



George Weston Foods re-engineer enterprise IT infrastructure.

George Weston Foods, a leading food manufacturer, has re-engineered its enterprise IT infrastructure in a bid to consolidate its seven distinct businesses under one cohesive management system.

In streamlining its business functions across the organisation, which boasts 100 sites, George Weston Foods has adopted IBM's RS/6000 technology to provide a reliable backbone for the selected SAP business infrastructure.

Designed to ensure cohesion across the businesses, the new integrated IT infrastructure has enabled the independent divisions to optimise supply chain, strengthen customer relationships and help them make more accurate management decisions.

"The George Weston Foods divisions operate their businesses independently from each other and have their own MIS Departments," said Douglas Forgie, Finance Director, George Weston Foods. "This resulted in over 30 legacy systems operating across the organisation. It soon became obvious that to implement

the group's new operating infrastructure we needed to implement a complete corporate solution, which would replace these disparate systems with one unified system."

SAP, one of the world's largest inter-enterprise software companies, was approached to develop a common business infrastructure that would accommodate all of the different businesses and meet the enterprise resource planning (ERP) requirements of George Weston Foods.

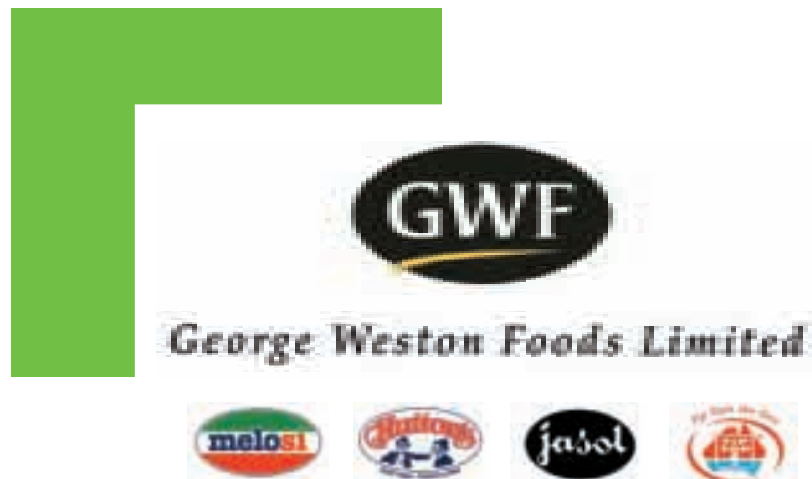
"As an existing partner company and with a strong relationship, IBM was a natural fit to work with SAP on this project," said Tony Carr, SAP Project Director.

"RS/6000 technology was going through a revolution in terms of its capabilities at the time, with the announcement of the RS/6000 Model S70 and H50, which made it an ideal product for the solution. RS/6000 could offer all the 'grunt' we needed to meet George Weston Foods' ERP needs and could accommodate the planned two year rollout," he said.

Industry	Food Manufacturer
Application	SAP R/3 Financials and Logistics
Software	AIX HACMP
Hardware	RS/6000

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Douglas Forgie, Finance Director,
George Weston Foods



The RS/6000 provided the IT backbone for the implementation of the common SAP business infrastructure and was chosen because of its proven reliability, technology leadership and history of providing customer satisfaction.

"Of the twelve main RS/6000 systems we have installed, there has been no unscheduled downtime since we went live over 12 months ago, which in turn means zero downtime in production. We are able to get on with the job of managing our business. Availability has been exceptional and the only downtime has been for scheduled maintenance reasons", said Mr Forgie.

The RS/6000 S70 and H50 servers are designed to deliver the performance and reliability needed for critical applications, and the flexibility to add important features as needed.

To manage the cluster of RS/6000 systems IBM also introduced High Availability Cluster Multiprocessing (HACMP) software, which helps ensure there is no single point of failure.

In addition to the RS/6000 technology, IBM has provided a comprehensive solution including system facility management and system disaster recovery services.

Initially George Weston Foods looked at managing its own IT systems, however in the course of the project and as the relationship with IBM developed, they decided to completely outsource the management to IBM. The result is the involvement of the IBM Global Services division, which is housing the central RS/6000 backbone system at its Baulkham Hills site in Sydney where the system is totally facility managed.

"By taking advantage of this IBM facility, we are able to get on with the job of managing our businesses", said Mr Forgie. "It is a hassle-free set-up which means we don't have to worry about servicing our own equipment and can leave the IT management up to the experts".

"Because we're running 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it is also crucial to have round-the-clock support which has led to us working with IBM Global Services in the strategic area of disaster recovery."

"With businesses throughout Australia and New Zealand relying on delivery of our products in time for their own pro-

duction schedules or stock management, it is essential that the computer system is always up and running to ensure the smooth flow of production and supply chain management. There would be massive problems if there was a shut-down", he said.

In response to this need, IBM is working together with George Weston Foods to develop a DRP strategy, whereby, should George Weston Foods experience any incidences, the system can be back up and running within five hours.

The project commenced in January 1998 beginning with the full set of SAP financial systems and went live in the period from August to December 1998.

The SAP logistics implementation began in May 1999 and is still rolling-out at a rate of one division every two months. "This makes the George Weston Foods project one of the largest Accelerated SAP projects in the world," said Mr Carr.

The IBM/SAP project is in a roll-out process across all the George Weston Foods sites. To date there are 450 George Weston Foods users that have gone live on the SAP financials system and approximately 400 that have gone live on SAP logistics which includes sales, distribution and procurement. A further 600 to 800 users will be connected to the logistics system in the coming months.

While the systems are still being implemented across the organisation, George Weston Foods is already benefiting from the new infrastructure, with financials providing the first glimpse of the benefits to come.

"Immediately we are seeing group benefits from an overall managerial perspective," said Mr Forgie. "Consolidated financial reporting is ensuring we can very quickly obtain an overview of how the various businesses are performing."

As logistics is rolled out to all sites the organisation will begin to experience greater control over its inventories as supply chain management processes are consolidated.

"The one corporate system across the businesses will naturally result in economies of scale for us and therefore cost savings for the organisation as a whole," said Mr Forgie.



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