



GROWMARK Inc. Migrates to Lawson System Foundation 9.0

Lawson System Foundation 9.0

Success is built upon a strong foundation. Lawson System Foundation 9.0 delivers the standards-based infrastructure world-class organizations require. Complete with industry-leading middleware from IBM – the global leader in application infrastructure – Lawson System Foundation 9.0 delights Lawson customers with its ease of implementation, ease of administration, application performance, investment protection, security, scalability, reliability, total cost of ownership, and return on investment.

“Lawson System Foundation 9.0 allows us to get more advanced security and use IBM middleware, yet users don't see a major difference in the applications. This is the positive outcome we were hoping for.”

**Gary Price, Manager
Enterprise Systems Group
GROWMARK Inc.**



About GROWMARK

In 1927, Farm Bureau members formed a number of locally owned and controlled cooperatives to provide farmers with a reliable supply of farm inputs at a fair price. Those early cooperatives evolved into what is now GROWMARK Inc.

Headquartered in Bloomington, Ill., GROWMARK is a regional cooperative with annual sales of \$4.4 billion (FY 2007 data) providing agriculture-related products and services and grain marketing in the Midwest and Ontario, Canada. FS brand farm supplies and related services are also marketed to farmers in the northeastern United States by GROWMARK subsidiaries. Additional information is available at www.growmark.com.

GROWMARK and Lawson

GROWMARK has had a long history of innovation and technology adoption. In 1994, they selected Lawson for its unique open technology architecture. Lawson systems operate on the major, industry standard hardware platforms and operating systems, which allows GROWMARK to easily integrate their Lawson system with their enterprise architecture and their non-Lawson information technology investments and infrastructure.

"Because of the open architecture Lawson offers, we were able to devise a system that we've used over the past 14 years successfully, and we have enjoyed a lot of gains because of that," says Gary Price, Manager, Enterprise Systems Group, GROWMARK.

Currently, GROWMARK deploys Lawson Human Resource Management and Lawson Enterprise Financial Management on an HP Integrity platform running the HP-UX 11i operating system with 80 application and 1,000 Employee and Manager Self-Service users throughout the GROWMARK system. Most recently, they migrated from Lawson 8.0.1 applications in a Lawson 8.0.3 technical environment running on an HP PA-RISC configuration to Lawson System Foundation 9.0 on HP Integrity. In the future, they plan to add Lawson Security 9.0, and are currently looking at implementing the new Lawson Talent Management Suite offerings.

Why GROWMARK Migrated to Lawson System Foundation 9.0

Higher demand for agricultural products in the past few years has resulted in tremendous growth at GROWMARK. To keep up with the increasing number of users and processing requirements, the cooperative required greater system performance and scalability. A more flexible, efficient, and cost effective application security infrastructure that meets industry security requirements was also needed.

By employing such industry-standard technologies as IBM WebSphere, Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) options and Single Sign-On (SSO) capabilities, Lawson System Foundation 9.0 helps GROWMARK create the flexible, modern platform they need for their future. With horizontal and vertical scaling options, improved throughput and performance, and support for industry standard technologies, GROWMARK's Lawson suites will interact well with, and effectively take advantage of, emerging Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) and web services technologies.



The Move to HP Integrity Servers

The implementation of HP Integrity Servers with Intel® Itanium® processors for the Lawson application suites gave GROWMARK a server platform more attuned to its growth and future technology needs. Like many customers deploying HP Integrity servers, GROWMARK was swayed by their outstanding performance and unique flexibility. Not only are Integrity servers certified for a host of mission-critical applications, but also several operating systems can run optimally in isolated, virtual partitions on a single server. Mission-critical virtualization technologies for Integrity servers and HP-UX 11i can help GROWMARK satisfy its users with additional computing capacity dynamically and on demand. Most importantly, the move to HP Integrity servers gave the company substantial power and higher availability to accommodate newer Lawson applications.

Migration Success

Recent certifications of Lawson applications and technology on their existing HP Integrity platform prompted Lawson to invite GROWMARK to participate in a pilot Lawson System Foundation 9.0 migration program. Therefore, GROWMARK was among the first Lawson customers to migrate to Lawson System Foundation 9.0.

"There's a high level of risk involved in a system migration. Going into a pilot experience, we expected to have a few more problems after cutover than we did. But because of the teams we had at Lawson and GROWMARK, and the on-site testing we performed in partnership with Lawson Professional Services, we achieved our cutover without any major issues at all," says Price.

He adds, "One metric our CIO uses to gage if a cutover experience was successful, or not is how much he hears about it, and particularly the number of phone calls he receives after the cutover: With the Lawson experience, he didn't get any phone calls at all. He was very satisfied with that."

Similarly, users noticed little disruption to their business processes. "Lawson System Foundation 9.0 allows us to get more advanced security and use IBM middleware, yet users don't see a major difference in the applications. This is the positive outcome we were hoping for," says Price.

About HP and Lawson

For over 25 years, Lawson and HP have partnered to deliver innovative technologies that form an integrated business process platform for managing enterprise performance, user productivity, financials, supply chain, human capital, services, manufacturing, distribution, and retail operations.

Lawson and HP serve hundreds of loyal customers worldwide and provide solutions to specific industries such as healthcare, public sector, manufacturing, distribution, fashion, food and beverage, equipment service and rental management, retail, professional services, financial services, and other strategic markets to create highly scalable environments to meet current and future needs of performance-minded companies.



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About GROWMARK Inc.

GROWMARK is a locally owned, globally strong agricultural cooperative system that grew out of an organization of local cooperatives dating back to the 1920s. In the last nine years, GROWMARK has continued to expand as a regional and national leader in the agricultural field, diversifying through acquisition and investments in companies in retail energy, bio fuels, and industrial lubricants. Today GROWMARK has four retail brands (FS Brand, ComfortPro, Fast Stop and GreenYard) and 2007 net sales exceeding \$4 billion.