

BRITISH SUGAR

BRITISH SUGAR KEEPS LIGHTS OUT WITH HALCYON

Real time monitoring brings mainframe level availability to the iSeries



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Mainframe Migration

Part of Associated British Foods, British Sugar is the leading supplier of sugar to the UK market. The company produces an extensive range of sugars and sweetener blends which are represented in the leading brands of all the major global food and drink manufacturers.

In 2004, the company decided to replace its mainframe based ERP package with *JDE One World*, running on *IBM iSeries* hardware. *One World* supports British Sugar's six manufacturing and two packaging sites which operate 24x7x365. The application has over 300 users and its performance and availability is critical to the smooth running of the organisation.

Key to the success of this implementation was the ability to replicate the high availability of the mainframe environment without adding unacceptable system management overhead.

Paul Morley, Operations & Infrastructure Development Manager, British Sugar, explains, "British Sugar was one of the first companies in Europe to achieve a 'lights out' operation on the mainframe. Excellent system monitoring enabled the company to replace 20 operators working four shifts, with four people working during one prime shift."*

Constant Operation

With the move to the iSeries, it was essential to achieve the same levels of high availability and the low cost of ownership. Having undertaken a thorough review of system management tools, British Sugar opted for the *High Availability Suite* from Halcyon Software.

Morley confirms, "The goal for any organisation is to limit the number of IT suppliers and products in use. Achieving objectives with one skills set, one vendor relationship and no need for complex product interaction delivers a far lower cost of ownership and minimises operational risk."

Richard Card, Senior Operations Analyst, adds, "Halcyon's single product suite provides the complete monitoring and alerting, batch scheduling and message management solution British Sugar requires to achieve a lights out environment for the iSeries."

The company also uses Halcyon's Enterprise Console to provide colour coded views of the iSeries performance. The console is used both by operations personnel to proactively manage the environment and, via a large plasma screen, by the Help Desk to improve the quality of service delivered to users. Alerts are also forwarded via SNMP to *HP OpenView*, British Sugar's console for overall management of the entire enterprise.

Proactive Management

In October 2005, British Sugar implemented IBM's new *i5* hardware and opted to upgrade to Halcyon's *Operation Center* product. "*Operation Center* provides British Sugar with the ability to see inside the iSeries. The more focused information available to the support team, the better the service delivered to the business. Potential problems can be identified before they occur and can be addressed to minimise business impact," Morley confirms. "Furthermore, by ensuring the help desk is already informed of the system status, British Sugar can deliver far more proactive service and support to users across the business."

With a large number of critical batch applications, including reports and daily sales updates, running overnight, the company is highly reliant on Halcyon's *Operations Center*. The combination of job scheduler and message manager ensures any out of hours problems are immediately notified to staff via text message.

"The system also highlights unexpected issues, such as long running tasks or those using more than a certain level of cpu, which is enabling the support team to take early action to avoid potentially serious problems," says Card.

Since 2004, the company has undergone numerous upgrades and patches to both the iSeries and *One World*, many of which have required updates to the Halcyon product set. "Halcyon's support is particularly impressive," says Morley. "The company is always professional and responsive. Indeed, for British Sugar, Halcyon's customer service ethos is as important as the product and has been an essential component of British Sugar's smooth transition to the iSeries."

*'Lights out' refers to the fact that there was no longer a need to operate fully manned, around the clock systems management.

About Halcyon Software:

Halcyon Software Limited is an established software company with over 17 years experience in systems management. Halcyon writes software for IBM midrange computers as well as Windows, Linux, Unix, AIX and Netware platforms. Large multinational companies, corporate data centres, as well as small to medium-sized businesses use Halcyon Software products to proactively manage and automate their IT operations.

The Head Office is based in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, and their software is used throughout the world with distributors in Europe, Australia and the USA. Customers include Digica, Caggemini, Avon Cosmetics, Honda, Raleigh, Burberry, Early Learning Centre, Arcadia and Budget Insurance, British Sugar, Volvo and Cummins Information Systems.