

Italian door manufacturer welcomes eco-friendly, economical HP Integrity blades

Moving to HP Integrity BL860c Server Blades running OpenVMS— from HP AlphaServers and Tru64 UNIX®—opens the way to higher performance at less cost



“By choosing HP Integrity server blades, we reduced data center fixed costs, maintenance chores, space, and power and cooling requirements. And this choice allowed us to capitalize on our previous operating system investment.”
—Gabriele Pozzo, Chief Information Officer, Dierre SpA



HP customer case study: entrance of HP BladeSystem c-Class, HP OpenVMS, HP Services and HP StorageWorks systems heighten agility

Industry: manufacturing

Objective

Reduce maintenance and data center costs, optimize space, and conserve energy

Approach

Consolidate HP AlphaServer/Tru64 UNIX environment to HP Integrity BL860c Server Blades hosting OpenVMS and Java™-based proprietary manufacturing applications

IT improvements

- 50 percent higher performance with zero downtime
- Reduction in the number of server racks from three to one
- Faster provisioning and lower maintenance requirements
- More space to accommodate additional racks

Business outcomes

- Ability to produce and manage more product orders
- Improved end-user productivity due to speedy application response times and higher availability
- 30 percent drop in power and cooling costs
- 40 percent lower license cost on OpenVMS
- Greater business agility



Let in a new server infrastructure

The passion to create, to embrace challenges, and to shun complacency has catapulted Dierre SpA to the forefront in manufacturing doors, panels, and security closure systems. Headquartered in Villanova D'Asti, Italy, Dierre (www.dierre.com) combines style, functionality, and innovation in its products. That is why the company enjoys a coveted position as Italy's #1 door maker and earned 2007 revenue of 170 million euros (US\$248.2 million). Some 200,000 armored doors; 300,000 locks and safes; and approximately 500,000 garage doors, shutters, and multifunctional doors enter the market annually from the company's five production sites. For customers, the choices are plentiful and pleasing.

“Our Product Configurator application running on HP Integrity BL860c Server Blades has better response time and higher availability. That makes data entry quicker and more accurate.”

—Gabriele Pozzo, Chief Information Officer, Dierre SpA

Dierre leads its manufacturing sector because it attends to the bottom line and processes underlying innovative design and production. Business technology for billing, production control, warehouse management, order processing, quality assurance, and customer service aids those processes—and for years, so did HP AlphaServer systems running OpenVMS and Tru64 UNIX. However, when Dierre’s board of directors issued a charge to slash data center operational costs, optimize space, and provide ecological enhancements, the need for a data center transformation became more pronounced.

While keeping a pulse on economics, Gabriele Pozzo, Chief Information Officer at Dierre, and his two-person staff also needed to retain the potent performance and reliability of the older environment. Because Dierre’s presence is constantly expanding, application availability is paramount. All of the company’s production management and billing functions are tied to the server infrastructure. About 250 end users need fast response times from the servers to put top-selling products into homes, shops, offices, and public buildings both locally and abroad. And like the Dierre electronic safes locking out intruders, the operating system must deliver privacy and protection for the company’s own patents, intellectual property, and customer information.

Lock in flexibility

The IT staff determined that Dierre would be best served by staying with HP. “Our plan was to follow HP’s technology roadmap, and the HP Integrity architecture is the natural progression from AlphaServer systems,” Pozzo says.

Taking this logical upgrade path, Dierre became one of the first Italian customers to adopt HP Integrity BL860c Server Blades with the OpenVMS operating system in a production environment. “The HP sales team helped us analyze our needs and select an infrastructure that aligns with our business model. We had installed rack-mounted Integrity servers and knew what they could do,” says Pozzo, whose staff deployed the server blades. “The installation was so easy we did it in-house.”

HP Integrity blade and rack-mounted servers with Intel® Itanium® processors are taking over the operation of core applications and databases that AlphaServers previously supported. Specifically, Integrity blades run a proprietary, Java-based application called Product Configurator, which manages product design, standardizes every new order, verifies bills of materials, and enables order entry into a general database. The mission-critical software guards against the use of an incorrect bill of material list, which can result in off-specification products and customer dissatisfaction. Dierre customizes its products according to customer tastes and needs, and guarantees perfect finishing, top quality, and final inspections. Such meticulousness is the basis for its competitive edge—and not only does Product Configurator help the staff complete these functions efficiently, but also (in the future) the software will enable dealers to track their orders step by step.

“Not only were we able to host more users than expected on HP Integrity blades running OpenVMS, but also they give us 50 percent more performance compared to AlphaServers—with zero downtime. We’ve reduced the time needed to process production orders and prepare bills of material.”

Eco-minded, but equally mindful of costs

Higher performance and availability come at a lower total cost of ownership (TCO). For example, a new maintenance contract reduced costs by as much as 20 percent annually. "Using OpenVMS, we configured a highly available server blade cluster. This configuration allows us to hold the line on our fixed costs by purchasing next-business-day support on Integrity servers," Pozzo explains.

Ever mindful of costs, Dierre is eco-minded also, and this mindset is evident in its products, such as the new door insulation system that the company has invented. In the data center, Integrity blades build on the company's ClimaPiú project, which underscores resource conservation and environmental sensitivity companywide. As a result of implementing Integrity blades, Pozzo projects energy savings of at least 30 percent—a number certain to rise as the staff builds out the HP BladeSystem infrastructure and migrates more AlphaServers to it. Thus far, they have consolidated six AlphaServers onto two Integrity blades.

"We are using less wattage and fewer BTUs with Integrity blades. We expect significantly lower energy costs with the introduction of more blade servers during the year," Pozzo says.

Protection against unauthorized intrusion

OpenVMS running on budget-friendly blades lowered Dierre's license cost by 40 percent compared to the AlphaServer/Tru64 UNIX environment. Plus, the staff found the transition from Tru64 UNIX to OpenVMS easy. They accomplished it without specialized training and by referring to the clear, concise OpenVMS documentation that HP provides.

Like the Dierre security doors and devices that protect against intrusion, OpenVMS affords a secure, robust infrastructure, which promotes business continuity. OpenVMS also provides management and monitoring ease, afforded by the Digital Command Language (DCL) interface and Availability Manager software for OpenVMS systems. The staff also uses HP Systems Insight Manager. "The OpenVMS management tools give us perfect control over our cluster," Pozzo notes.



This nearly impenetrable operating system also runs on five HP Integrity entry-class and midrange servers with Dual-Core Intel Itanium processors underpinning billing, warehouse inventory management, customized material requirements planning (MRP) software, and Oracle® Internet Application Server. On an Integrity rx6600 Server, the staff uses OpenVMS with Host-Based Volume Shadowing (HBVS) to replicate an Oracle 10g Database (upgraded from Oracle 8i) in synchronous mode to a failover data center.

"OpenVMS is a secure operating system we can trust in, and we can count on future development and new features from HP," says Pozzo.

Capable of competing worldwide

Integrity blades reside in the same HP BladeSystem c7000 Enclosure that houses virtualized HP ProLiant blades running Microsoft® Windows® and Linux. Pozzo looks forward to implementing an HP Virtual Server Environment (VSE) on Integrity blades when it becomes available on OpenVMS. HP plans to include HP Virtual Machines software in the next version of OpenVMS expected for release in mid-2009. "An HP VSE will give us more flexibility to pool and share resources, which will help us consolidate more servers and align capacity with business demands," Pozzo notes.

Customer solution at a glance

A data center transformation that leverages a blade server farm to support proprietary manufacturing applications

Primary applications

Proprietary Java-based manufacturing application; databases; and development, billing, production control, warehouse management, order processing, quality assurance, and customer service systems

Primary hardware

- 5 HP Integrity servers (models rx6600, rx3600, rx2600, rx4640, and rx1620)
- 3 HP Integrity BL860c Server Blades
- 5 HP ProLiant BL465c and 2 ProLiant p-Class server blades (running Windows, Linux, VMware, document management software, and development applications)
- 2 HP BladeSystem c7000 Enclosures
- 25 HP ProLiant DL/ML series servers (supporting business intelligence and Internet applications)

- 17 AlphaServer systems (OpenVMS/Tru64 UNIX)
- 2 HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays (EVAs) (8 TB total)
- HP StorageWorks 1000 Modular Smart Array (MSA1000) (400 GB capacity)

Primary software

- OpenVMS 8.3
- HP Data Protector software
- Microsoft Windows 2003
- Microsoft Internet Information Services (IIS) (for the Dierre website)
- Oracle Internet Application Server (IAS) 10g
- Oracle 10g Database Standalone and RAC
- Oracle Developer Suite 10g
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux
- VMware ESX Server

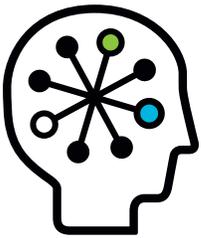
HP Services

- HP Care Pack service—Next Business Day support for Integrity servers

In addition to the HP BladeSystem, HP ProLiant rack-mounted servers and HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays (EVAs) round out the infrastructure. Dierre's servers and arrays connect to primary and failover SANs via optical fiber and backup wireless technology. "HP ProLiant servers are an important part of the business. They are robust, reliable, and fit our expectations. HP StorageWorks EVAs are our storage preference because they totally support all of the operating systems we use," Pozzo says.

Along with the right storage support, this thriving manufacturer also counts on the broad knowledge base of the HP presales team, who provided guidance for the OpenVMS transition. "HP presales and HP Services have expertise, professional competence, and great attitudes. We have developed great relationships with the HP teams in Italy," Pozzo says.

Those great relationships and technological innovation—like HP Integrity blades and OpenVMS—are the pathway to increased business agility and infrastructure flexibility, which will make Dierre an even stronger force in manufacturing. Others noticed Dierre's technology prowess some time ago, as the company's appearance on the list of the 100 most technologically advanced Italian enterprises demonstrates. Now that this medium-sized business is harnessing an affordable, adaptable infrastructure, it is sure to appear at the top of other lists. "Our data center is now a strategic business enabler that allows us to introduce new capabilities and applications in the easiest way and strengthen our global presence and reach," Pozzo concludes.



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