



Case Study: eCommerce Application

Costs reduced by 50 percent

Business Value

- Capital costs lowered by 30 percent
- Operating costs lowered by 50 percent
- One-third the power
- One-sixth the floor space
- Performance increase of 5x
- Provisioning in minutes, not weeks
- Cash flow increased by 25 percent

Executive Summary

This Egenera customer was faced with a good problem to have. Demand for its online commerce service had reached one million transactions per hour and was growing by more than 10 percent each month. But, the existing hardware infrastructure was not able to scale cost-effectively or reliably to meet application demand. A new architecture was needed.

Business Challenge

After the dot-com bubble burst, only a few significant Internet properties remained with sufficient customer traffic to create a sustainable business model. For the survivors, competition has since grown even more intense, while the drive to generate revenue streams has intensified. Although time to market was critical during the boom, and remains so today, deploying sustainable infrastructure that meets cost and business-agility targets is today's primary challenge.

For this Egenera customer, sourcing a cost-efficient, scalable processing platform meant moving away from proprietary systems. The UNIX machines they'd been using entailed high upfront capital and long-term maintenance costs, and locked the customer into a single-vendor operating system strategy. Equally important, the customer was not able to meet the application availability goals required to grow the business. Migrating to Linux seemed the logical choice.

BladeFrame Solution

After researching multiple offerings, the company concluded that the Egenera® BladeFrame® system and its Processing Area Network (PAN) architecture provided significant benefits above and beyond commodity white-box systems, including:

Improved response times: Based on world events and other factors, the ecommerce application has great variability that makes predicting traffic nearly impossible. To accommodate this with UNIX servers, the company had to significantly over-provision the environment. Even so, unexpected traffic caused poor response times. Between these spikes hardware sat idle, negatively impacting total cost of ownership (TCO).

The BladeFrame's automatic provisioning dramatically reduced TCO and improved response times. In a matter of minutes, system administrators are able to bring additional systems online line to meet unexpected traffic. Once the spike has cleared, resources are returned to the pool of servers used for testing, development, QA and spares. Moreover, with the Egenera environment in place, the customer experienced an immediate 5x performance increase.

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Increased business agility: Normally, it took four to six weeks to fully provision new servers. This not only tied up capital, but limited the company's ability to respond to new customers. With the Egenera BladeFrame, servers are provisioned in minutes not weeks.

In addition, the Egenera system's dynamic repurposing shifts processing capacity between the application's two major functions based on load—maintaining optimal service levels for site visitors.

Lights-out management: Using the BladeFrame's lights-out management capabilities, a single system administrator manages the entire application infrastructure.

Quantifiable Business Results

Use of the BladeFrame has resulted in greater profitability for the application.

- **Capital-cost reduction:** More efficient utilization of available servers eliminates the need to over-provision, resulting in a 30 percent capital-cost reduction versus comparable Intel-based solutions.
- **Operating-cost reduction:** Reductions in maintenance, network ports, SAN ports and system administrator time have reduced operating expense by more than 50 percent. Egenera required just one-third the power and one-sixth the floor space of the legacy environment.
- **Cash-flow improvement:** With reduced provisioning time, servers for planned expansions are now ordered one month instead of four months in advance, increasing free cash flow by 25 percent over the course of the year.



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