program in place for the next several years, and believe it or not, we're looking at spending large chunks of that with Oracle," the IT director. "Looking forward, we feel comfortable that we'll be able to work with Rimini on the support and operations side to achieve better run costs, and actually, better service."

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