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# Gulf Ocean Trading gets an SAP HANA advantage with an integrated solution from Lenovo

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## Overview

As a retailer, Gulf Ocean Trading needs to serve its customers quickly and effectively. To speed up core trading systems and to provide real-time visibility into operations, the company migrated its SAP ERP landscape from HP ProLiant servers to an integrated SAP HANA in-memory solution from Lenovo. Based on its success in accelerating processes and reporting, while supporting round-the-clock operations, the company chose the same solution to support its new manufacturing business.

Gulf Ocean Trading Co. has a forty-year history as a leading provider of components and related services for industrial and automotive applications. The company is the sole agent in the Middle East and North Africa for some of the world's most reputable industrial and automotive brands. From its 23 branches, the company serves major industrial clients in Saudi Arabia, U.A.E, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Oman. Gulf Ocean Trading is a member of the Samir Odeh Group of companies.

## Supporting business growth

To accelerate client-facing processes in its retail stores and to improve the visibility of key business performance metrics, Gulf Ocean Trading wanted to enhance the capabilities of its SAP ERP environment. The existing solution, running on Microsoft Windows and Oracle databases on HP ProLiant G6 servers, had become unreliable and difficult to manage. In addition, performance and availability degraded as the workload grew, resulting in long decision cycles and customer satisfaction issues.

Hamza Al Bakri, IT Manager, comments: "We were spending increasing amounts of time managing the servers, and the business was feeling the impact of availability and performance issues. Staff could not serve customers as quickly as they wanted, and it took too long to get business intelligence about sales by different employees, branches, and regions."

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—Hamza Al Bakri,  
IT Manager,  
Gulf Ocean Trading Co.



Gulf Ocean Trading set out to deploy a more reliable technology backbone for its SAP ERP systems, one that would offer the performance to meet its current requirements and the scalability to match its future ambitions.

“We wanted a solution that would scale cost-effectively within the existing footprint, and that would not suffer from availability problems as the workload grew,” says Hamza Al Bakri. “Our business-critical retail operations depend on the smooth functioning of our SAP software, so it was vital to find a platform capable of uninterrupted service.”

### Extending to new requirements

Recognizing that SAP HANA in-memory technology could give it the high performance and real-time reporting it needed, Gulf Ocean Trading looked at integrated SAP HANA offerings from Fujitsu and Lenovo.

“The Lenovo offer was the best in terms of technology and we also had positive previous experience of working with the company,” says Hamza Al Bakri. “In addition, Lenovo offered deep expertise in designing and supporting systems based on SAP HANA, which helped Gulf Ocean Trading complete a successful migration from Oracle database to SAP HANA.”

Gulf Ocean Trading migrated its SAP ERP Central Component (ECC) landscape to the SAP HANA platform, running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server across three high-availability, highly reliable Lenovo System x3850 X6 servers featuring Intel® Xeon® processor E7 family and EXP2524 Storage Expansion enclosures. IBM Spectrum Scale provides high-performance access to files for multiple simultaneous users.

Optimized for Intel Xeon processors, SAP HANA provides an opportunity to integrate real-time, data-driven intelligence into every part of the business. Using the Lenovo and SAP HANA in-memory solution produced immediate and substantial performance gains, as Hamza Al Bakri explains: “With SAP HANA, we can deliver information to decision-makers in real time, and we also have much more responsive systems in our branch locations. As we can work faster in our branches and get immediate decisions on pricing offers, we can serve our customers much more effectively.”

### Solution components

#### Hardware

Lenovo Solution for SAP HANA

Lenovo System x3850 X6 with

Intel® Xeon® processor E7 family  
and EXP2524 Storage Expansion

Lenovo System x3550 M5 with

Intel Xeon processor E5 family

#### Software

SAP HANA platform

SAP ERP

SAP BW

IBM Spectrum Scale

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

#### Services

Lenovo Solution Services

Lenovo SAP HANA care services –  
exclusive to the Middle East



When Gulf Ocean Trading decided to launch a new business specializing in the manufacture of vehicle axles, its positive experience with both Lenovo and SAP HANA made it easy to choose the same technology platform again. “For our new requirements, we deployed an additional Lenovo Solution for SAP HANA based on a Lenovo x3850 X6 server, together with a Lenovo x3550 M5 to host the application servers for SAP ERP and SAP Business Warehouse,” says Hamza Al Bakri. “Once again, working with Lenovo was extremely helpful in terms of refining our designs for the solution and making sure it would support our requirements around high availability.”

For high availability, Gulf Ocean Trading uses the SUSE Linux High Availability Extension to cluster the SAP application nodes, as well as SAP HANA System Replication for the database layer.

In addition, Gulf Ocean Trading invested in Lenovo SAP HANA care support service, a Lenovo service offering available exclusively in the Middle East, for both the new and existing infrastructures. The service includes support for the Lenovo servers, SAP software, and all of the associated networking and storage technology. This gives the company a single source of support for the entire stack, simplifying support requests and helping to accelerate the resolution of issues.

### Real-time visibility

With SAP HANA running on Lenovo servers, Gulf Ocean Trading enjoys exceptional performance and availability at all times. SAP Business Warehouse delivers real-time dashboards and reports to business decision-makers, enabling them to analyze sales performance by any combination of metrics. In-branch users get snappier performance from the SAP systems, helping them to serve customers faster and make better decisions.

Gulf Ocean Trading also introduced new mobile applications using SAP Fiori UX technology, enabling it to deliver SAP functionality directly to field-sales operatives on their smartphones and tablets. This enables representatives to check stock levels, agree discounts and place orders when they are on-site at customer locations, accelerating the sales cycle and increasing customer satisfaction.

“With SAP HANA running on Lenovo systems, we have resolved all of our past issues with the performance and availability of core business systems,” says Hamza Al Bakri. “We now have much faster visibility of transactions and better control over business workflows as a result. Processes that could take a couple of minutes in the past are now instant, and the end-result is that we can offer a better and more responsive service to our customers.”

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The Lenovo solution supports Gulf Ocean Trading's requirements for year-round, 24/7 operations, and offers easy scalability – both up and out – so that the company can manage future growth without disruption or changes to its systems architecture.

"In more than one year since we deployed the Lenovo System x servers, we had not had so much as an alert about the hardware, let alone any kind of failure," says Hamza Al Bakri. "The perfect reliability and easy management of the Lenovo servers means that we spend less time on routine administration and more time helping the business with its strategic objectives. The SAP HANA integrated support package contributes to this, saving us time and effort by providing a single point of access to multi-company expertise. We are delighted with the Lenovo solutions and support, and we look forward to developing the relationship further."

### For more information

To learn more about Lenovo Data Center Systems solutions, contact your Lenovo Sales Representative or Lenovo Business Partner, or visit: [lenovo.com/systems](http://lenovo.com/systems)

To learn more about Lenovo Solution for SAP HANA, visit: [lenovo.com/sap/hana](http://lenovo.com/sap/hana)

For more information about Gulf Ocean Trading, visit: [www.samirodeh.com](http://www.samirodeh.com)

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