



NTUC Fair Price builds ideal shopping experience around data insight

HPE ConvergedSystem creates platform for faster, more reliable data access

Objective

Improve meaningful access to data to enable faster decision making

Challenge

Fully migrate to new HANA platform within six months

IT Matters

- Migrates to new platform within set six-month deadline, without issue and within minimum strain on internal IT resource
- Delivers a clearer roadmap for management of data, both in terms of technology and strategy

Business Matters

- Accelerates access to actionable business insight, with single version of data
- Improves efficiency of stock, merchandising and payments
- Allows business to react faster to new consumer trends



Challenge

Retail relies on insight from Big Data

NTUC Fair Price is Singapore's largest grocery retailer. Founded in 1973, it serves over 600,000 customers daily from over 190 supermarkets and convenience stores. The business owns stores, distribution centres and food warehousing depots. In 2014, group revenue was S\$3.2 billion.

In retail, collecting, accessing and interpreting vast amounts of data is both a necessity and a strategic advantage. As the business has grown, NTUC Fair Price faces rapidly rising levels of data. Being able to act upon this data will improve stock control, merchandising and financial management across the business. With new entrants hungry for market, actionable data insight protects NTUC's position as market leader.

The retailer's ERP system was installed in a UNIX® environment using IBM Power server and Hitachi storage system. However, as data volumes grew it was clear there were issues around the time taken to generate new reports.

NTUC Fair Price recognised it needed to upgrade its ERP system, adopting new trends in SAP. "SAP HANA's unique approach to the retail segment would allow us to always work on a single source of data for real-time planning, execution, reporting and analysis on very large volumes of data," says Zhang Yan, deputy director, IT, of NTUC Fair Price. "An upgrade would entirely revamp our SAP platform for the future and enable new business capabilities such as real-time Big Data analysis on operational data store. At present, operational data needs to be archived to an analytics database before analysis is done."

Customer at a glance

Hardware

- HPE ConvergedSystem 900

Software

- HPE Serviceguard

“The Hewlett Packard Enterprise solution means we now have better visibility of stock. Sales personnel can run availability inquiries in real-time. This increases the chances of finding sellable merchandise. And makes for a better customer experience.”

— Zhang Yan, deputy director, IT, NTUC Fair Price

Solution

From hardware to consultancy

“Because we had decided to move our P7 UNIX platform,” says Zhang, “It made sense to find a solution with the technical leader in the HANA market, Hewlett Packard Enterprise. Also, on a project of this importance, we prefer a direct relationship with the vendor, and HPE spans hardware, software, implementation services and consultancy.”

The HPE ConvergedSystem solution consists of two CS900 HANA (Superdome X) with SG and dual purpose storage, and includes Consulting Services Factory Express Services by HPE Technology Services. The HPE HANA portfolio delivers systems optimised to provide the highest levels of performance and availability for clients’ in-memory computing initiatives.

“The HPE team is our trusted advisor,” says Zhang. “The team provided sizing, architecture design, and help with the migration. It was a shared experience.

“The HPE TS consultant was always responsive. I’d like to emphasis how much detail went into their migration planning. This avoided any uncertainty, and was fully in-line with our overall project plan.”

She says there have been immediate advantages. Prior to migration to HANA, NTUC Fair Price’s DB size was 6.5TB. Today it is 2.2TB, but with the capacity to grow to 12TB.

“With HPE CS900, we have a more reliable system,” she says. “We’re better able to prevent data loss as well as ensure higher availability for monitoring and automatic fail over with HPE Serviceguard clustering software.

Faster access to data, a single version of the truth, means the business is better at its core activity: retail. “We now have better visibility of stocks in real-time,” says Zhang. This increases the chances of finding sellable merchandise. And makes for a better customer experience.”

The business is better able to distribute stock, sending merchandise where it is needed and reducing the amount of stock held in warehouses. Buyers are better able to identify new consumer trends, and supply relevant merchandise.

“Ultimately, the efficient creation of master data reduces interference with other business processes,” says Zhang. “We’re more efficient in the way we buy, sell and pay for stock, and manage the business.”

Benefit

Faster, clearer access to data

The deal was finalised in September 2014 with a go-live March 2015. “Exactly in-line with six-month deadline,” says Zhang.

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