



A step approach to modernisation



Introduction

Established in 1977, Target Furniture has a long-established reputation for providing a comprehensive range of high-quality goods and services to the contract furniture market.

A critical situation

Since 1995, Target Furniture has relied on a bespoke order processing and production control system to support its manufacturing workflow, invoicing, sales and distribution.

By 2006, that reliance had turned into a very real problem for the business. The system worked but was no longer supported and its reliability was being questioned. Just as importantly, the original application no longer met all of their business requirements.

The situation was serious and yet all too common. This was a mission-critical system with no support available for the software application, database software, hardware or operating system.

"As a business, we needed to enhance our systems to survive and grow. The investment in our old systems meant rip and replace wasn't an option. We needed to modernise what we had."

- David Green, Managing Director

The Oninit solution

The ideal solution was to move to a modern system, a modern application platform and a modern database environment. In reality, most businesses cannot afford – both in terms of cost and risk – to simply rip and replace. The most immediate problem for Target was to address that their business-critical system was no longer supported and could not be replaced if it failed.

Since our initial engagement with Target Furniture in 2006, Oninit Consulting has assisted the migration to a supported operating system (SUSE Linux), a modern application platform (Genero) and a modern database environment (IBM Informix).

Application migration from UNIX to Linux

VB legacy app migration to IBM Genero

Core application replacement – maintenance screens

Planned hardware refresh and legacy system decommissioning

2007

2008

2011

2013

2014

2015

2016

Informix database upgrade

Core application replacement – enquiry and look-up screens

Core application replacement – final integration phase

Modernisation of a complex IT environment is not a single project, but instead many smaller projects each with their own defined priority and outcome.

However, this has not been achieved overnight. Initially, we made the legacy system supportable, meeting Target's most pressing requirement. Then, we continued to work closely with the IT team to undertake a comprehensive gap analysis to order the priorities. By applying a step approach, we have delivered a series of projects one at a time - reducing risk but adding value at each step. All with the ultimate goal of creating a supported, modern solution that works now and in the future.

Major improvements

Since the initial system migration in 2006, we have upgraded the database software and moved the entire application platform to a modern interface, Genero.

The Genero application is easier to navigate which means improved staff productivity. Genero also supports multi-window application display which means easier context switching and user multi-tasking. The application interface is more intuitive which means that many tasks which previously required specialist application knowledge can now be shared.

Key benefits

- ☑ Increased user productivity
- ☑ Significant cost efficiencies
- ☑ A continued and reliable support service
- ☑ A cost-effective and long-term approach to modernisation
- ☑ A trusted partnership



With IBM Informix 12.10, users are seeing 20-30% improved application response and 30 times faster response for sales look-up requests and customer service enquiries. IBM Informix also delivers improved failover capability and improved back-up and recovery facilities – virtually eliminating risk of any data loss or service disruption.

We continue to work with Target Furniture to support and enhance these critical systems.