



Oninit Case Study – Migrating and Modernising Informix for Target Furniture's Future

Client: Target Furniture

Key challenge: To migrate core business applications smoothly and efficiently onto a new platform and upgrade Informix with no disruption to day-to-day working practices.



On target with Informix

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.

Operating out of two factories with a combined operating area in excess of 9,000 square metres, this Northampton-based manufacturer produces most types of timber furniture for the hospitality sector, including the production of bespoke products, often without quantity restriction.

Using its own in-house design and manufacturing capabilities, coupled with a profound knowledge of sourcing in the wider European furniture market, Target Furniture is able to meet increased pressure on lead times whilst producing quality products which meet client demands.

For more than 15 years, the bespoke order processing and production control system for Target Furniture had been running on an older version of Informix – Informix Standard Engine – from a proprietary Siemens Nixdorf UNIX server. However, as the maintenance of this server was coming to the end of its life with no planned future support, the system urgently needed to be replaced and the applications migrated.

Chris Rimbault, IT Manager at Target Furniture commented: “The business recognised that it was of paramount importance to replace the unsupported server as soon as possible. The existing server was underpowered, obsolete and lacking the functionality the business required. We needed a modern, fully supported solution to manage our processing systems and enable them to perform their duties effectively.”

After careful assessment, the company opted to migrate the processing application onto a Linux server and at the same time upgrade the Informix solution.

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– Chris Rimbault, IT Manager, Target Furniture

Chris continued: “We needed to migrate our core business applications smoothly and efficiently with no disruption to day-to-day working practices onto a new server. However, implementing this new server required major work and modifications to the C programme that our bespoke order processing application was using. We initially chose an Informix reseller to support the migration process; however we continued to experience several technical programming issues and failures.”

Fit for the future

Despite the initial failures with its original provider, Target Furniture was determined not to move away from Informix because of its hardware efficiency and speed.

“Informix is an efficient database,” explained Chris. “Target Furniture has been running its processing applications successfully on Informix for over 15 years and it fulfils all our requirements on a relatively small amount of hardware.”

Target Furniture turned to Informix support specialist Oninit to take over the project.

Oninit was able to migrate the existing Informix application and installations to make use of all the latest functionality. It also offered Target Furniture both Informix and Linux support as well as introducing the company to HCI York Limited, which could provide C programming expertise to handle the many complex programme modifications created by the server upgrade.

Subsequently, Oninit helped Target Furniture successfully to upgrade its existing Informix standard engine to Informix Dynamic Server. Chris said: “With the assistance of Oninit and HCI York Limited, the upgrade process was fast and painless.”

Faster processing and decreased costs

Target Furniture is now running the latest version of Informix, Informix Dynamic Server, which enables the sales teams to access data much more quickly. Said Chris: “Maintenance costs are now much lower and combined with faster processing and improved performance, our sales staff can offer a real improved service to our customers.”

“Without Oninit, Target Furniture would still be running its processes on an obsolete server – Oninit helped us port the system effectively and efficiently - and we would not have met the HCI team which was key to our application migration success.”



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About Oninit

Oninit was founded in 1999 as a specialist Informix developer and consulting team, and since that time has grown into a leading Informix services company providing a range of Informix database and application development, support and training services to companies in the UK and across EMEA from its base in Cirencester, UK.

Informix is deeply embedded in the enterprise IT systems of many thousands of companies worldwide. Oninit provides the vital Informix technical support and development services which are required by these complex systems.

Oninit helps companies to develop new Informix applications as well as support, enhance, integrate and modernise applications running on older installations. It works with customers to upgrade and modernise these to take maximum advantage of the latest Informix technical enhancements and additions, ensuring a roadmap for their future IT or establishing an evolutionary path to more modern open or virtualised architectures.

More information can be found at www.oninitgroup.com

About Target Furniture

Target Furniture has a long established reputation for providing a comprehensive range of high-quality goods and services to the contract furniture market, whilst providing excellent value for money. A flexible and highly skilled manufacturing facility embraces the production of most types of timber furniture for the hospitality sector. In recognition of the importance of providing a complete service to the customer, this flexibility also extends to include the practical production of bespoke products, generally without quantity restriction.

Target Furniture was established in 1977. Based centrally in Northampton, it now operates out of two factories with a combined operating area in excess of 9,000 m². The vast majority of both production and administrative personnel can boast long service records, which reflects in the continuity of product quality, and a pride in achieving a high degree of customer satisfaction. Its own transport team and fleet of vehicles ensure a level of care and punctuality, which is essential in this area of service to the customer.

More information can be found at www.targetfurniture.co.uk



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Informix