

Open, reliable BladeSymphony servers integrate with distributed mainframes to deliver real-time business information, helping Hokkaido fisheries cooperative expand into new markets and increase sales.

Profile: Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries

- Economic federation with 90 members in the Hokkaido region of Japan
- Accounts for about one quarter of Japan's total fishing production

Customer Profile: Gyoren Systems, Inc.

- Provides IT and business services to the Hokkaido fishing cooperative
- Manages direct sales to stores and mass-marketers

Customer Challenge

- Replace batch-processing mainframe model with real-time model
- Integrate the workloads of multiple mainframes
- Deliver high levels of security, reliability, availability, and performance

BladeSymphony Benefits

- Fresher data: real-time information 24/7/365
- Cut hardware and development costs by half
- Reduced management and administrative costs significantly
- Compatibility with Hitachi SANRISE arrays for unified management

Business Results

- Real-time business information for better decision making
- Ability to cut cost and complexity without sacrificing service levels
- Ability to integrate multiple workloads onto one open, reliable platform

"In the direct-sales business, non-stop operation is necessary, even on holidays. BladeSymphony meets that need. Since the start of the operation of the system, no errors that would affect operations have occurred."

Yoshinori Saso, Deputy Manager, System Department, Gyoren

The concept of a cooperative is simple: by pooling the resources of many small entities, it is possible to create a very powerful organization that can accomplish what the individual participants could not achieve on their own.

The Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries has used the cooperative model to maximum potential. This economic federation of 90 members now accounts for about a quarter of Japan's total fishing production, and has made inroads to markets beyond Japan.

Recently, the Hokkaido Federation applied the same cooperative model to its computing environment. The company that provides business and IT services to the cooperative, Gyoren Systems, Inc., integrated the computing workloads of many geographically dispersed mainframes and connected them to a single, open, real-time platform running in the central office: BladeSymphony.

The result: with BladeSymphony, the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries now has 24/7, real-time access to critical business information rather than day-old, batch-processed data—on an open system that is powerful, reliable, and flexible to grow with new business requirements.

Fresh Fish, Fresh Data

Gyoren is involved in the business of selling Hokkaido's renowned seafood, including kelp, scallops, and salmon, as well as purchasing fuel and materials for the fishing industry, and various distribution and manufacturing businesses.

Gyoren was interested in restructuring the backbone system that had been put in place in 1999 to provide business information for the fisheries cooperative. With that system, operations at each of 14 bases were completed locally, and a batch process was initiated to upload sales and other data to a system at the main office.

"There was a need to analyze and utilize various operational data in real time in order to conduct business activities in a timely manner," said Shinichi Nakatsuka, Office Management Assistance Manager for the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries. "With distributed processing, it was not possible to meet this requirement, so we decided to integrate the systems."

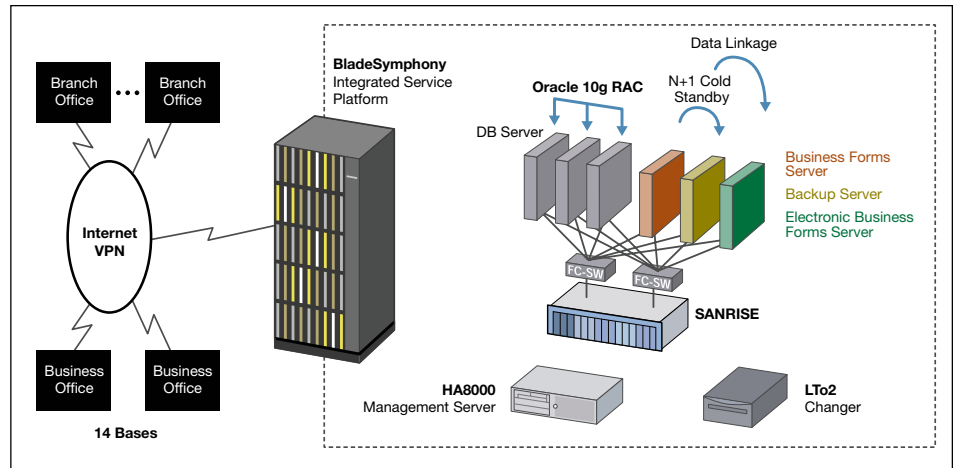
Gyoren had used mainframes at the central office for many years, but the Federation decided to shift to an open system to help reduce system costs and increase flexibility—if the open system could match the enterprise-class capabilities of the mainframes. “Reliability and availability, with the same assuredness as the mainframes gave us, was necessary,” said Mr. Nakatsuka.

Greatly Improved Processing at Half the Cost

BladeSymphony met and exceeded the requirements of the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries. “We can maintain reliability and availability because we can use an N+1 cold standby configuration, which provides a single backup server for multiple servers in BladeSymphony,” said Yoshinori Saso, Deputy Manager of the System Department at Gyoren.

“Also, we highly valued the fact that Hitachi’s SANRISE disk array subsystem was set up to utilize functions such as SAN boot, which is more easily constructed and operated than a rack-mount server,” said Mr. Saso. “And we can receive support with one-stop service.”

The new backbone system featuring BladeSymphony became operational in 2005. Initially, seven mainframes that were set up at the main office and local bases, plus a server for exchanging information with field sites and a business forms server were all integrated with six BladeSymphony blades.



“By integrating mainframes and related servers, we have reduced costs for hardware and development to about half,” said Mr. Nakatsuka. “We also no longer need to manage the system at each base, which greatly reduces cost and operational work.”

High Performance, Higher Information Utilization

BladeSymphony delivered additional advantages in terms of performance and reliability, according to Gyoren. “In particular, the improvement in processing capability was beyond our expectations,” said Mr. Saso. “Previously, it took about an hour to perform batch processing and backup at each base, but now it takes less than 10 minutes.”

Gyoren also has extremely high system uptime 365 days a year, which was not always the case when mainframes were used. “In the direct-sales business, non-stop operation is necessary, even on holidays,” said Mr. Saso. BladeSymphony

meets that need. Since the start of the operation of the system, no errors that would affect operations have occurred.”

Being able to support future system expansion easily is also an advantage of BladeSymphony, noted Mr. Nakatsuka. “In recent years, we have been strengthening our direct-sales business for co-op stores and mass retailers outside the Hokkaido region,” he said.

With BladeSymphony, Gyoren expects the Hokkaido brand to continue to be successful throughout Japan, to expand into new markets such as China—and eventually to become well known worldwide.

Learn More

To learn more about the Hokkaido Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations, visit www.gyoren.or.jp. For additional details about the BladeSymphony server line from Hitachi, visit www.bladesymphony.com.

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