



SCHUKRA: ENHANCING ERP WITH IBM AND SSA GLOBAL

Challenge

Upgrade the ERP system, operating system and platform to leverage the benefits of the latest version of SSA® ERP: SSA BPCS® 8.2

Solution

IBM @server® iSeries™, IBM DB2®, SSA ERP

Why IBM?

SSA ERP was designed for the iSeries, which offers enhanced performance, reliability, ROI and a lower total cost of ownership (TCO).

Benefits

A reliable platform; reduced time involved with resolving problems and performing tasks; eliminated cumbersome manual processes

Headquartered in Windsor, Ontario, Schukra of North America is a division of the Leggett & Platt Automotive Group—a Fortune 500 company founded in 1883 by patenting the world's first steel coil bedsprings. Twenty-five years later the company's coil springs began to be used in automotive seating. Today, Schukra is a worldwide leader. Its internationally patented lumbar supports have now become standard original equipment in some of the world's finest automobiles—including GM, Ford and Chrysler—as well as many airlines.

THE EFFECTS OF EXPANSION: STREAMLINING PROCESSES

When Leggett & Platt acquired Schukra in 2000, its Automotive Group began expanding quickly through increased sales and acquisitions. Schukra needed to maintain the same level of staffing and overhead costs at its headquarters while at the same time helping other facilities within the automotive division. It thus had to streamline processes and reduce manual workload across the company, while providing a cost-effective enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution to facilities lacking the capital or staff to support full implementation.

As a result, Schukra needed to upgrade its ERP system and its hardware platform to SSA BPCS 8.2 running IBM DB2 on an IBM @server iSeries system.



IBM AND SSA GLOBAL: MERGING PERFORMANCE WITH ADVANCED FUNCTIONALITY

When Schukra decided to take advantage of the next version of SSA ERP—which featured Web-based access and considerably more functionality—it determined that its current hardware platform was at capacity and needed replacing. The company found its new platform in the iSeries.

Not only was SSA ERP designed for the iSeries, but the application performed better on the iSeries than on Schukra's previous technology platform. Says Laura Ryall, Director of MIS, Leggett & Platt Automotive Group, "We were able to show the benefits of iSeries performance, ease of technical transition and TCO over other platforms."

In addition, the iSeries offers the company:

- Ease of use, including support and an easier-to-learn OS for junior staff members
- A reliable platform with 99.99 percent uptime as well as strong expert technical support
- A deep SSA ERP knowledge base of more than nine years, which

would benefit other facilities companywide in terms of technical and developmental support

- Visibility of SSA ERP programming code, resulting in faster problem recognition, reduced problem resolution time, and more effective programming interfaces to other applications and in-house written applications

What's more, Schukra could benefit from the partnership between SSA Global and IBM. "IBM and SSA Global have a strong working relationship," says Ryall. "SSA Global solutions will continue to take advantage of software and hardware capabilities."

LAUNCHING THE PROJECT

IBM, SSA Global™ and Schukra began the project by thoroughly defining the scope as well as requirements for staffing/partnership, production and test systems, software (including license fees, development tools, forms, and data conversion), tools, and technical staff and user training. The team also secured ROI justification for the project and user group performance, as well as obtaining corporate and executive buy-in and approval for the project plan.

The MIS Technical and Development team redesigned interfaces, developed technical and user group test case scenarios for daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual processes. In addition, they updated senior management with regular status meetings and provided cross-department training and brainstorming sessions.

Thanks to thoroughly defined project requirements and a meticulously detailed implementation plan involving MIS staff and user responsibility per task, Schukra met an aggressive timeframe. Installing hardware, upgrading the OS and SSA ERP application, and removing the previous ERP system dedicated to EDI, as well as meeting the time-consuming requirements of Sarbanes-Oxley were all completed within one year.

The team installed the iSeries systems in 21 days. Within 70 days from the project start, the installation of SSA ERP on the iSeries was complete. Later that month, Schukra was able to carry out the first real data conversion test.



“It was a flawless launch. The complex cutover took three days, without one glitch, finishing five hours earlier than planned.”

– *Laura Ryall, Director of MIS
Leggett & Platt Automotive Group*

BENEFITS REALIZED

The IBM and SSA Global solution has equipped Schukra with a more responsive system and solid platform on which to automate additional tasks, enabling its staff to focus on their expertise instead of time-consuming data-gathering tasks. In addition, the solution has helped the company reap a number of benefits, including:

- A stronger working relationship between MIS and user group
- Increased MIS staff's confidence in their abilities
- Cost-effective, Web-based solution for other facilities

- Expanded cross-departmental comprehension with one system
- Eliminated a significant number of manual, access and spreadsheet processes
- Reduced time involved with performing tasks, including:
 - MRP run: from three hours to 20 minutes
 - Cost roll: from six hours to two hours
 - Backups: from five hours to one-and-a-half hours
 - Check run: from one hour to five minutes

A WORLD LEADER IN TECHNOLOGY

The company now has 225 licenses of SSA ERP, supporting users across the company's operations in Europe and North America. A future project is a rollout in Asia, and in 2005, Schukra plans on stepping up its use of the application across other departments; one of its goals is to significantly reduce the amount of reports generated.

“With iSeries technology and SSA ERP, Schukra has truly maintained its goal and reputation as a world leader in technology and solutions direction,” says Ryall. “We're committed to this solution.”

ABOUT SSA GLOBAL

SSA Global is a leading provider of extended ERP solutions for manufacturing, distribution, retail, services and public organizations worldwide. In addition to core ERP applications, SSA Global offers a full range of integrated extension solutions including corporate performance management, customer relationship management, product lifecycle management, supply chain management and supplier relationship management. Headquartered in Chicago, SSA Global has 63 locations worldwide and its product offerings are used by approximately 13,000 active customers in over 90 countries. For additional information, visit the SSA Global Web site at www.ssaglobal.com.

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1-05
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