

The rock-solid reliability of Hitachi BladeSymphony enables Higo Bank to migrate mission-critical financial service applications to a more cost-effective and flexible platform.

#### Profile: Higo Bank, Ltd.

- Top regional bank in Kumamoto Prefecture
- Provider of a broad portfolio of commercial financial services
- 112 branches

#### Customer Challenge

- Deliver core financial services with exceptionally high reliability
- Cut maintenance and administration costs
- Integrate heterogeneous systems and unify management
- Improve customer service and loyalty

#### BladeSymphony Benefits

- Enterprise-class availability at a low cost
- Compatibility with Hitachi SANRISSE arrays for unified management
- Open platform for simplified integration with heterogeneous systems

#### Business Results

- Ability to run business-critical applications with minimal downtime risk
- Ability to cut cost and complexity without sacrificing service levels
- Ability to consolidate multiple applications onto one reliable platform

“Blade Symphony gave us high availability for our most critical financial service applications at a low cost. It really is the optimal infrastructure to support our business strategy.”

Hiroshi Shirokawa, Deputy Director, Information Group, Systems Division, Higo Bank

Nowhere in the business world is competition more intense than in retail banking. Under pressure from declining margins, new consumer options such as online loan services, and new market entrants such as insurance companies and brokerage firms, banks must use every tactic at their disposal to cut costs and improve services.

One of the most effective competitive weapons for retail banks is technology. By staying a step ahead of competitors in using IT to deliver innovative services, retail banks can maintain an edge. They can introduce new services that improve customer satisfaction and loyalty; they can consolidate processing workloads and save time and money; they can increase transaction volumes in the face of lower margins.

If they can deploy their services on the right platform.

And that's where the BladeSymphony server line from Hitachi comes in. Higo Bank, Ltd., a major Japanese Bank located in the Kumamoto area, selected BladeSymphony servers as the centerpiece of its recent IT-led business transformation strategy.

“We are reforming our business to stave off intensifying competition,” said Hiroshi Shirokawa, Deputy Director of the Information Group, Systems Division, at Higo Bank. “Blade Symphony gave us high availability for our most critical financial service applications at a low cost. It really is the optimal infrastructure to support our business strategy.”

### Up and Running 24/7

In 2000 Higo Bank had deployed a terminal service based on the Citrix Presentation Server—the first time a financial institution had used this product. One of the key requirements for the BladeSymphony servers was to run this terminal service with maximum reliability. “Shutting down one of these systems is the same as shutting down the business,” said Shin Murakami, Assistance Deputy Director of the Information Systems Group at Higo Bank. “It is unthinkable.”

In October 2005, Higo Bank migrated to a 24-blade BladeSymphony server configuration. The company chose BladeSymphony based on its ability to deliver the high levels of availability required while also helping to cut maintenance costs.

“We needed a true enterprise-class server that could run our key applications 24/7 with no risk of downtime,” said Mr. Murakami. “Our investment trusts, credit risk management and loan systems are the backbone of our business, and they must be available at all times.”

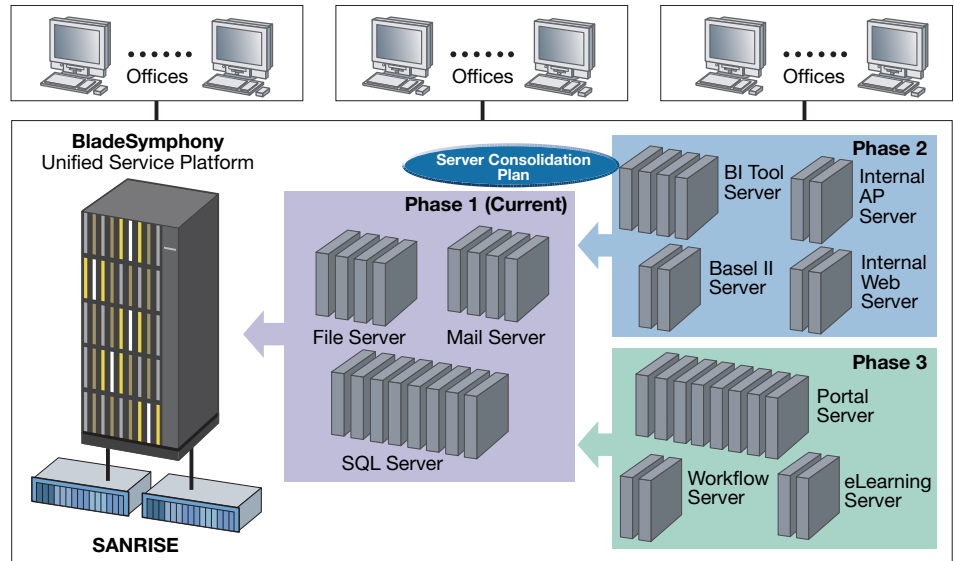
We saw that BladeSymphony was an extremely reliable piece of hardware, and we also believed that it could help us save money through reduced administration and better resource utilization."

According to Mr. Murakami, the built-in high-availability features of the BladeSymphony servers go far beyond those of traditional blade servers. "The N+M cold standby feature and its easy linkage with the high-reliability disk array, SANRISE, are far more sophisticated than the availability features you would typically expect in a blade server," he said. "Together, they enabled us to achieve stable operation of the whole system."

## Technological Prowess, Cost Savings, Compliance Advantages

Mr. Murakami also pointed out that the strong service orientation of Hitachi was extremely helpful. "We really appreciate working with a trustworthy vendor that we have known for a long time," he said. "If there is any problem, one of their system engineers helps out immediately. What we were really looking for was the technological prowess of Hitachi and their ability to propose the optimal solution."

Another critical element in the success of the BladeSymphony installation at Higo Bank is the flexibility and openness of the servers, which leads to cost savings. According to Mr. Shirokawa, Higo Bank is now planning to migrate more key applications and services to BladeSymphony, including their B1 tools, workflows, and portals.



"The basic plan is to migrate everything to BladeSymphony," he said. "It supports multiple operating systems including Windows, Linux, and HP-UX, and you can also run Oracle and SQL Server on it. This gives you the flexibility to build a system without being bound by specifications. It also allows you to extend the system and change the layout without wasting any resources."

Mr. Murakami also sees BladeSymphony as an excellent platform for consolidation. There are more than 100 rack-mounted servers crowding the floor tiles of the bank's data center, and Mr. Murakami keenly feels the need to integrate the workloads and management of all the various systems. "If we can integrate multiple servers with BladeSymphony, we will not only reduce the amount of maintenance work," he said, "we will also create more space in the data center and cut costs."

"What we are trying to achieve is the flexible use of data over and above the constraints of the bank or task," added Mr. Shirokawa. "This will enable us to meet our customer's need with great precision, as well as put in place the internal controls to comply with the Japanese equivalent of the Sarbanes-Oxley regulations."

"By enabling integrated management of the bank's systems and the monitoring of all of its resources, BladeSymphony allows us to use B1 tools to conduct cross-sectional analysis of data from multiple departments, such as cost data, customer sales data, and area data. That in turn allows us to pursue an even higher level of service quality."

## Learn More

To learn more about Higo Bank, Ltd, visit [www.higobank.co.jp](http://www.higobank.co.jp). For additional details about the BladeSymphony server line from Hitachi, visit [www.bladesymphony.com](http://www.bladesymphony.com).

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