

HITACHI ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS (M) SDN BHD

Hitachi JP1 solutions improve management of SAP jobs, enhance desktop management and end-user support, enable IT team to deliver greater value to business entities.

Hitachi Electronic Products (M) Sdn. Bhd. (HEPM) is a leading global manufacturer of DVD drives and digital media products. An SAP user, HEPM uses Hitachi JP1/AJS2 to completely automate its SAP jobs, backup its SAP database and transfer files. It also uses Hitachi JP1 desktop management solutions for software distribution, PC asset management and software governance.



Mr. Tamizarasu N.S.,
CIO, MIS Dept & IT
Shared Services

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Established in 1989 by Hitachi Limited as part of its expansion into Malaysia’s dynamic electronics industry, Hitachi Electronic Products (M) Sdn. Bhd. (HEPM) is a leading international manufacturer of DVD drives and digital media products. Its fully integrated plant located in Bandar Baru Bangi, a new township near Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia’s capital city, has a monthly production output of about 2.5 million units.

At HEPM, quality control is given top priority at every stage of production – from design, manufacturing, finished product, sales and service – and the plant is certified to multiple quality standards. This commitment to quality is complemented by a production philosophy centred on speed and reliability, with full measures taken to ensure smooth and efficient process flow.

Quality, speed and reliability also govern the IT services in use at HEPM. These services are provided by the MIS Department and delivered on a shared services model to HEPM and two sister companies located at the same site: Hitachi Sales (Malaysia) and Hitachi Consumer Products Malaysia.

The mainstay of the IT assets leveraged by HEPM is the mySAP Business Suite, which went live in early 2006. Deployed on a HP server running HP-UX and the Oracle database, the suite replaced ageing MRP I and MRP II systems that ran on a mainframe. Among the mySAP modules implemented are those for financial accounting, management control and reporting, materials management, production planning, and sales and distribution.

Given the scale of the manufacturer’s operations, the spread of business functions supported, and the sizeable pool of about 150 concurrent users, the volume of SAP jobs is very high. Creating, scheduling, synchronising, executing and monitoring these jobs, however, is a breeze – thanks to the use of Hitachi JP1/AJS2 for Enterprise Applications (JP1/AJS2 for EAP) module, which allows SAP jobs to be managed as part of the overall job management schema.

Full Job Automation

Before HEPM started using Hitachi JP1/AJS2, job management was performed manually on a daily basis, with constant adjustment of the job ‘schedule’. IT staff members were required to be on-site during the second and even the third shift to ensure that jobs ran as planned. Together with the daily grind, this resulted in a staff turnover problem. In addition, as it was difficult to estimate how long jobs would take to complete, buffers were placed in between jobs so that they would not overlap. This resulted in ‘lost’ productive time.

“With Hitachi JP1/AJS2 and the EAP module, all SAP tasks are now fully automated. Night operators are no longer needed and we’ve managed to reduce IT headcount by four persons. The solution is easy to learn and use so every IT staff member is competent in it. Moreover, it’s very reliable and we’ve had zero downtime,” said Tamizarasu N.S., CIO, MIS Department & IT Shared Services.

One of the first to use the Hitachi JP1/AJS2 for EAP module when it was launched, HEPM implemented the software after a two-month pilot, during which it found the solution to be, like its own products, highly reliable and easy to use.

“Implementation was very smooth, with lots of value-add from a Hitachi Asia consultant. Pricing was competitive and we continue to receive excellent knowledge transfer and support from Hitachi Asia,” said Mr. Tamizarasu.

Jobs are now planned once a week, with just two man-hours needed to define and schedule the jobs for the entire week. Jobs can be arranged such that the completion of one triggers the beginning of another (or several others), so time buffers have become a thing of the past. The use of Hitachi JP1/AJS2 has also enabled the IT function to manage by exception, with team members alerted by pager in the unlikely event that jobs do not execute as planned.

Another area where HEPM is leveraging Hitachi JP1/AJS2 for EAP is database backup: the module powers down the SAP server at a scheduled time,



JP1

Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enhance and automate job management ➤ Improve speed and integrity of file transfers ➤ Speed up distribution of new applications, patches and upgrades ➤ Enhance software governance and end-user support ➤ Gain visibility of client assets
Solution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Automated job management using JP1/Automatic Job Management System ➤ Improved file transfers using JP1/File Transmission Server/FTP ➤ Centralised software distribution using JP1/Software Distribution ➤ Client asset management using JP1/Asset Information Manager
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mission-critical SAP jobs and daily database backup are fully automated ➤ Streamlined and shortened supply chain operations ➤ Near real-time monitoring of key performance indicators ➤ Faster, automated and centralised distribution of software ➤ Software audit cut from six weeks to one week ➤ Quicker diagnosis and resolution of end-user issues ➤ Lower IT headcount

performs a backup of the Oracle database, and auto powers up the server. This backup is done on a daily basis and is fully automated.

File Transfer

Besides job management and database backup, HEPM also uses Hitachi JP1 for transferring data files and documents relating to its transactions with its parts vendors. The manufacturer has about 200 vendors from around the world in its Web-based e-procurement system. Approximately 80 of these vendors have their inventories managed on a Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) model by HEPM.

Given that many of the parts HEPM procures have high monetary values, supply chain cycle time is critical. Correspondingly, the exchange of files and documents between HEPM and its vendors need to be to be very fast and highly reliable. Previously, these transmissions were done through EDI. This, however, made for longer cycle times as the vendors would have to take the data sent by HEPM and re-enter or integrate it into their own IT systems for further processing.

Now, using JP1/File Transmission Server/FTP (JP1/FTP), HEPM can document transactions with its vendors in near real-time. Together with functionalities in the e-procurement and VMI systems, this provides visibility of all data flows and processes. File transfer/receipt can be set to execute applications (for example, generate a purchase order or transfer funds) or start jobs managed using JP1/AJS2. Transfers are captured in a log, facilitating troubleshooting, auditing and tracing.

Management reporting is another area that has been enhanced through the use of JP1/FTP. The software constantly feeds data, including daily sales, inventory turnover, hourly production quantities, WIP, holding stock, holding inventory, into a business scorecard used by top management, thus enabling them to track key performance indicators in near real-time.

Desktop Management

To manage the 500 PCs at HEPM, Hitachi Sales (Malaysia) and Hitachi Consumer Products Malaysia, the MIS Department has deployed Hitachi JP1/Software Distribution (JP1/SD) and Hitachi JP1/Asset Information Manager (JP1/AIM).

Like for job management, software distribution (including patch management) and PC asset inventoring were done manually before the Hitachi solutions were implemented. In line with corporate software governance guidelines, the MIS Department conducts software audits of the three sister companies at least twice a year. Due to the large size of the

shared campus and the variety of PC clients (from Pentium II-based desktops to the latest notebooks), each audit, during which asset, software version and configuration information were also recorded, used to take one and a half months to complete.

Using the two Hitachi desktop management solutions, the MIS Department can now perform a full software audit cum asset inventoring in just a week. New applications, patches and upgrades are distributed very quickly, with end-users grouped according to their needs and business function. No scheduled end-user downtime is incurred and operating and application software are consistent and up-to-date.

The detailed hardware and software asset information that the department now has at its fingertips has also enabled the MIS Department to provide a higher level of end-user care.

"Previously, when a support call came in, an IT staff member would need to go on-site to do a check, come back to the IT Department, check documents, look for the appropriate CD, and then go back and do a re-install, update or whatever is necessary," said Mr. Tamizarasu. "Now, with detailed configuration and software information at hand, we can diagnose problems online and remotely and resolve them quickly."

Looking Ahead

Besides improving IT process and business efficiency, the Hitachi JP1 solutions in use at HEPM and its two sister companies have, together, enabled the MIS Department to provide more and new value to the businesses – and at lower cost.

"The IT function is now trimmer and more productive, we're able to spend more time on end-user training and other value-added tasks, and we now can achieve our quarterly plans and meet targets more efficiently. More importantly, we now have much more time to work together with the business units on how the MIS Department can enable and support their future plans."

Going forward, HEPM plans to double its monthly production output. Accordingly, the volume of data will balloon and the number of jobs and file transfers will increase. The MIS Department, however, is confident that the Hitachi JP1 solutions it has put in place will help it meet the increased demands from the soon-to-be-expanded business. Already, it has made plans to ensure that it can continue to improve the services it delivers to the three Hitachi entities. Among these plans are: moving ageing data to a new archive server and a version upgrade of the Hitachi JP1 solutions in the next year.

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About Hitachi Electronic Products (M) Sdn. Bhd.

Hitachi Electronics Products (M) Sdn. Bhd. is a leading manufacturer of DVD drives and digital media products. Established in 1989, the company employs about 1,600 people and has an ongoing technology transfer program with Hitachi Limited of Japan.

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