



Putting the Power back into ERP

Maine Public Service Tackles a Difficult
Oracle Upgrade to Create Long-Term
Operating Efficiencies

A ONENECK IT SERVICES CASE STUDY

The Company

A subsidiary of Maine & Maritimes Corporation (AMEX - MAM), Maine Public Service provides regulated electric transmission and distribution services to 17 communities within the state of Maine. The company operates over 380 miles of transmission lines and 1,700 circuit miles of distribution lines within a 3,600 square mile area. Major business activities in the service area center around agricultural and forest products. As an investor-owned energy company, Maine Public Service aims to transmit reliable, economical electric power and meet the expectations of its 35,000-plus residential, commercial and industrial customers.

The Challenge

Utility and energy companies face considerable market volatility. Regulatory changes, customer demands and competitive pressures create constant hurdles. To address these market dynamics, utilities must continually evaluate business strategies, operating performance and technology effectiveness.

In November 2003, Maine Public Service (“MPS”) contracted with Delinea Corporation, an Oracle service provider subsequently acquired by OneNeck IT Services (“OneNeck”), to provide ongoing support for its IT infrastructure, as well as deploy new applications to help overcome market challenges. MPS and OneNeck implemented Oracle’s e-Business Suite Application version 11.5.9 to support strategic initiatives. MPS deployed modules for financials, inventory management and procurement.

Although the Oracle application improved business information for decision-making, system performance issues surfaced during the following year. Overall, MPS experienced slow system operation and many non-working functions. For example, the system reports, self-service time templates and the recoverable tax functionality were not running properly.

OneNeck and MPS logged numerous service requests with Oracle to fix the ongoing problems. In response, OneNeck integrated several Oracle-recommended “patches” to fix the issues. Unfortunately, these complicated and time-consuming patches did not always fix the problem. Or, after OneNeck fixed one function with a patch, another would break.

These ongoing system problems created a rocky information environment within the company. MPS and OneNeck knew they needed to stabilize the environment and eliminate the ongoing application performance issues permanently. After OneNeck provided a complete analysis of the situation,





MPS had to decide whether to continue fixing problems with patches, or undertake a tricky upgrade to a new application version.

The OneNeck Solution

MPS required top-notch system performance to manage constant regulatory scrutiny, efficiently meet customer demands and support the company's long-range strategic plan. To meet these requirements, OneNeck presented MPS with a proposal to upgrade the current Oracle application to version 11.5.10. Widely known in the industry as a complex and daunting project, OneNeck was confident it could manage this upgrade smoothly and to a successful outcome. OneNeck knew this course of action would fix the current 11.5.9 application problems, enhance system performance and provide the best cost-benefit ratio.

MPS engaged OneNeck to begin the upgrade. During the development process, OneNeck tested the application three different times over a two-month period in off-line environments. The actual production upgrade was completed in six days.

In addition to migrating the Oracle e-Business Suite application to 11.5.10, OneNeck rearchitected the underlying database to version 10g and upgraded the operating system. The project also required deploying a more robust server to speed the upgrade process, improve system performance, and support MPS' growth plans. All facets of the 2,000-staff hour project were completed without a hitch.

The Benefits

When MPS first selected OneNeck, the two companies entered into a 10-year application management partnership. OneNeck was brought on board to improve operational efficiency, streamline internal procedures and create a solid foundation for implementing the company's long-term strategic projects. "The OneNeck/Oracle solution was up against a tough competitive field during the selection process, but their collective reputation was unmatched," said Michael Eaton, vice president of IT for Maine Public Service. "Plus, we determined they were best suited to enter into a long-standing, trusting relationship with us. The quick and thorough Oracle 11.5.10 application and 10g database upgrade was no trivial task. The successful outcome of this project proves we made the right outsourcing decision."

As a result of the Oracle upgrade, user satisfaction with system performance improved dramatically. For example, Discoverer report processing which took one-to-two hours to run are now completing within 15-20 minutes. Project accounting processes take 20-30 minutes instead of more than one hour. Response time decreased from 10-15 seconds to 3 seconds. And data query time fell from five minutes to 30 seconds or less. Now, users navigate the applications and retrieve data more easily. By combining multiple forms into one, data retrieval and reconciliation became a straightforward process.

"We were looking for a long-term, reliable partner that could support our complex application environment. OneNeck brought a unique blend of Oracle application and Utility industry expertise to the table. Plus, their project management skills and rigorous support processes help us maintain peak system performance. "

*Michael Eaton
Vice President of IT
Maine Public Service Company*

Under its current 10-year agreement, OneNeck continues to manage the Oracle environment, systems and infrastructure. OneNeck provides one-to-one attention and leverages its Oracle Certified Partner status to get any issues escalated quickly. In addition, MPS engages OneNeck for other enhancement projects as needed. As with all customers, OneNeck helps MPS align its vision, objectives and strategy with the right ERP solution. Most importantly, OneNeck has helped MPS put the power back into its Oracle ERP application.



Maine Public Service Facts

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| Organization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maine Public Service Company |
| Industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Utility |
| Business Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate ongoing performance issues with Oracle 11.5.9 by upgrading to version 11.5.10 |
| User Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 105 Users |
| Application Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oracle Applications version 11.5.10 • 10 Modules • Oracle report tools include Discoverer and ADI (ADI also used to upload journal entries and budget) |
| Technical Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hewlett Packard HPDL 380 Production System with RAID 5 • IBM xSeries 345 for Production System Backup • IBM xSeries 345 for Developing and Testing; also runs Failover and Patch environments under VMware |



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