NEWS/4YOU

AS/400 & S/3X MAGAZINE ___ AUSTRALASIA

AS/400e series... the net generation

The bottom-line value of business intelligence

Tools for the Year 2000 Challenge

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IBM Business Partner

Reader's Guide – Here is your easy guide to the technical level of articles in NEWS/4 YOU

NON-TECHNICAL 🟢   **MODERATE** 🟠   **TECHNICAL** 🔴

AS/400e series...the net generation

There is no doubt the networked era is upon us!

Most advertisements today include an email or website address in addition to their telephone and fax numbers. People shop, sample, barter, buy and exchange ideas electronically, on the Internet.

The single most dramatic move in recent months has been the growth of e-business. E-business enables you and your customers to conduct business electronically, using networks (public and private) as the medium. This electronic approach lets small businesses compete successfully with large enterprises in almost any industry – and build new one-to-one relationships with customers in new markets.

As our recent announcements show, IBM means business about e-business.

• We are embracing Web technology by expanding the AS/400 integrated environment to include today's hottest e-business technologies.

These include Java, Lotus Domino and more. By early next year, VisualAge Java and Native Virtual Machine for AS/400 also will be available.

• We continue to grow our application portfolio, with thousands of new e-business applications optimised for the Web today.

• We are extending simplicity to e-business and delivering new integrated security features for Web serving: data encryption, authentication and safe data transmission.

David Russell
Manager – AS/400 Division
Australia and New Zealand

• We are expanding customer care with enhanced online support through an intelligent website; and soon, remote diagnosis, distribution and installation of Temporary Fixes will be available.

• We are offering dramatic price and performance improvements. With the new AS/400e series, we have more than quadrupled the performance of our previous AS/400 series. That's the largest performance improvement in the history of the product line. With this announcement we are also introducing new simplified pricing to make it easier to do business with us.

Another area of focus for this issue of NEWS/4 YOU is Business Intelligence. Business Intelligence is providing businesses with decision making information from their data, coupled with the new performance gains from the new AS/400e Series enabling companies to tap into the economic benefits of the electronic marketplace, providing customers what they want, when they want it.

This philosophy is also carried through to the new AS/400 website now available at **www.as400.ibm.com.** The new site will enable visitors to create a personal profile which will provide customised information based on the visitor's country and specific areas of interest.

As we approach the new millennium one thing is clear: there are exciting e-business opportunities ahead for organisations that utilise key enabling technologies. The role of AS/400 is to make it safe, secure and straightforward to move ahead.

MODERATE ●

Maximum power, maximum growth: introducing the new AS/400e series

A world-class collection of ready-to-run e-business solutions makes AS/400e series an ideal business computing system.

The new AS/400e series:

Embraces Web technology

AS/400e series has expanded its integrated environment to embrace today's hottest Web technologies – such as Java, Lotus Domino, ActiveX, Netscape, network computers and Microsoft Windows NT Server, which will be enabled to work with the Integrated PC Server. In addition, thousands of new applications optimised for the Web are ready today.

Extends simplicity

AS/400e series integration is designed to reduce complexity and provide faster deployment of e-business applications. New industrial-strength security features allow you to conduct e-business with confidence. AS/400e offers secure Web serving, data encryption and authentication to ensure safe data transmission.

Expands customer care

A comprehensive suite of Web-enabled service and support offerings is delivered any time, any place, anywhere – that means 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Enabled by breakthrough performance

New 8-way and 12-way processors more than quadruple the performance of the previous AS/400 Advanced Series. That's the largest improvement in the history of the product line.

New e-servers and e-systems provide twice the processing capability with up to two times the maximum disk capacity and five times the maximum memory.

A new, enhanced AS/400e server (model 150), with double the memory capacity, offers small businesses and departmental users a new low-cost, high-performance e-business computing solution.

The newest version of the AS/400 operating system, OS/400 Version 4 Release 1, was designed to maximise the performance enhancements of the new AS/400e series, while providing a number of advantages for e-business.

V4R1 is fully integrated, including database-, network- and systems-administration functions, and comes preloaded on the e-series.

V4R1 is complemented by network-enabled technologies such as:

- IBM Firewall for AS/400 that prevents unwanted Internet traffic from entering a secure network
- IBM Internet Connection Secure Server (ICSS) for AS/400 that provides security for sending proprietary information over the Internet and corporate intranet
- Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) that protects data and transactions over public networks
- Net.Data (a Web Macro Processor) that makes it easy to create Web pages and access AS/400 data.

The result is a simple start-up, fast application serving, minimal disruption of day-to-day operations, and investment protection for current applications, data and user skills. It is available with a new e-business integrated price structure that includes: e-systems and e-servers maintenance, software voice support and software upgrades.

Model 600
For businesses focusing on departmental solutions.

Model S10
For e-business and collaborative computing applications.

The new e-systems

Four new AS/400e systems with greater function and improved performance. They are readily scalable, allowing small configurations to grow naturally into large configurations as workloads increase. The e-systems are designed for companies requiring interactive applications. Easy upgrade paths are available throughout the entire range.

Model 620

For businesses upgrading from Advanced Series. Excellent for departmental solutions; entry point for symmetric multiprocessing.

Model 640

For companies on a growth path, primarily using interactive applications.

Model 650

For customers requiring maximum growth potential; 12-way processor with best interactive processing and most powerful symmetric multiprocessing.

The new e-servers

Four new, high-performance, cost-effective AS/400e servers for e-business. They include 8- and 12-way processors with expanded main memory. The e-servers are designed to help your company make the most of its client/server and batch applications.

Model S20

For organisations expanding in size and adding e-business capabilities. Provides growth from the Model S10 and earlier AS/400 servers.

Model S30

For organisations on a sustained growth path in e-business. An upgrade from Model S20 and earlier servers.

Model S40

Top-of-the-line server. Most powerful, 12-way symmetric multiprocessing. Maximum growth and power for e-business and data warehousing applications.

New AS/400e custom servers

A simple way to implement – and optimise – e-business solutions. Now there is a fast, cost-effective way to implement AS/400 Business Partner applications with client/server architectures: new preloaded, preconfigured AS/400e packaged solutions.

Current custom server solutions are available through J.D. Edwards, SAP and SSA. Further Business Partner solutions will be available in the future. For details, contact your AS/400 Business Partner.

Tapping opportunities in e-business

MODERATE

Aligned business processes are essential.

Technology is only part of the answer in moving to electronic business – or "e-business." According to the Yankee Group's Chris Selland, Research Director, enterprise applications, "From a technology standpoint, the most critical issues are leveraging and extending the systems you already have in place. Beyond that, implementing and managing e-business in the corporate environment is primarily a business process and business management issue."

In theory, it sounds simple. On the selling side, a company's systems must match how its customers wish to buy. For procurement, systems should support streamlined buying processes. In reality, there are many issues to consider to ensure processes are optimised on both sides of the e-business street.

For example, the Internet is eliminating certain intermediaries and middlemen in the consumer supply chain, while also creating new ones – such as online information brokers to sell tickets for events and transaction brokers to sell insurance policies, mortgages, stocks and bonds. This change to the supply chain will have a dramatic impact on an organisation's business process.

"With good process planning, electronic business not only allows your people to be less involved with the nitty-gritty transactions, which can reduce costs dramatically," says Selland, "it also frees your people to focus more on building relationships. That's where the real value-add lies. Customer service standards are moving so quickly that companies need to stay on the leading edge, or they will risk losing out to their competitors in this critical area."
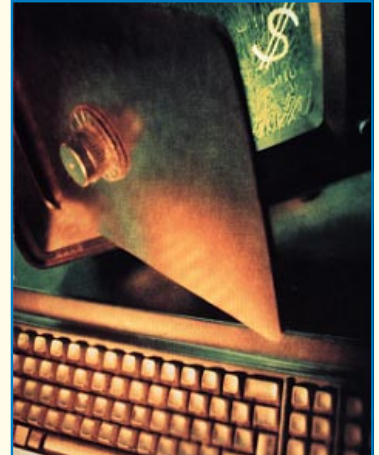
e-business

A secure, flexible and integrated approach to delivering differentiated business value, by combining the systems and process that run core operations, with the simplicity and reach made possible by Internet technology (e-business = Web + IT).

e-systems

Model	Processor Feature	CPW Rating	V4 Software Group
9406-600	2129	22.7	P05
	2134	32.5	P10
	2135	45.4	P10
	2136	73.1	P20
9406-620	2179	85.6	P20
	2180	113.8	P30
	2181	210	P30
	2182 (2-way)	464.3	P40
9406-640	2237	319	P40
	2238 (2-way)	583.3	P40
	2239 (4-way)	998.6	P40
9406-650	2240 (8-way)	1794	P40
	2241 (12-way)	2340	P40

e-servers

Model	Processor Feature	CPW Rating interactive/server	V4 Software Group
9406-S10	2118	16.2 / 45.4	P05
	2119	24.3 / 73.1	P05
9406-S20	2161	29.3 / 113.8	P05
	2163	35.8 / 210	P10
	2165 (2-way)	48.6 / 464	P10
	2166 (4-way)	58.5 / 759	P20
9406-S30	2257	48.6 / 319	P20
	2258 (2-way)	64.9 / 583.3	P20
	2259 (4-way)	64.9 / 998.6	P20
	2260 (8-way)	64.9 / 1794	P30
9406-S40	2261 (12-way)	64.9 / 2340	P40

New website delivers just the information you want

In today's networked world, information overload is a reality. Often selection is more the issue, not access. But not at IBM's AS/400 website located at *www.as400.ibm.com.* Here, what visitors see can be neatly tailored to their unique information needs – using AS/400 Division's 'intelligent' Web system. This system dynamically creates and serves customised pages for each site visitor.

For example, a Business Manager looking for manufacturing solutions will see a different site from an MIS Director interested in software development. The business manager will be able to join the AS/400 Business Centre and receive information on consultant reports, press reprints and customer case studies.

The MIS Director may join the AS/400 Technology Centre and receive information technology (IT) tips and tools, take part in technical forums, and check out the latest product demonstrations. The site can customise information based on a visitor's country and specific areas of interest.

Add chat rooms, 'cyber events' and other elements into the mix, and the AS/400 website gives visitors a powerful information resource – designed to deliver exactly what they want, when they want it.

For further information on the new AS/400e series contact your AS/400 Business Partner or call IBM Direct on 132 426 in Australia or 0800 426 132 in New Zealand and ask for 'AS/400 NEWS/INFO'.

Installation and configuration services available for e-business:
- SmoothStart for Client Access/400
- SmoothStart for Internet Connection for AS/400 – FTP, Web, email or Secure Server
- SmoothStart for Firewall
- Planning Service for Network Station Healthcheck
- SmoothStart Service for Network Station Manager or Bootmanager
- SmoothStart for Lotus Notes, Server to Server, Remote Access or Domino

Services to increase availability of systems involved in e-business:
- Hardware Maintenance Services
- Software Support Services
- AS/400 Software Maintenance
- Performance Management/400

Installation, configuration and migration services for new AS/400s:
- SmoothStart for AS/400
- SmoothStart for AS/400 Operating System – Year 2000 Enabled
- AS/400 System Transition
- (Data) Migration Services for AS/400

Announcement Letter	Description
28830*	IBM San Francisco Frameworks
AG97-0269	e-systems
AG97-0270	e-servers
28431*	AS/400e server model 150 V4R1 Basepak
AG97-0272	AS/400e server model 150 Enhanced
AA97-3065	AS/400 Overview Announcement for V4R1
AP97-1279	AS/400 V4R1 Software Terms and Ordering Information
AA97-3067	AS/400 V3R7 Software Terms update
AA97-3066	AS/400 V3R2 Software Terms update
AG97-0271	e-server ISV Solutions
AP97-1271	AS/400 Client Access Family Windows (V4R1)
AP97-1272	AS/400 Client Access Family Windows (V3R7)
AP97-1273	AS/400 Client Access Family Windows (V3R2)
AP97-1270	IBM OS/400 V4R1 Enhanced
AP97-1275	AS/400 Security Products
AP97-1277	AS/400 V4R1 Licensed Programs
AP97-1276	IBM Wireless Connection for AS/400
AP97-1274	Withdrawal AS/400 Software
AA97-3068	New products for AS/400 Client Series
AP97-1280	Neural Network Utilities Clients Withdrawal
AP97-1282	Preview: Net.Commerce for AS/400
AP97-1281	AS/400 Operations Productivity Pack

For more details search on the IBMlink web site at www.ibmlink.ibm.com

* Use as reference numbers as Announcement Letter details were not available at time of publication.

NON-TECHNICAL

AS/400 ANNOUNCEMENTS

...for organisations and individuals who are users of IBM AS/400 systems.

COMMON Australasia
The IBM Midrange User Group

WHO ARE WE?

"COMMON Australasia is an incorporated non-profit association whose members are organisations and individuals who are users of IBM AS/400 systems. Our organisation is managed and funded by the members and has a close relationship with IBM. We are committed to assisting members achieve their corporate and personal goals and we welcome all AS/400 users to join in our activities and obtain the benefits that are available to them."

Len Bidstrup
President of COMMON Australasia

WHAT DO WE DO?

COMMON′s objective is to benefit its members in the use of their information technology with activities that include an annual national conference and regional group meetings. These activities provide:

• Management and Technical Education
• Information Exchange
• Communication with IBM
• Personal Development

OUR HISTORY

IBM user groups were first formed during the 60s in New South Wales and Victoria. In 1989, COMMON Australasia was formed with the merging of these two groups – IBM Computer Users Association in New South Wales and Inform Incorporated in Victoria. These subsequently changed their names to COMMON New South Wales and COMMON Victoria. There are also local Chapters operating in Queensland and South Australia with plans for additional Chapters in Western Australia and New Zealand.

AFFILIATIONS

COMMON Australasia, together with COMMON USA and COMMON Europe, is a foundation member of COMMON International. The IBM midrange user group of Japan is now also a member of COMMON International. This international association provides an extensive source of shared information and high calibre speakers at conferences. It also benefits the user community with the combined relationship in dealing with IBM on matters of a worldwide nature.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Participation in COMMON′s activities provides many benefits to members. These include:

PEER NETWORKING
• Sharing experiences and knowledge
• Extending industry contacts
• Access to expert users
• Avoiding "re-discovery" of solutions

LINKS TO IBM
• A/NZ technical specialists
• Managers and executives
• Overseas development staff

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
• Management and technical education
• Improvement of interpersonal skills
• Interaction with other organisations

REGIONAL GROUP MEETINGS are held in major city locations and provide general and special interest group presentations throughout the year on management and technical topics. Speakers are qualified people from member organisations, IBM and other industry organisations. The meetings also provide a forum for extending peer networks.

THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual COMMON IBM midrange conference consists of over 120 presentations. This is the most extensive management and technical education event for IBM midrange users in Australasia. Speakers include COMMON members, industry figures and IBM staff from Australasia and overseas.

The conference also provides another excellent forum to establish and extend peer contacts from a wide range of local, national and overseas organisations.

Speaker: Peter Kazacos, KAZ Computer Services, Sydney

Speaker: Dave Botherway, Coles-Myer, Melbourne

TRADE EXPO

The Trade Expo is held in conjunction with the annual conference. Exhibitors show a wide range of products and services applicable to users of IBM midrange systems. Exhibitors include IBM, Business Partners and other vendors.

WEBSITE

For more information on COMMON Australasia, please visit our website at www.common.org.au

Tel: 61 2 9975 6133
Fax: 61 2 9975 6356
Email: common@bigpond.com

COMMON
AUSTRALASIA
THE IBM MIDRANGE USER GROUP

Here's what the consultants are saying

"AS/400 to PC-LAN Connectivity: From IBM or Microsoft?"

Emerging Technologies Group

AS/400 can be connected to PCs through either a direct attach method such as IBM's Client Access/400 software, or through a gateway such as Microsoft's SNA Server software. ETG monitored tests of these two connectivity approaches and found there is no reason to buy SNA Server to improve PC access to AS/400s. In addition, when cost-of-ownership factors relevant to the AS/400 user are taken into account, SNA Server's cost of ownership increases over the direct attach method.

"IBM DB2 for AS/400"

Emerging Technologies Group

This consultant report on DB2 for AS/400 combines both functional feature comparisons and cost-to-use for users/servers. ETG has developed this extensive report and surveyed users to develop their cost-to-use comparisons of integrated vs. home grown/point solutions. ETG believes that DB2/400 and AS/400 offers a lower risk and lower priced solution than most competitive databases.

NON-TECHNICAL

"The Foundation of Wisdom: A Study of the Financial Impact of Data Warehousing"

IDC
International Data Corporation

This IDC white paper outlines quantitative and qualitative benefits achieved by 62 companies in North America and Europe who have implemented successful data warehouse solutions which have been in production for at least six months.

The report concludes that the average return on investment (ROI) achieved by the companies studied was 401 per cent, with the average for data mart solutions being 532 per cent, and for full enterprise wide solutions being 332 per cent. It also discusses the reasons why organisations choose to implement data warehouse solutions and finishes with case studies of three IBM customers with successful data warehouse solutions.

"Comparing NT Server and AS/400 in the Enterprise"
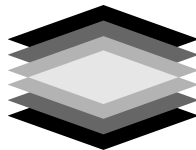
D.H. Brown Associates, Inc.

This report provides a detailed comparison of eight functional areas which are of most concern to IS managers, including system architecture, application programming, systems management, operating facilities, networking, performance/scalability, support and costs.

The report concludes "traditional IS users, with their strong emphasis on transaction processing and scheduled batch operations, will find that Windows NT Server falls short of the AS/400 in meeting many of their demands."

"Lotus Notes for AS/400: The Merger Bears Fruit"

Whittman-Hart

This white paper presents an objective analysis of the Lotus Notes implementation on AS/400. It highlights the current implementation and discusses future plans. The paper discusses in detail the significant advantages AS/400 has with its integrated database and directory capabilities. It reviews why and how Lotus Notes and the AS/400 work together highlighting some practical uses.

If you would like a FREE copy of any of these independent consultant reports call IBM Direct on 132 426 in Australia or 0800 426 132 in New Zealand and ask for 'AS/400 NEWS/INFO.'

The bottom-line value of Business Intelligence

MODERATE

Craig Tamlin
AS/400 Business Intelligence
Segment Manager
IBM Australia and New Zealand

There are many stories about the business turnaround available with Business Intelligence technology – data warehousing and data mining. If you decide to invest in implementing your own solution, before you get the final go ahead, someone is always bound to ask, "What does this mean for our business?".

A data warehouse can be used to manage information on all parts of the business – from sales to personnel to manufacturing. Most often, however, rapid tangible business benefits come from a better understanding of information about your customers. This should be your primary focus with a solution of this type.

If the needs of your customers can be met or exceeded by the goods and services you provide, this can help you to obtain a loyalty which ultimately means more sales. A prominent strategy being employed by many organisations today is to primarily focus on ways to improve customer retention rather than new customer acquisition. A business intelligence solution utilises technology to achieve this result.

Every organisation should determine the cost of obtaining a new customer. Coopers and Lybrand conducted a study which showed that on average it costs five times as much to obtain a new customer as it does to retain an existing one. A better view of your existing customer set can help

you retain those customers who are important, and cost so much to get in the first place.

Setting objectives

To determine the business value of a business intelligence solution (either data warehousing or data mining), you should start by setting an objective and then try to determine what business value will result by achieving this objective. For this process you should not ask someone in IT for the objectives and payback. Typically, the objective you set will (if you do it right) have an impact on someone who is customer facing. As such, the marketing or sales manager should be an integral part of the solution design and justification.

The types of benefits could include:
- Timely access to information to make the right decisions
- Faster creation of new reports
- Enabling new marketing strategies that were not previously possible
- Sales people 'empowered' by having information at their fingertips
- Help to understand customer groups and design the organisation to fit your customer retention model

We are traditionally cost focused

The traditional approach employed by IT management is to look at the cost side of the following equation:

Profit = Revenue – Cost

In doing this you might look at improving the productivity of IT and the end users. Often, listing improved efficiency of the IT department is risky, as it begs the awkward question: who is responsible for the current non-productive situation!
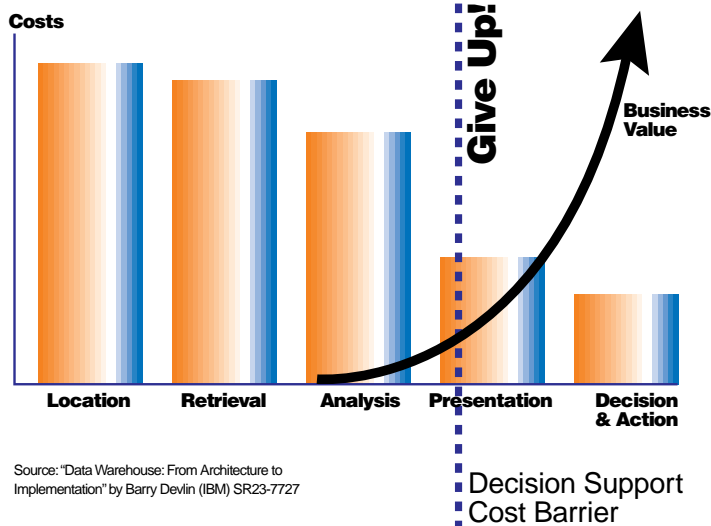
The chart on the next page shows the relative costs of the various phases of decision support. Overlaid with this is a line showing where business value is obtained.

The graph shows that location and retrieval of the information can be very time consuming and have no business value. So much time can be spent at this stage, the decision support cost barrier is reached, and a decision is made before the true work (decision and action) is done because you run out of time!

With a data warehouse, the costs of the first four phases are lowered significantly to the point that decision support is affordable and business value can be achieved much earlier in the cycle.

IBM

Traditional Decision Support

Costs

Bar chart with categories: Location, Retrieval, Analysis, Presentation, Decision & Action

Give Up!

Business Value

Decision Support Cost Barrier

Source: "Data Warehouse: From Architecture to Implementation" by Barry Devlin (IBM) SR23-7727

The right approach

Despite there being some benefit, productivity improvements for IT and users alone will not justify a solution, and they are not where the key business benefits are. Business management and IT must look beyond this narrow (and traditional) approach.

To determine business value requires some 'crystal balling' into how the users will get value from the data transformed into information. This should be related to finding ways of increasing the revenue component in the Profit formula discussed earlier. It is important that an objective is set to enable the measurement of the business value (revenue increase) when achieving this objective.

A study was conducted by the International Data Corporation (IDC) sampling 62 sites in North America and Europe to determine the financial impact companies have realised by implementing a data warehouse. While the companies surveyed were skewed

to the larger end (average spend of $US2.2m), there were also a fair number of smaller sites (including AS/400 sites) which demonstrated a very healthy return on investment. The average they found was 401 per cent Return on Investment (ROI) over a three-year period.

The results of the survey showed that the highest returns on investment were from 'discrete' implementations. This is the term used by IDC to refer to

departmental or data mart implementations. These achieved a ROI of 532 per cent on average.

"The real value of the warehouse is uncovered when you give it to someone who can find the important details in the data, and tell you something that will make a difference," explains Sharon Sibigtroth, VP Equitable Assurance.

The key message from this quote is to find the people in the organisation who are able to make a difference, then try to understand the type of informational needs they have. If these people have their needs satisfied by a solution, you are creating a leadership environment that will be unparalleled by any other IT development project.

In summary

Real business value is determined by looking at better ways for working with customers. Using traditional methods for justification like improved productivity of IT and end users will only get you part of the way there. You should start with a business objective and measure the business value of achieving it.

Spend time to look for examples of other achievements such as the IDC study and in magazines and the press. Finally, fulfil the needs of the power user. At the end of the day, they are the people who will be able to help make a difference to the business.

> **"The real value of the warehouse is uncovered when you give it to someone who can find the important details in the data, and tell you something that will make a difference."**

To gain a copy of the referenced report, "Foundations of Wisdom: The Financial Impact of Data Warehousing" by IDC Corp (1996), or for further information contact your AS/400 Business Partner or call IBM Direct on 132 426 in Australia or 0800 426 132 in New Zealand and ask for 'AS/400 NEWS/INFO.'

Toys 'R' Us keep ahead of the game with data warehousing

NON-TECHNICAL

Toys 'R' Us Australia are keeping a step ahead in the seriously competitive industry of fun with a new Data Warehousing solution.

From tennis balls to Barbie dolls, the new solution is designed to capitalise on the wealth of information stored on their AS/400 server to track buying trends, and put the right product on the right shelves at the right time.

With 1000 stores worldwide, Toys 'R' Us are the world's largest chain of toy stores. MIS General Manager in Australia and Asia, Mike Nagle says, "Understanding our customers and identifying the emerging trends in the marketplace is vital to staying ahead of our competitors."

Using ShowCase STRATEGY, a product available locally from Beacon IT, running on IBM AS/400, Toys 'R' Us are able to put vital information in the hands of the staff who need it the most – those who make the

decisions about what stock should go where, and when.

ShowCase STRATEGY is a complete enterprise wide solution for AS/400 data warehousing. Designed specifically for the AS/400, ShowCase STRATEGY comprises data transformation to DB2/400 relational and Essbase/400 multidimensional data warehouses and data marts, warehouse administration and powerful end-user query and analysis capabilities.

ShowCase STRATEGY helps companies, such as Toys 'R' Us, create more business opportunities and increase productivity without compromising the security, performance and ease of use.

Mr Nagle explains, "Approximately 300,000 square feet of stock, or 14,000 products, are located at a central distribution centre and shipped to a store on demand. The new solution allows us to keep a tight control over inventory, ensuring we have the products our customers want, when they want them."

The data warehouse is updated daily, drawing information from the sales and inventory databases in each of the stores. All stock is tracked at the barcode level by the IBM 4680/4690 point of sale equipment, to ensure that there are no dramatic variations between the central records and the stock actually on the shelves.

Toys 'R' Us have an AS/400 installed in each of their 22 stores around Australia, and are currently upgrading their head office server to an AS/400 with 64-bit RISC technology.

"The main benefit we are expecting with the

upgrade to 64-bit RISC technology is the high-speed response time," Mr Nagle said. "Faster data response ultimately means a faster response to customer demand. The AS/400 solution, running across a 48k IGN line, allows us to exchange vast amounts of information between sites, at a speed that keeps pace with the market."

Mr Nagle said the integrated nature of the AS/400 platform had allowed Toys 'R' Us to quickly implement their data warehousing solution using existing in-house skills. "It has been less than six months from the time we conceptualised the solution, through to choosing the tool and getting the servers up and running. Features like the single database, DB2/400 at the core of AS/400 and its inbuilt simplicity have allowed us to deploy the solution right on schedule."

Toys 'R' Us have used IBM AS/400 technology since first opening in Australia in 1993. The company uses AS/400 technology around the world.

ShowCase STRATEGY now available through Beacon IT

ShowCase STRATEGY is the first complete enterprise-wide data warehousing solution for AS/400.

ShowCase STRATEGY enables customers to extract, transform and distribute data to DB2/400 relational and Essbase/400 multidimensional databases for rapid end-user analysis to support business decision making.

ShowCase STRATEGY consists of six products, available separately or as an integrated solution:
• Server provides warehouse administration functions allowing IT to deploy end-user data access without compromising security, performance and ease of use.
• Query empowers end-users to bring AS/400 data directly to their PC desktop applications, including Excel and Lotus 1-2-3.
• Report Writer enables end-users to access AS/400 data and build professional, printable reports.

• Distributor allows IT to easily create and maintain data warehouses, including relational and multidimensional data marts.
• Essbase/400 provides a powerful multidimensional database designed for fast data access and analysis.
• Analyzer allows end-users and executives to explore multi-dimensional or relational databases, providing rapid analysis of information found anywhere in the data warehouse.

ShowCase STRATEGY, with comprehensive consulting and support services, is available in Australasia from Beacon IT.

For further information on ShowCase STRATEGY call Beacon IT on 61 2 9413 3522.

Apparel manufacturer upgrades to BPCS V6 with AS/40O to speed production of reports

NON-TECHNICAL

Gazal continues its commitment to SSA's BPCS

Gazal Corporation, a Sydney-based apparel manufacturer and wholesaler, is upgrading to SSA's Version 6 of BPCS Client/Server system software on AS/400 with 64-bit RISC technology.

Gazal has been running SSA's BPCS Version 4.03 for the past three years. Now, the company is moving to BPCS Version 6 and embarking on the implementation of the CEA Financials and advanced sales performance modules as the first project.

"We chose Version 6 because it provided the next step in our BPCS implementation," said David Coghlan, Financial Controller for Gazal Corporation. "CEA will give us the flexibility to consolidate our financial systems across the company."

Prior to BPCS, Gazal had a number of different unintegrated systems in place. Computer systems for stock could not access the general ledger. The production planning system was manual, as was the bill of materials, costings and work orders.

Customisation for garment tracking

The BPCS implementation meets garment-industry requirements of tracking stock by size, fit and colour.

There is no limit to how customers organise financial information, nor is there any limit to the number of

Sample merchandise from Gazal

budgets or other information they may want to capture and analyse.

For example, "one style of garment may have as many as 48 sizes and fits," said David Coghlan. "This means we must be able to track the stock by colour, by size and by fit as in the case of women's lingerie and men's shirts.

"By moving to Version 6 and taking advantage of CEA, we can quickly generate financial reports reflecting the specific needs of a garment company while consolidating all reports accurately across the organisation."

Report generation time reduced by one day

Currently, Gazal's management reporting required the company to run

reports in BPCS across all the departments. These reports are then processed using a database language and downloaded into Lotus spreadsheets. Reporting requires accounting staff to check the data and continue refining it over several days.

"Version 6 will save us a lot of uploading and downloading of information because of integration with the Microsoft desktop," said Jim Lynch, MIS Manager for Gazal Corporation. "We can reduce the time required to produce management reports by at least one day."

About Gazal's installation

According to Gazal, the CEA module will be operational within two months. The advanced sales performance module, to be used for sales analysis, will be operational by the end of September.

In addition, Gazal is considering incorporating SSA's BPCS accounts-payable module, which it intends to have operational by July, 1998. As the year 2000 approaches, Gazal may speed implementation of further Version 6 modules, to ensure there is no disruption to the business.

Gazal to enhance customer satisfaction

"In the apparel industry, having strong application software such as BPCS gives us a distinct advantage

over competitors," said David Coghlan. "It means we are more aware of our current situation at any time in terms of inventory, requirements, and financials and are able to respond to our customers faster.

"With BPCS, we have a more interactive and better overall view of the business. This means cost savings in all areas of our business processes."

For further information on BPCS visit www.ssax.com or contact SSA on 61 2 9855 7100 in Australia or 64 9358 0555 in New Zealand.

About Gazal Corporation

Gazal Corporation is a manufacturer and wholesaler of apparel to a number of different markets including: David Jones and Myer department stores, discount stores such as Big W and K-Mart and specialty stores such as Bras-n-Things and General Pants.

Gazal manufactures clothing brands under licence such as Mambo, Yves Saint Laurent lingerie and Van Heusen shirts. It also manufactures its own brands, which include Lovable lingerie and sleepwear.

The company has annual sales revenue of $111.5 million and employs approximately 370 people in Australia.

New SSA clients commit to BPCS Version 6.0 on AS/400

In the past three months, SSA Pacific has won significant new business contracts throughout Australia and New Zealand with clients committing to BPCS Version 6.0 on AS/400. These include HJ Heinz Aust Co Ltd, Reyrolle NZ, Lockwood and Pacific Dunlop Cables.

SSA Pacific revenues for its second fiscal 1997 quarter increased 202 per cent over revenue for the same period last year. Software licence revenues rose 166 per cent for the second quarter over the same period last year.

Graeme Cooksley, Managing Director of SSA Pacific said, "We have demonstrated the growing acceptance of BPCS Version 6.0 on AS/400 in this region which has resulted in excellent growth.

"We are on an aggressive growth path with these new clients and are hiring new people to complement this growth. We are in a solid position to bring our clients the competitive advantage that results from

"We have demonstrated the growing acceptance of BPCS Version 6.0 on AS/400," Graeme Cooksley, Managing Director of SSA Pacific.

"We are in a solid position to bring our clients the competitive advantage that results from implementing BPCS Client/Server Version 6.0."

implementing BPCS Client/Server Version 6.0."

About BPCS Client/Server Version 6.0

BPCS Client/Server Version 6.0 is based on distributed object computing architecture (DOCA), designed to let clients take advantage of the benefits provided by object-oriented technology.

The benefits of object orientation include the ability to make configuration changes to modules and meet sudden changes in manufacturing timetables or processes. Version 6.0 supports Configurable Order Management, Outbound Logistics Management, DOCA and century dating.

"The marketplace is recognising the strength of our DOCA initiative, which is a competitive advantage for us and a benefit to clients requiring implementation of agile manufacturing and distribution systems," commented Graeme Cooksley.

Integrating suppliers and customers in the supply chain

MODERATE

The realities of doing business in today's increasingly deregulated global marketplace have led Australasian manufacturers and distributors to reassess all aspects of their operations to stay competitive. Increasingly, the supply chain is seen as one of the key factors for success.

IBM Business Partner BCM Systems appreciates the importance of an integrated supply chain and its impact on bottom lines. As the distributor of MOVEX, a leading client/server business application solution, many of its clients are benefiting from extensive research into the dynamics of the supply chain reflected in the product.

BCM Systems recently hosted a presentation by Professor Stig-Arne Mattsson, Director of Strategic Applications Development, visiting Australia from Intentia headquarters in Sweden (the developer of MOVEX). The presentation was titled "Integrating Suppliers and Customers in the Supply Chain".

Following are some excerpts from the presentation which discussed the many current trends facing manufacturers and distributors in Australasia.

"Concepts such as Business Process Re-engineering, Customer/Supplier Linking and Quick Response have been applied by many organisations worldwide in an effort

Professor Stig-Arne Mattsson, Director of Strategic Application Development, Intentia (developers of MOVEX), visiting Australia at the invitation of BCM Systems.

to improve business effectiveness," Professor Mattsson said. "In all instances IT has brought about solutions to facilitate these innovations."

Current trends – supply chain management

"Most organisations in this sector are experiencing longer supply chains. Indeed, many organisations in the manufacturing and distribution area have seen a marked increase in the number of independent companies involved in the material flow from raw material to the end user.

"As the supply chain is extended, the distance between manufacturer and end user increases, both geographically and from an operational point of view. In parallel, there is a strong trend toward more customer orientated products and production plus close relationships between

suppliers and customers. These factors in combination extend lead times making it more difficult for companies to stay competitive.

"The increasing transaction costs between suppliers and customers is a major concern to many organisations who are experiencing on-going decentralisation of their operations, extension of the supply chain and more frequent exchange of information.

"The number of transactions per period has increased as a consequence of a more Just-in-Time orientated approach to production and distribution. Although a customer may reduce an order quantity for a particular item from 100 to 10, the number of transactions between the two companies will, in effect, increase by 10 fold.

Implications for management

"These trends raise a number of concerns for companies. In response, several new approaches have been developed and applied. Most are based on improving cross-company processes and applying a more exhaustive integration between suppliers and customers and the application of IT.

"For example, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) and computerised decision making as well as the introduction of customer/supplier linking by forward or backward integration.

"EDI is being used with great success by many organisations to solve important supply chain issues.

For example, the lead time from sending to receiving information can be decreased and the amount of manual administrative work reduced thereby supporting the reduction of transaction costs.

"By combining EDI with more computerised transaction processing and decision making, the administrative work involved in each transaction can be reduced even further.

"A lot of administrative work must be carried out in the interface between suppliers and customers, for instance, ordering, order confirmation, expediting, invoicing and inventory control. A typical relationship between customers and suppliers might start with the need to replenish the customer stock. This requirement is then processed by an inventory control clerk, followed by a purchaser at the customer site.

"The process continues with a salesperson, an order entry clerk, an inventory control clerk and finally with a manufacturing manager at the supplier site before manufacturing can start. Such long activity chains cause cost consuming administrative work and greatly inflate lead times.

"A way to develop more efficient customer/supplier relationships is to re-engineer the business processes, eliminating some of the activities involved. One possible re-engineering approach has the supplier become responsible for his customer's stock, known as forward integration or Vendor Managed Inventories. Through access to the customer's inventory and demand data, the supplier can control and replenish stock without any intermediate activities from purchasing and order entry personnel.

The MOVEX Business Process Model

Every industrial enterprise has a number of business processes, some of which are core processes, comprising direct value-adding activities. These processes represent the essence of the business and are of vital importance in creating profitable output.
In all of these, IT (Information Technology) is an important facilitator. In the MOVEX business process model seven such core processes have been identified: Product Development; Sales; Order Fulfilment; Procurement; Manufacturing & Service; Distribution; and After Sales.

"The other approach is backward integration which makes personnel at the customer site enter customer orders online directly into the supplier's manufacturing system without involving supplier personnel. Some restrictions on what the customer can be allowed to do might be necessary, for instance concerning rescheduling, entering orders above capacity levels or entering orders when available-to-promise for the ordered item less than zero. Through inquiries into the supplier's system, customers can check and monitor the status of their orders, therefore no order confirmation is required," Professor Mattsson said.

The MOVEX solution for supply chain management

According to BCM's MOVEX Product Manager, Colin Strang, "Professor Mattsson's visit comes at a time when Australasian manufacturers

and distributors are under considerable pressure from overseas competition and tariff cuts. Now more than ever this industry must properly manage its supply chain well to be successful.

"Sophisticated integrated software applications such as MOVEX are becoming well recognised to help solve these problems.

"Intentia designed MOVEX based on the fact that every industrial enterprise has a number of business processes, some of which are core processes, that are direct value-adding activities. These business processes represent the essence of business and are of vital importance in creating profitable output.

"To prosper, companies must start thinking in terms of business process change and continuous improvement of all the different processes that are the connection between a company's suppliers and their customers make up the value-add flow to their business.

"These core and support processes jointly represent the MOVEX Business Process Model and constitute the framework on which the MOVEX Business Process Approach is built.

"Professor Mattsson's presentation demonstrates Intentia's comprehensive understanding of the issues currently affecting all manufacturers and distributors and is reflected in the company's international success," Mr Strang concluded.

For more information on Movex visit www.intentia.com or call BCM Systems on 61 2 9957 3755.

NON-TECHNICAL

LANSA helps reduce NZ earthquake claim risk!

With a large number of fault lines running under the surface of New Zealand, the risk of a major earthquake is very real. To prepare itself for that day, the New Zealand Earthquake Commission (EQC) and IBM's Business Partner CSI selected LANSA to speed up processing of claims in the event of a disaster.

EQC now has a fail-safe system that is capable of processing up to 200,000 claims in 14 days. The system is now managed by Centurion, a wholly owned subsidiary of IBM Global Services.

Centurion guarantees response and availability of the system 24 hours a day. "The robustness of AS/400 and LANSA contribute to this guarantee," says Robyne Lee, Project Manager from Centurion.

Centurion has installed AS/400 servers and local area networks in both Wellington and Auckland to provide disaster recovery. The Claims Information Management system links with Valuation New Zealand's (VNZ) property database for residential property records and Geographic Information System (GIS) from Eagle Technology that links the geographic co-ordinates with the property records so EQC can view its claims in map format.

"In the event of an earthquake, EQC only has to concentrate on using the system to quickly process claims made," says EQC General Manager David Middleton.

"No off-the-shelf package would work for us. Unlike a normal insurance company, we do not have a database of clients, so we had to map every house in the country," explains Lance Dixon, EQC's Insurance Manager.

EQC management signing outsourcing agreement

"The system's main task is to allocate resources after a disaster. If the 1931 Hawkes Bay earthquake happened today, we would have about 80,000 claims. The new system can work out just how many claims, where from and if they are likely to be major or minor. We can estimate costs, allocate teams and decide their makeup; for example, how many engineers are needed."

"Using LANSA reduced the project risk," explains Robyne Lee. "Initially I felt the project would be a high risk, since only one person in the team had used LANSA. However, LANSA was easy to learn and staff were highly productive in a short time. The project came in on time and within budget."

Early in 1997 IBM NZ bought Computer Systems Implementation (CSI) and divested the AS/400 re-marketing arm which retains the CSI name. The services operation, now called Centurion, provides facilities management for the EQC and VNZ systems.

EQC is now considering using the Internet to allow data entry from remote areas during a disaster. 'LANSA for the Web' allows existing LANSA applications to be run on an AS/400 Web server without changing a line of code.

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Neller brings integrated HR/Payroll to BMI on AS/400

When Bunge Meat Industries (BMI) found their existing business system was not meeting their Payroll/HR requirements, implementing Neller Software's *Preceda* **PEOPLE** on a dedicated AS/400 proved to be the ideal solution.

BMI is the largest producer of pig meat in Australia. They are part of the Bunge Australia Group, which also includes Don Smallgoods and Sunicrust Bakeries, and are part of the worldwide Bunge Group.

According to Jim O'Toole, MIS Manager of Bunge Australia, "The previous Unix-based payroll system we were using was no longer supporting our requirements. In particular, it was unable to support the number of users on our network. We were also running a separate in-house HR system, which involved excessive manual entry, inefficient repetition of data and inconvenient paper reporting."

By installing a fully integrated Payroll/HR system on a dedicated AS/400, were able to address these problems and increase the efficiency of both departments.

"Although the rest of BMI's business systems are Unix or PC based, we found it easy to integrate the AS/400 with the rest of the network. The installation of the AS/400 and *Preceda* **PEOPLE** was a surprisingly quick and easy process."

The issue of Year 2000 readiness was also important, and one of the reasons BMI decided to install the AS/400. "Like most businesses, we cannot afford the risk of late compliance and do not have the resources to wait until the last minute. Having both hardware and software that are Year 2000 Ready means we are in the enviable position of being prepared, having all Year 2000 payroll issues resolved here and now.

"The installation of AS/400 has enabled us to take advantage of the benefits arising from an integrated HR/Payroll system and, in particular, the functionality offered by *Preceda*."

BMI will be using the system to streamline their processes and overcome the inefficiencies of their previous system. "*Preceda* will assist us in developing efficient HR processes, support strategic decision making and leverage HR information throughout the organisation."

The integration of Payroll and HR also means that duplication of data is eliminated, providing access of consistent information by each department. For instance, when a new employee is entered by the payroll department the HR department records are seamlessly updated.

According to O'Toole, "users have been impressed with the system's flexibility and *Preceda's* Windows-based reporting tools. This will allow them to run their own reports, rather than being reliant upon the IT department. This will facilitate greater efficiency and enable us to prepare reports for management at short notice."

Most importantly, though, the move to *Preceda* **PEOPLE** on the AS/400 will have a positive impact on the bottom line at BMI. "We have found the AS/400 to be the ideal platform for Payroll/HR irrespective of hardware used for other systems within BMI.

"We now have the perfect combination that arises from the ease of use and flexibility of the PC, enhanced with the limitless storage capacity, data integrity and enormous processing capability of the AS/400."

Other companies in the Bunge Australia Group are also looking to move to *Preceda* during the year.

For further information contact Neller Software on 61 8 8364 1800 or visit the Neller Software home page at www.neller.com.au.

Neller Software, established in 1976, is a privately owned, wholly Australian company. It is a prominent developer of AS/400 software, with its *Preceda* suite addressing the Human Resource, Payroll, Time Management and Fixed Asset needs of many diverse organisations.

BMI has now joined over 400 clients, including many of Australia's largest companies, using *Preceda* software running on AS/400. Other recent implementations include Laminex Industries, Collins Foods, Email Building Products and Major Appliances Group and Van Leer Australia.

NON-TECHNICAL

Building society increases deposits and services using AS/400 and SSG's Sovereign

NON-TECHNICAL

"With Sovereign and AS/400, we can now offer many of the products and the kind of responsiveness usually associated with the major banks."

Southern Cross Building Society distinguishes itself from New Zealand's banks by its service. So when the financial intermediary decided to implement new information systems, it searched for a secure and integrated solution with a client focus.

"We needed to move into the 20th century," said Southern Cross accountant Mark Kerly. "Our old EDS system was very robust, but it used 25-year-old technology that did not allow us to adequately respond to the market and to our customers' needs."

To fulfil its goal of delivering more products and better customer service while cutting overall costs, the Auckland-based building society chose Sovereign, a banking and

finance industry software package operating on AS/400 with 64-bit RISC technology.

Built around an advanced Client Information System (CIS), Sovereign has enabled Southern Cross to manage a wide range of term, call and savings products as well as personal lending, mortgages and traditional shares.

The database network system, which uses the AS/400 as the server on the LANs and WAN, includes front-end processing by 30 branch tellers. The network connects a total of 64 PC users in the Auckland head office and seven North Island branches.

After 18 months with the new system, Southern Cross has realised significant improvements in its deposit and lending products, services and bottom line.

"With Sovereign and AS/400, we can now offer many of the products and the kind of responsiveness usually associated with the major banks," Kerly says. "We have not only reduced costs but also increased the amount of customer deposits by about 15 per cent."

The migration decision

Every finance industry system needs to handle accounts accurately. That means strong audit controls, security, access to account information and interest construction, and a drive to automate office workflow.

IBM Business Partner, Systems Support Group (SSG), the developers of Sovereign, offered Southern Cross a cost-effective solution on the AS/400, the most widely used platform worldwide for banking and finance applications.

Southern Cross Facilities Manager Colin Barrett said the 74-year-old building society had strongly considered outsourcing its data processing, but decided that Sovereign's robust, in-house solution delivered the best combination of control and flexibility.

"The Sovereign package and the AS/400 platform provide the security and safeguards of the EDS system with the openness to grow and respond to the market well into the 21st century," Barrett says. "And the fully integrated business tools are both appropriate and easy to use. They have made a big difference at the front end."

New products and flexibility

The most common example of the new system's flexibility occurs when a customer requests a payment schedule, term period or interest rate that varies from the building society's standard offerings.

Today, a branch teller can automatically calculate a variance, run a projection or tailor a product to the customer's request the same day. Under the old system, such a change usually would have required a program modification and, even if possible, might take as many as six months to complete.

Southern Cross can now change interest rates across the system in the middle of the day, provide more regular

interest payments, accommodate more frequent mortgage payments and introduce new finance product lines without software changes.

The totally integrated banking and finance application suite includes a range of other business tools, such as teller balancing, direct debiting, electronic bank linkages, automated production of letters and documents, imaging, action-dated memorandum messages and automated general ledger interface.

"It's an easy, logical and very reliable system to use," Barrett says. "Tellers and staff are impressed by how quickly they can do things now and how much significant information is readily available.

"Sovereign also gives customers the ability to control their money better. Their lending and deposit needs have never been better served."

Automated processes have also replaced many of the time-consuming manual tasks of the old system, such as typing cheques, calculating interest discrepancies and transferring funds to banks.

Parallel and live implementations began early last year, starting with funding accounts and finishing with lending accounts. The installation of new JDE financials was completed in March.

On the horizon

In addition to branches in downtown Auckland, Papatoetoe, Takapuna, Hamilton, Tauranga, Rotorua and Wellington, Southern Cross has 59 deposit-and-withdrawal agencies in the North Island.

These agencies (mostly pharmacies and bookshops) are not currently linked to the network, but customers may soon be able to use EFTPOS machines at these locations to make online connections. Sovereign's design also makes home banking via the Internet possible.

According to Barrett, Sovereign's banking and finance application suite, Year 2000 readiness, open platform and support service give Southern Cross a lot of confidence for further growth.

Systems Support Group

Systems Support Group Limited (SSG) is a New Zealand-owned software development and support company. It was formed in 1986 by Managing Director Barrie Shannon to provide information technology support to the finance industry. Since then, its services have grown to other industries.

With a staff of 36 IT specialists, SSG offers a wide range of experience in commercial computing developments and financial sector organisations. SSG's Sovereign, a modern software package specifically designed for financial institutions, was first installed in 1992 and now operates at seven sites. It has become a prominent solution in the banking and finance area.

"This banking and finance package may not seem like a significant innovation for major trading banks with a building full of mainframes," Barrett said. "But it is a novel solution for small to medium financial institutions who want to realise a modern banking system in an easy, cost-effective way on a secure, reliable and fully integrated platform."

For more information on Sovereign, contact SSG on 64 9 552 4500, email ssg@ssg.co.nz or visit www.ssg.co.nz

SYMIX announces client/server ERP system for AS/400

MODERATE

Symix, developers of a range of complementary applications for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), has announced the availability of their SyteLine client/server based product for AS/400.

SyteLine provides significant advantages to manufacturers of discrete products requiring rapid deployment of applications for manufacturing production, financials and distribution. Target industries include manufacturers of industrial equipment, industrial electronics, fabricated metal products, furniture and fixtures and manufacturers of highly configurable products.

Currently Symix software is installed at over 2,900 sites worldwide, with approximately 100 sites throughout Australia and New Zealand. In Australia, existing customers include BHP, B&D Roller Doors, Cablex, Frigrite, Kingfisher and Smorgon Steel. New Zealand users include Colgate-Palmolive, Hume Industries and Hurricane Wire.

SyteLine's implementation in PROGRESS/400 will prove very attractive to AS/400 users, providing a number of benefits that would not have been otherwise available. PROGRESS/400 allows administration of DB2/400 database descriptions from within the PROGRESS development environment, eliminating the problem of maintaining duplicate database descriptions.

Osman Tounjel, General Manager Sales and Marketing, Australia and New Zealand.

PROGRESS/400 is designed to deliver optimum online transaction processing performance whether using TCP/IP or SNA.

Robert Laird, Business Development Manager for PROGRESS/400 in Australia and New Zealand, says, "The AS/400 customer is traditionally application driven and very discerning. Symix's existing high level of success in the UNIX market is based on delivering high class results for Symix customers. I believe there is plenty of room in the AS/400 market for this level of professionalism and excellence and I look forward to working with Symix in the AS/400 market."

SyteLine capabilities

Today's business environment makes it mandatory that organisations are customer centric. Companies must be able to respond rapidly to changing market demands and provide the customer with total satisfaction.

In addition, all businesses need to be as efficient as possible, minimising waste through effective business processes and reducing overheads wherever possible. SyteLine ERP has been designed to ensure the degree of flexibility required to meet today's demanding conditions.

SyteLine provides the capabilities for handling multiple business functions within an integrated environment. Companies can manage their engineering, business performance, customer and supplier relationships, production and distribution, human resources and information flow.

Specifically, SyteLine provides functional applications for:

- Estimating customer service, including centralised and decentralised order entry
- Financial management, including budgeting, planning and production costing
- Multi-site and multi-plant control, including inter-site transfers
- Globalisation, including multiple currencies, LOCs and VAT
- Project control
- Production management, including capacity planning, scheduling and job costing and tracking
- Quality management
- Material management
- Distribution
- Human resources and marketing and sales.

In implementing SyteLine the following areas have received specific attention:

• Ease of use – The adoption of client/server technology has provided the opportunity to implement an intuitive GUI, ensuring maximum staff productivity, and the ability to simply share data between Symix SyteLine applications and standard PC tools such as Microsoft Word and Excel.

• Support for multiple sites – Both centralised and distributed order entry are fully supported, with consequent simplification of operations and management. Users have views of the inventory at all times. Material can be simply moved between plants while ensuring full accountability.

• Extensive financials – SyteLine includes high-level general ledger and reporting capabilities, with flexible definition of chart of accounts.

• Speedy customer service – Optimum responsiveness and access to information ensures minimum time to respond to customer enquiries.

• Multinational operations – Multinational operations include provision of capabilities such as letters of credit, a range of tax types and calculation of landed costs.

Symix SyteLine is implemented using the PROGRESS/400 toolset.

P O W E R E D   B Y
PROGRESS™

Kathryn Hartman, Marketing Manager for Progress Software, comments, "Symix has had a long and close relationship with PROGRESS Software, and frequently acts as a beta test site for new versions of the toolset and Relational Database Management System (RDBMS). The availability of SyteLine on the AS/400 is further evidence of the strength and flexibility of the PROGRESS/400 implementation. It also shows PROGRESS Software's commitment to the AS/400 platform and the depth it offers."

The Symix/Progress partnership

The implementation of SyteLine using the PROGRESS toolset provides a number of advantages for users of AS/400 systems. Osman Tounjel, General Manager Sales and Marketing, Australia and New Zealand, says, "These benefits accrue from Symix's focus on developing quality software targeted at discrete manufacturers, and from the inherent capabilities of the PROGRESS toolset and RDBMS.

"The benefits from PROGRESS based implementations include high performance, which was confirmed by recent results of transaction processing tests for AS/400 systems in a client/server environment where PROGRESS was the fastest of all RDBMS tested. It also dramatically improved client/server query and reporting performance on the AS/400."

Further implementation benefits include:

• Simple modification of the DB2/400 data dictionary through a Windows based GUI client;

• The availability of a scaleable, cross-platform architecture with support for the widest range of AS/400 enabled clients;

• Improved database performance through optimised record level data

access provided through the AS/400 machine interface.

SYMIX – Year 2000 ready

In addition, SyteLine is prepared to handle the Year 2000 through a feature available in PROGRESS Software. The PROGRESS language lets people build applications that recognise a new century or millennium – this function is known as Century Dating and lets programmers define a century of operation. As a result, the software recognises 00 as a new century and therefore the software will continue to operate as it is programmed to.

Symix Inc – The Company

Symix, headquartered in Columbus Ohio, is a prominent global supplier of open client/server software for manufacturers of discrete configurable products. Many of the world's largest companies in this segment are using SyteLine, and its predecessor, The SYMIX Solution, to meet the rigorous demands of their business.

In 1979 Symix was the first company to develop an MRP solution based on minicomputer systems, and in 1986 was one of the first companies to introduce a UNIX based MRPII solution. SyteLine was introduced in 1996. Symix became a publicly held company in 1991 and was introduced in Australasia in 1989.

The availability of SyteLine for the AS/400 provides users with an additional choice of product, one which is proven in the marketplace, is supported and maintained locally, and is well supported in its target markets.

For more information on Symix, call 61 2 9552 1400 in Australia or 64 9 366 4747 in New Zealand or visit www.symix.com

NON=TECHNICAL

BMG drives business online with EDI on AS/400

With the advent of the Internet, BMG Australia (part of one of the world's top 5 record companies, BMG Entertainment), realised that there was a means of providing a fast, efficient and inexpensive ordering system that also allowed retailers to access their accounts and ordering history.

Additionally, the Internet was seen as an efficient vehicle to provide the retailer with up-to-date marketing information.

Allen Furnas, BMG's MIS Manager, and John JP Clark, Network/Internet Development Manager, explain the rationale behind this local initiative.

Allen Furnas commented that, "the problem we had with straight EDI was that we lost direct communication with the customer. The retailers required a lot of information to make an informed decision on what, and how many, CDs to order. What we really wanted to do was provide up-to-date marketing information (on current products) that was readily available."

John JP Clark, Network/Internet Development Manager, and Alan Furnas, MIS Manager, BMG Australia

"The BMG website allows us to take orders electronically and gives the retailer access to information relevant to their order," added John JP Clark. "The idea came about when we thought 'if we could put a computer terminal in the retailer's office so they could have direct access to our system, wouldn't that be great!'

"What we hope for is improved efficiency in order taking; better and

JDEdwards

cheaper dissemination of marketing information and improved accounts efficiency for both our retailers and ourselves.

"It also frees up our resources, so that our sales desk can do a more active job of selling. Finally, in consultation with the retailers and our various departments, we concluded that the site could save up to 12 hours in order processing time. That means we could get an order to them 12 to 24 hours quicker than we are doing now!"

Furnas explained how easy it was to deliver this service to their customers. "J.D. Edwards handles everything. In fact, it only took two hours of programming to make the system work with the Internet! When the orders come in we simply convert them into EDI files and process them as we would any other EDI order. As for the retailer looking at its accounts or order status, that information comes from the J.D. Edwards Financials and Distribution modules on the AS/400.

"J.D. Edwards' integration hangs together very well and provides all the applications and functionality we need to run the business. The software made it extremely easy to maintain all the information required, allowing us to accept orders from the Internet at very little cost!"

For further information contact J.D. Edwards on 1800 634 802 in Australia or 0800 900 011 in New Zealand or visit www.jdedwards.com

IBM
Business Partner

> "What we hope for is improved efficiency in order taking; better and cheaper dissemination of marketing information and improved accounts efficiency for both our retailers and ourselves."

Call Centre solutions for AS/400

Baycorp of New Zealand reduced the average time it takes to identify and answer a customer call from 20 seconds to 5 seconds. Johnson and Johnson response to enquiries is now more personalised, faster and with fewer data entry errors. Porsche services its customers with a state-of-the-art owner relationship system.

What do these organisations have in common? They combined IBM's CallPath and DirectTalk call centre solutions with their AS/400!

The world's best-practice organisations are significantly increasing their investment in call centre operations. A call centre being that part of the organisation that is focused on customer telephone contact.

It is estimated that Australian and New Zealand businesses are spending over $A2,000M a year on call centres, with expenditure growing at 40% to 80% a year.

AS/400 call centre customers are being well served with the new DirectTalk IVR and CallPath CTI enterprise servers. These servers are allowing AS/400 customers to build a three-tier client/server call centre as
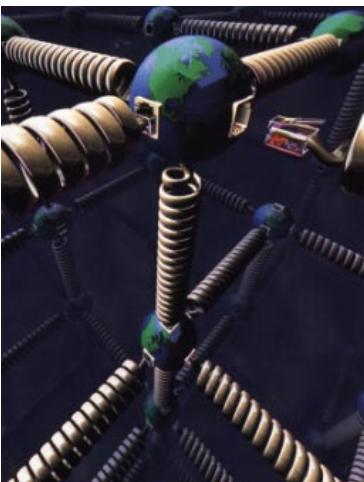
shown in the adjacent schematic.

Typically, the CallPath Server is a PC Server and is connected to the Call Centre's local area network and the customer's PABX, ACD or Centrix telephone system. In the future, this functionality may be supported by the AS/400 internally through the Integrated PC Server.

The telephony agents are typically Windows 95 or Windows NT workstations running CallPath software. This software provides the core telephony functions required by the workstation application software. This application software is either an off-the-shelf call centre application or a customised Windows 95 or Windows NT application. Visual Basic or VisualAge is often used for the customisation.
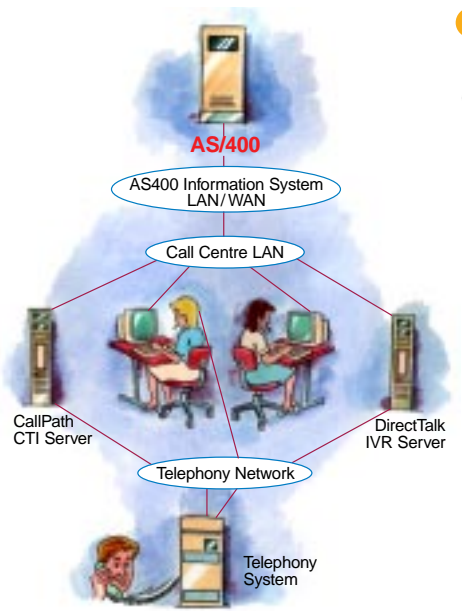
CallPath

The CallPath CTI Server shown in the schematic refers to IBM's family of computer telephony integration middleware. It provides the interface to glue your voice/data systems to your call centre applications and data.

With CallPath CTI you can, for example:

- Use Dialled Number Identification to pop special application screens for various 1800 numbers.

- Automate placement of outbound calls from a workstation or database.

- Facilitate call transfer along with customer screens, from one department to another.

- Speed problem resolution by allowing agents to consult with supervisors while viewing the same customer screen.

- Intelligently route calls to the appropriate call centre and to the appropriately skilled agent.

- Intelligently balance the load by blending inbound and outbound calls.

- Maximise revenue by automatically assisting agents to perform cross-selling and up-selling.

In summary, an AS/400 client/server call centre solution can allow an organisation to move their call centre from a cost centre to a profit centre. A centre that provides more knowledgeable and personalised service while maintaining maximum market reach and revenue per call.

For further information on Call Centre Solution offerings contact your AS/400 Business Partner or call IBM Direct on 132 426 in Australia or 0800 426 132 in New Zealand and ask for 'AS/400 NEWS/INFO' or visit www.ibm.com.au/cti/

Planning for the Year 2000 Challenge

TECHNICAL

The turn of the century is right around the corner, and it is necessary to have a plan to ensure that your existing IT infrastructure will function in Year 2000 and beyond.

Various tools have recently surfaced that can be used to find date-sensitive information in source programs. These conversion tools only address a small portion of the total Year 2000 solution. For example, testing is a major issue which should not be overlooked.

If the applications you intend to make Year 2000 ready are licensed, the ability to make modifications to it is controlled by the licence agreement from the copyright owner. Be sure any vendor software can be modified. If unsure of ownership or copyright status of the vendor code, contact the software vendor and/or a legal counsel.

The following list represents some of the steps that would have to be planned and resourced for a conversion project. This list does not represent a complete checklist and is for indicative guidance only.

Conversion steps

1. Create a Year 2000 Conversion Plan
2. Check licence agreement for vendor applications
3. Check for completeness of documentation
4. Decide how to handle production changes during Year 2000 conversion
5. Partition the large conversion effort to a manageable size
6. Identify AS/400 System to be used for impact analysis/conversion and testing
7. Use AS/400 operating system that is Year 2000 ready (at least V3R1/V3R6).
   - V3R2 (for CISC) and V3R7 (for RISC) are Year 2000 ready.
   - V3R1 (for CISC) and V3R6 (for RISC) require PTFs to make them Year 2000 ready. These PTFs are available through the normal channels as other PTFs.
8. Find source programs
9. Verify that the executable program and source program match
10. Find all date-affected fields in the source programs
11. Create new databases with expanded data fields
12. Migrate data to the new databases
13. Correct date-affected fields and compile
14. Test the compiled programs with the following scenarios:
    – Daily, weekly, monthly
    – Leap year, therefore 1 March, 2000
    – Quarter end, year end
    Do not test without a plan and appropriate backups. (Note: this should never be conducted on production systems)
15. Repeat steps 8-14 until satisfied
16. Update source code
17. Repeat steps 8-16 until all applications are converted
18. Begin integration, acceptance testing and user training
19. Write bridge programs* and test
20. Update the operating system to be Year 2000 ready
21. Distribute the Year 2000 ready applications to all systems
22. Bring up all systems and test communications
23. Test the bridge programs
24. Go live
25. Update documentation
26. Monitor systems for errors

This information is intended to assist you. IBM does not warrant its accuracy or completeness.

*Bridge programs – modify the four-position year to the two-position year or vice versa between a Year 2000 ready system and a non-Year 2000 ready system.

For further information on AS/400 and the Year 2000 Challenge contact your AS/400 Business Partner or call IBM Direct on 132 426 in Australia or 0800 426 132 in New Zealand and ask for 'AS/400 NEWS/INFO'.

For further technical information contact the Year 2000 Technical Support Centre at Y2KTSC@VNET.IBM.COM or call 1800 637 713 in Australia or 0800 444 714 in New Zealand.

SYSTEM/36 PTFs now available

IBM recently announced the availability of PTFs assist with testing SSP for Year 2000 readiness to those customers running their business applications on the System/36 (models 5360, 5362, 5363, 5364 or 9402-Y10). The PTF numbers are:

U670551	5727SS1	Release 5.1	8" diskette
U765053	5727SS6	Release 5.1	5 1/4" diskette
U765054	5727SS6	Release 6.0	5 1/4" diskette

Included with each PTF order is a copy of instructions and a written explanation of what functions this code will provide. For further information on the current status and testing required for SSP refer to www.ibm.com/year2000

Tools to assist with the Year 2000 Challenge

IBM has recently announced three tools to assist AS/400 customers with the Year 2000 Challenge. These tools help with various aspects of a Year 2000 project, including application inventory, impact analysis and application conversion.

Application inventory tool

This is a free PTF now available from Rochester to existing AS/400 customers (V2R3 or higher). The tool looks at the object code on your AS/400 and matches it up with the correct source code. It lists all objects without source as well as all programs that have not executed in the last 13 months.

This language-independent product also lists all databases. The result after using this tool is a compilation of the applications, system software packages, data and application source installed on the AS/400. It will provide an indication on:

– the number of programs to be converted
– whether the current source for those programs is available.

Some PTFs that are available through the normal channels to assist include:

V2R3	SF41293
V3R0M5	SF41405
V3R1	SF41382
V3R2	SF41383
V3R6	SF41385
V3R7	SF41384
V4R1	SF41387

Impact analysis tool

To help determine the impact that a change to a date field will have on an application, IBM will be enhancing the current Application Development ToolSet/400 (ADTS/400) with a specific Year 2000 feature.
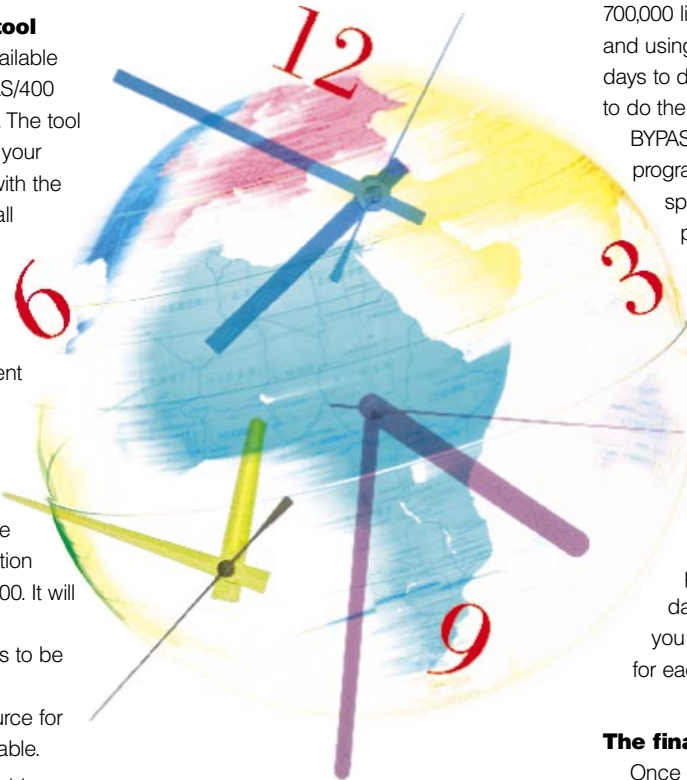
This feature will help locate fields within applications that either contain dates or will be affected by changes to a date field. It will also help determine the date format used (e.g. YYMMDD) and estimate the number of programs and data files that would be affected by the change. This is a priced feature and will be available during the third quarter of 1997.

BYPASS/2000 conversion tool

This now available, IBM logo product, was developed by HAL, an Italian software company. This is an extremely powerful product, and the cost is easily justified for all the time it will save doing conversion work. There are reports that a customer with 700,000 lines of code, 1,550 programs, and using 2 programmers, took only 15 days to do the conversion and 10 days to do the testing.

BYPASS/2000 requires a skilled programmer with some product specific education to use this product most effectively. Release 1 handles RPG II and RPG III, and release 2 (09/97) adds COBOL. It creates a relationship web, of how programs, databases and files are all linked, so all date occurrences are located and fixed. For databases, it creates a program to change the database, and you run it when you want. One licence is required for each machine.

The final step – testing

Once the conversion is complete, it is important that plans make allowances to perform the final step, testing. Tests must be run to ensure that the applications converted continue to function as they did prior to conversion.

For the latest Year 2000 updates and information on available resources, including a 200-page guide on Year 2000 Planning and Implementation refer to www.ibm.com/year2000

TECHTIPS/4YOU

TECHNICAL

What is QRECOVERY?

Q. What is QRECOVERY, and how can I minimise its size? The AS/400 manuals just say, "Keep off; IBM only." If that is true, why can I see it?

A. QRECOVERY is the library that contains QDBJRN, the journal used for the system cross-reference files. DB2/400 uses these files to track database files, file dependencies, file ownership, fields in files, and so on. The AS/400 journals cross-reference files so that a complete rebuild of the files is not necessary for recovery after an abnormal termination of the system.

The system manages the journal receivers for QDBJRN, so you do not have to maintain them. The receiver threshold is set to a low value to minimise the amount of space the journal uses. You can ignore messages received at the system operator message queue that indicate that the current journal receiver for QDBJRN has been detached and a new receiver attached; these messages are normal and require no intervention on your part.

The importance of cume tapes

Q. Help! We are running V3R1M0 and are horribly behind on PTFs, but our supervisor insists on applying PTFs only to fix specific problems we are having. The last time we applied a cume tape was in spring 1996. Can you help me explain how important applying cume tapes is?

A. It is indeed important to stay current with PTFs. Although some AS/400 customers operate quite well without keeping up with PTFs, they are in the minority. Such shops typically do not take advantage of new technology and instead remain static. Even if this is your situation, it is recommended staying current with PTFs.

Keeping up with PTFs lets you take advantage of any new functions IBM might introduce via PTFs, and your system should be more stable. Another, less obvious, area where PTF currency yields benefits is support. It is often difficult for a support provider to give you the best help possible if you are behind on PTFs.

The philosophy of applying PTFs only to fix specific problems can be dangerous. With the overwhelming number of PTFs available, it is practically impossible to stay on top of them all. Some PTFs correct problems that can have disastrous consequences, such as a down system or data loss.

At a minimum, you should stay current with the latest cumulative PTF package if at all possible. Some customers prefer to lag behind by one cume package so as not to pioneer the use of new code; this strategy, too, is usually acceptable. In addition, be sure to keep abreast of the latest High Impact Pervasive (HIPER) PTFs, which address problems that can bring down a system, cause data loss, or result in other problems.

For the latest information about current cume PTF packages and other important PTFs, check NEWS/400's monthly PTF Watch column or visit the NEWS/400 website at www.news400.com where PTF Watch is posted two weeks early every month.

These tips are provided courtesy of NEWSWire/400, a free weekly e-mail newsletter from NEWS/400, the worldwide AS/400 Magazine.

For more information about how to subscribe to NEWS/400 and/or NEWSWire/400, either go to www.news400.com or email randyg@duke.com or contact NEWS/400's regional distributor, Intelligent Technologies on 61 2 9891 9136.

For further technical information visit as400service.ibm.com – IBM Rochester AS/400 Knowledge Base or www.ibmlink.ibm.com – IBMLink online manuals and WW Q & A.

This information is intended to assist you. IBM does not warrant its accuracy or completeness.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR CUSTOMERS WITH AS/400 MODELS E AND F!

Effective 4 November, 1997, IBM will no longer be marketing the following:

- Model upgrades and related processor feature conversions:
  - AS/400 E models to AS/400 models 2XX/3XX (CISC) and 4XX/5XX (RISC)
  - AS/400 F models to AS/400 models 2XX/3XX (CISC)
  - AS/400 3XX to 3XX model upgrades (processor upgrades within a 3XX model are still supported)

In addition, effective 31 December 1997 IBM will withdraw CISC to RISC memory feature exchange credits on upgrades to models 5XX.

Please refer to announcement letter AG97-0176 for further information located at IBMlink on www.ibmlink.ibm.com

BlueSpeak
an index to computing terms and acronyms

Business Intelligence with AS/400

This is a topic that tends to bring a wry smile to the lips of propeller heads. The sceptics in the industry would argue that 'Business Intelligence' is a contradiction in terms. Especially when the aim of data mining is to establish the answers to questions that we did not even realise needed to be asked!

With the vast improvements in technology over the years, we have been able to generate huge amounts of data. Through the use of Business Intelligence, companies aim to convert this data into useful decision making information and have created myriad terms along the way.

AD-HOC QUERY – an unpredictable, non-standard query run over a database.

BALLPARK – a term borrowed from baseball to indicate that figures were approximate, that is, in the vicinity of the actual answer. Data mining tries to get answers closer to the truth than these estimates have previously been.

CUBE – a name for a multi-dimensional database. One that keeps data over a number of regions or functions.

DATA MINING – a process used to search for patterns of information in large databases. Used to establish buying patterns and plan related stock levels etc.

DM or DATA MART – a subset of an enterprise-wide warehouse.

DW or DATA WAREHOUSE – a database that is designed not simply for transaction processing but organised for retrieval of information to support the business decision making process.

META DATA – data about data. Dynamic information about the fields in the files which may indicate how the value was calculated.

OLAP – on line analytical processing. Database tools intending to provide rapid access to data in the warehouse.

OLTP – online transaction processing. Applications whose one purpose in life is to get data updates into a database.

RDBMS – relational database management system. This can be used in OLTP and OLAP environments – and are accessed by tools such as SQL and ODBC.

ROLAP – Relational Online Analytical Processing. The ability to perform complex analytical processing over a relational database and producing results in a relational database (like AS/400) that require the creation of a multi-dimensional cube on other systems.

SOME NOT SO IDEAL DATA WAREHOUSES

Data Outhouse – the data warehouse is built too fast and filled with dirty, incomplete, or out-of-date data; it's not what the business wants.

Data Basement – a data warehouse with poor access and/or performance. Not used much.

Data Mausoleum – like the Basement but built with the finest hardware/software.

Data Shack – the data warehouse will soon collapse because it has insufficient funding, management commitment and staffing.

Data Cottage – an individual department's own personal data warehouse. (Outside the company's full data warehouse architecture, hence not a Data Mart.) Allowed to carry on, you end up with the Data Village.

Data Jailhouse – built to such a high spec, and with such tight controls, that no-one can get access to the data even though the IT department will swear that it is there.

Data Tenement – the result of a chaos- or ostrich-based implementation strategy where some outsider is trusted to build the data warehouse for you. The data warehouse ends up satisfying no particular set of business requirements, other than you get to say you have one.

NON-TECHNICAL

Why lease your AS/400?

Leasing has become a widely accepted and highly popular way for businesses to obtain IBM AS/400 technology. Some of the many benefits include:

Cash management

In a recent survey on why companies lease, 36 per cent of the respondents stated their primary reason for leasing was to enhance cash management. Successful companies look for ways to conserve working capital and preserve lines of credit so they can invest in the growth of the business. Leasing proves to be advantageous as it also allows for lower monthly payments, protects against inflation and simplifies budget management.

Chris Engel, Director, Synergy Software, observed that his customers who lease have been able to "remove the expenditure 'bumpiness' associated with periodically upgrading their IT technology.

"Now they [customers who lease] have a predictable IT expenditure stream. With IBM delivering over 40 per cent year on year price/performance improvements with AS/400, they are able to keep pace with IT technology without changing their expenditure."

Through leasing, customers can structure payments to meet specific cash flow needs. Mark Little, IT Manager, United Telecommunications, has experienced the benefits of customised payment flexibility first hand. His company, a mobile phone service provider for Telstra, has experienced rapid growth in the past few years. Within 18 months, the demands of the business made it necessary to upgrade their single AS/400 model 300 to two AS/400 model 530s. "There was a huge cost involved," said Little. "The best thing about leasing is that we were able to stage the lease payments to match the business plan. We were able to defer the costs into the future when we were able to realise the benefit of growth to our business."

Technology management

A key reason why companies choose leasing is for better technology management.

Leasing protects against the effects of product obsolescence. Mid-lease and end-of-lease options allow easy equipment upgrades, preventing being 'locked-in' to outdated hardware.

Peter Stokes, Systems and Planning Manager, Van Leer Australia, has been leasing AS/400 technology since 1993. "It is (a matter) of keeping options open", said Stokes. "As part of an international group, we have to recognise the pace of technological change. One of the ways to hedge risk is to lease technology".

Convenience

Another important reason why companies lease is for convenience. Disposal of computing equipment may involve selling it, relocating it to another area of the business, or simply scrapping it. Each of these activities is normally beyond the lessee's experience and expertise. Leasing eliminates the problem of equipment disposal.

"A key benefit of leasing," said Thomas Pilcik, Southern Region Manager, J.D. Edwards Australia, "is the ability to finance the total project rolling in software, maintenance and services, as well as hardware. When evaluating leasing companies check to see if the lessor will finance the total solution, not just the hardware." Leasing the software, hardware and services all together will provide the convenience of just one monthly payment for the entire solution.

Approximately 50 per cent of all AS/400s in Australasia are leased. Whether you are looking for a lease that's simple and straightforward, or one that is customised to meet your business's unique requirements, you will want to work with a lessor who understands your financial and practical needs.
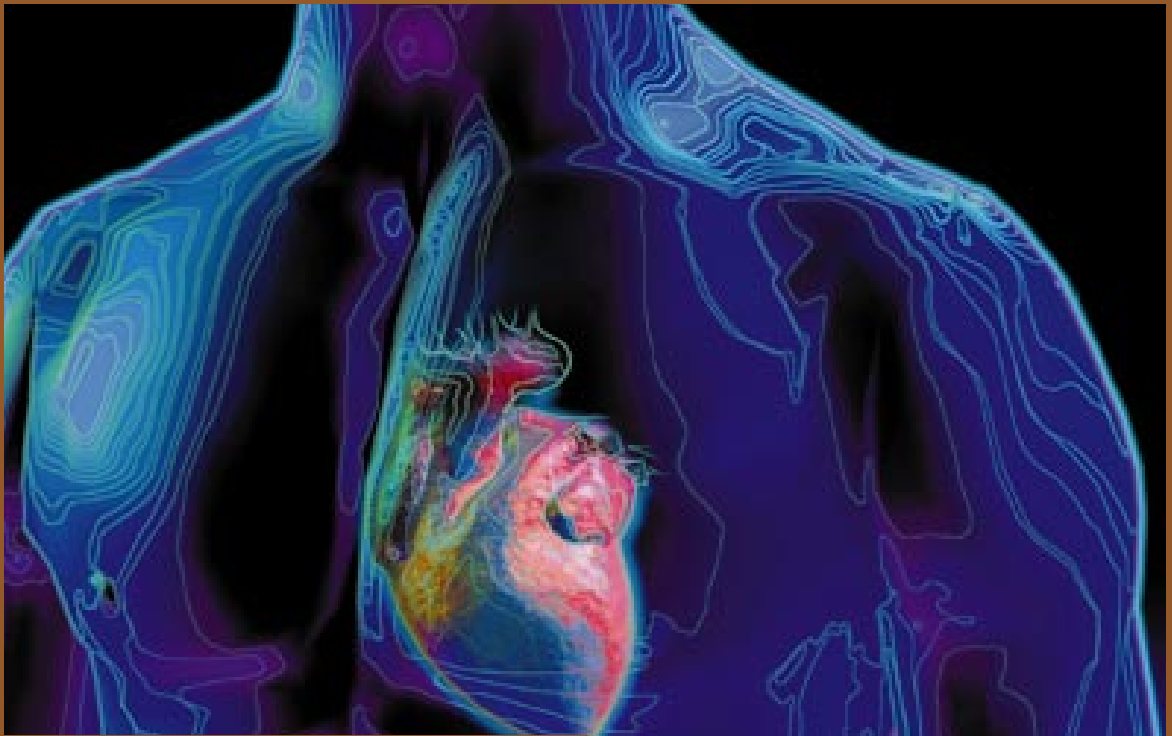
AS/400 Preferred Rate Financing

IBM Credit Preferred Rate Financing lets customers combine today's low rates (6.4% in Australia and 7.4% in New Zealand for fixed residual leases… even lower for lease to return) with 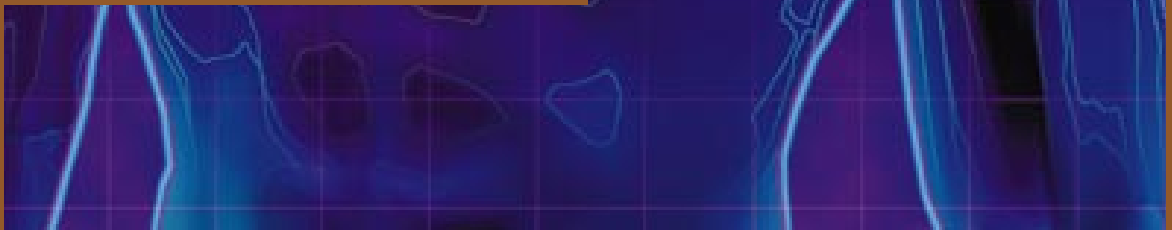the industry's best terms and conditions. Preferred Rate Financing offers discounted below-market rates on IBM hardware products, including AS/400 Processor lines, Storage, Networking Systems, Point of Sale equipment, Printing Systems, IBM PCs and Network Stations. With these low rates, customers receive the benefit of lower monthly payments or the ability to invest in larger information systems projects.

Preferred Rate Financing is available for both Risk Residual Leases (Lease to Return) and Fixed Residual Leases. Maintenance, software and services can also be financed at attractive rates.

To learn more about IBM Credit offerings contact your AS/400 Business Partner or call IBM Direct on 132 426 in Australia or 0800 426 132 in New Zealand and ask for 'AS/400 NEWS/INFO'.