Enabling business for 30 years with OpenVMS reliability

Looking toward the next 30 years and beyond

Anniversaries mark a point in time when you get the chance to look back at the journey you've taken and to look ahead at all that is to come. On the 30th anniversary of HP OpenVMS, we are doing just that.

What started in the mid 1970's as a visionary operating system for the VAX system has evolved into one of the industry's most secure and reliable foundations for mission-critical business. When we hear companies talk about how they measure their uptime in multiple years, we know that we are enabling business in a way that few technologies can. The successes we celebrate on this anniversary are most certainly collective ones. Any company can develop a great technology. But without customers to support that technology and prove its value as a true enabler of business, its capability and influence are limited. We are fortunate and grateful to have some of the most loyal customers in the industry—organizations that have been running OpenVMS virtually since its inception. It is really their loyalty and ongoing support that we celebrate today. We thank them for sharing our vision and allowing HP to become an integral part of how they do business.

As we celebrate the past, we are also extremely excited about the future of OpenVMS. We have made a commitment to advancing the technology and enabling organizations in a variety of sectors that rely on it to drive business outcomes and promote differentiation.

Already, the launch of the HP c-Class Integrity server blade is changing the way many organizations think about blade technology. They are realizing that the myths regarding space and power don't hold up, and that blades provide a cost-effective alternative to support compute-intensive, mission critical operations.

We will also continue to enhance OpenVMS for the HP Integrity and AlphaServer platforms with: new HP Integrity systems; storage performance and connectivity; performance and scalability; the integration of industry standards around security, integration software, Web Services, Java and UNIX®/Linux® interoperability; and virtualization capabilities.

So thank you for joining us in our journey so far. And we look forward to continuing the OpenVMS adventure with you, providing the technology that delivers the reliability, scalability and security your mission-critical business has come to rely on.

Ann McQuaid,
General Manager, OpenVMS Systems Division
Hewlett-Packard Company

1975	Work begins at Digital Equipment Corporation on an operating system for its VAX system
1977	First release of "VAX11/VMS" (Virtual Memory System)
1980's	VMS becomes the 'gold standard' of minicomputer operating systems
1991	Renamed OpenVMS as rivalry from UNIX® demands greater support for industry standards
1992	First release of OpenVMS for Alpha, VAX hardware discontinued
1997	Digital sells its Alpha microprocessor business to Intel; Intel will sell Alpha chips back to Digital
1998	Compaq acquires Digital
2001	Port of OpenVMS to Intel® Itanium® processor announced
2002	Compaq and HP merge
2004	HP announces last Alpha-based hardware will ship in 2007
2005	OpenVMS for HP Integrity servers based on the Intel® Itanium® processor released
2006	OpenVMS version 8.3 released
2007	November – OpenVMS version 8.3-1H1 released. OpenVMS now supports all of HP's innovative BladeSystem functionality
2007	December – Work on the next release of OpenVMS commences

Southeastern Freight Lines benefits from OpenVMS reliability for 23 years

Southeastern Freight Lines, a less-than-truckload regional carrier serving the U.S. sun belt, can be considered an OpenVMS pioneer. Implemented in 1984, OpenVMS serves as the backbone of the company's entire computer system, delivering high reliability for the past 23 years.

"OpenVMS doesn't require specialized expertise, it just keeps on running," says Dave Robinson Jr., VP of IT at Southeastern Freight Lines. "Because of our heavy reliance on automated business processes, we have to be up. And OpenVMS provides us with an operating system that requires minimal, if any, system administration. We can spend time solving business problems instead of system problems."

In the early years, Southeastern Freight developed Cobol applications for its VAX systems. As the technology evolved, the company migrated applications to HP AlphaServers and is now in the process of moving onto the HP Integrity platform. With this interoperability, Southeastern Freight has been able to transition applications across platforms as they evolved with no major conversion efforts, protecting its investments in architecture and development.

OpenVMS has also enabled Southeastern Freight to innovate. In 1993, for example, the company had a business requirement to scan bills of lading and delivery receipts. At the time, very few trucking companies were able to achieve that capability, making it a true differentiator for Southeastern Freight. The company developed its entire imaging system in OpenVMS, and it is still running today, giving customers an unprecedented level of access to shipment history.

"Because of the reliability of OpenVMS, we have more time to spend solving business problems or enhancing processes for our customers," says Robinson. "And that means we can speed time to innovation, solidifying our competitive position in the industry. For example, we extended our imaging system to enable computer-generated rate calculation for 94% of our business. So we've bucked the industry trend of manual information entry, which is highly error-prone. Customers like dealing with us because we are error-free, which means they spend less time correcting information on their systems. And that is a very real example of how OpenVMS is allowing us to achieve business outcomes and deliver value to our customers."

As Southeastern Freight looks to the future, it sees OpenVMS as an integral part of its evolution. With the move to the HP Integrity server platform, the company is focused on scaling out rather than scaling up to support new transaction-heavy processes including shipment information by exception and Web-enabled interactions.

"OpenVMS is a large part of our history, but it is also a critical component of our future evolution as a business," says Robinson. "The way in which HP has evolved the technology has enabled us to innovate while maximizing our investments. So we look forward to using OpenVMS to drive process innovation, improving the way we do business and helping our customers derive maximum value from their relationship with us."

LA Community College District runs core business system on OpenVMS for reliability and performance

LA Community College District (LACCD) is the largest two-year college district in the United States. With nine colleges, LACCD has approximately 140,000 students registered each semester, 26% full time and 73% part time.

In 1991, LACCD began migrating its systems to OpenVMS. Completed in 1995, OpenVMS is now the backbone of the District's student registration system, which supports all nine colleges, making it the largest instance of student registration anywhere.

For LACCD, its bottom line is dependent on getting students registered for courses. It is reimbursed by the state by total registration, making its technology critical to achieving business outcomes.

"If students are having trouble registering for courses, it is literally money out the door for us," says Tony Tortorice, Chief Information Officer, LACCD. "As a result, scalability and performance are critical—we need to be able to handle peak registration, and our systems must be up all the time or we lose revenue."

When asked about uptime, Tortorice indicates that his team doesn't track those numbers because LACCD has experienced virtually no downtime except for scheduled outages since migrating to OpenVMS. That's almost 20 years of consistent performance and reliability.

LACCD was an early adopter of Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and Web registration. Currently, Web registration numbers are growing, creating an even greater need for reliability and security. For Tortorice, the security inherent in OpenVMS means he has one less thing to worry about. "Compromises aren't an option for an educational institution," he says. "Data loss and identity theft in particular are huge concerns in the sector, but with OpenVMS, we know we have the security to eliminate that liability."

In the future, Tortorice plans to add more functionality to the District's existing systems. He has recently purchased two HP Integrity Superdome servers, managing the OpenVMS migration by taking advantage of the clustering capabilities between HP AlphaServers and Integrity servers. Once he migrates to the HP Integrity platform, he will repurpose his AlphaServers as Web servers to support growing online functionality.

"Our goal is to move toward a Service Oriented Architecture, creating a student portal where they can have direct access to schedules and course information," says Tortorice. "We have a first rate student information system, with rock solid underlying technology. And we plan to leverage the reliability, scalability and security of OpenVMS to build on our capabilities. Everything that we do with OpenVMS is geared toward promoting student success. We want to attract students based on our ability to provide differentiated functionality so that their lives as students can be as easy as possible."

OpenVMS in our daily lives

OpenVMS supports many organizations in delivering products and services to their customers. On a daily basis, we experience the advantages of OpenVMS in what we eat, what we drive, how we communicate, how we work, what we watch and even where we sleep.

- When you eat your morning cereal, it probably came from a major consumer packaged goods producer that uses OpenVMS in its manufacturing facilities to obtain up to the minute management information and control.
- As you drive to work, your car may have come off the line of one of the world's top vehicle manufacturers that uses OpenVMS to control production.
- If you deal with a banking or financial institution to transfer funds, invest or withdraw money, that organization most likely runs OpenVMS to support its vast array of transactions.
- Any time you use your computer at work or at home, you are probably relying on one of the 90% of microprocessors manufactured by processes controlled by OpenVMS.
- Most of us have come to rely on our cell phones—very often when you sign up a new phone, use text messaging, or pay your bill you are doing this with systems built on OpenVMS.
- You call your doctor to book your physical and your physician is probably tapping into a health care system that uses OpenVMS to run clinical information systems, labs, radiology, and ADT systems.
- After a long day of work, you decide to tune into your satellite system to catch the latest movie or game, most likely accessing a system from one of the large number of cable, satellite TV, and other media that run critical applications on OpenVMS servers.
- After a long and productive day, you crawl into your bed which may have been produced or sold by one of the large manufacturers or retail outlets around the world that rely on OpenVMS.

To learn more, visit www.hp.com/go/OpenVMS

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