



Informix Professional Services

*Providing Architecture,
Applications, Development,
Product Implementation,
Systems Integration, and
Project Management
Services*

Software vendors, both large and small, are exploring another distribution channel for their businesses by becoming Application Service Providers (ASPs). The Application Service Provider model allows software vendors to provide their solutions to an entirely different market segment—organizations which cannot afford to buy the vendor's products directly or which do not have the internal resources necessary to effectively maintain complex technical solutions.

If your business is considering moving from traditional enterprise software licensing to an ASP delivery model, Informix Professional Services offers an ASP Evaluation Program that enables software vendors using Informix database technology to identify and address potential roadblocks before entering the ASP market.

There are many benefits to the ASP model, most notably the cost savings realized by having multiple business entities share communications facilities and hardware. In addition to being more cost-effective, the ASP model can help user organizations implement technology solutions faster, without requiring them to attract and retain a qualified internal staff to support them.

Renting applications also gives user organizations access to a host of technology solutions which they might otherwise be unable to implement on their own. However, all of these benefits can be outweighed by a number of issues, including:

- **Security**—since data is no longer under the direct custody of subscribers, ASPs must take strong measures to protect the security of user data.

- **Performance**—as transaction volume increases and processing, storage, and computer memory utilization decrease, ASPs must ensure that response times are consistent, and that hardware and software remain available when needed.
- **Data availability**—many subscribers will require access to the information contained in the ASP's system for other purposes. For example, data contained in an ASP-hosted sales system will probably need to be shared with other systems, such as forecasting, inventory, or shipping.
- **Architecture**—the structure of the application may have to be substantially changed, in order to accommodate the paradigm shift to Internet access.

Because application viability, performance, security, and data availability are all critical to success, these issues are best addressed while an ASP is still in its planning stages. Informix Professional Services offers three different packages for software vendors, all designed to help you understand the issues involved in conversion to the new delivery model, along with recommendations for an appropriate course of action.

What's Involved

When you engage Informix Professional Services, you obtain technology experts with a thorough knowledge of security, performance, availability and architecture issues. They will bring your organization a wealth of on-the-job experience, along with an in-depth understanding of the amount of time, planning, and effort involved in converting traditional Informix-based applications to the ASP model.

Informix consultants provide detailed knowledge of Informix database technology—specifically, how to ensure the secure, efficient processing necessary for a successful ASP. Consultants can focus on the DBMS issues in the ASP implementation, or work on any elements necessary to complete the implementation. Specifically, Informix Professional Services offers three ASP

Evaluation Program services: Evaluation and Planning of Application Conversion, Service Level Agreement (SLA) Services, and Data Transport Services.

Evaluation and Planning of Application Conversion

Before converting an application to the ASP model, key success factors must be evaluated and addressed. Using best practices, consultants will determine the actions necessary to allow an Informix-based application to function as an ASP. Among the areas analyzed are security, conversion from fat client to thin client technology, and an evaluation of the current application's degree of Web readiness, all of which are critical to customer satisfaction. At the conclusion of the engagement, a report of findings will be provided. This report can be used to develop the project plan for implementing recommended changes.

Service Level Agreement Services

An ASP must meet subscriber expectations in order to be successful. Using available tools, Informix consultants will provide a method of monitoring database performance so that your organization can verify that the database is functioning at expected performance levels. If required, they will analyze other components of the architecture that might affect overall database performance. This will allow you to provide your customers with information to assure them that agreed upon Service Level Agreements can be evaluated from a database perspective.

Data Transport Services

ASP subscribers require access to their data for a variety of uses. Based on the types of data needed, consultants will develop ways of transferring data between applications. This will enable the sharing of data between your application and other parts of the subscriber's enterprise that require the information. It will also allow subscribers to reclaim data captured by ASP systems.

Program Deliverables

During the course of this program, you will gain a thorough understanding of any security, performance, availability, and architecture issues related to your entrance into the ASP market. When issues are identified, Informix consultants will also provide recommendations as to the appropriate courses of action for resolution. In addition, the Informix Professional Services organization is available to augment your development organization, in order to speed up implementation of the changes required for conversion to the ASP model.

Program Duration

For Evaluation and Planning of Application Conversion, one or two consultants will spend a total of six resource weeks reviewing the current application. Service Level Agreement Services and Data Transport Services will vary in length, depending on the scope and complexity of the conversion, and are performed on a time-and-materials basis.

About Informix Professional Services

Organizations that use Informix technology to position themselves for success count on the expertise of Informix consultants to help them achieve their goals. Informix Professional Services is focused on ensuring that customers successfully implement long-term, strategic business solutions by implementing Informix-based data warehouses, Web content management applications, and high-performance OLTP environments.

Informix consulting programs emphasize a common thread—critical, up-front planning necessary to ensure the successful implementation and utilization of Informix technology. Informix consultants put an emphasis on flexibility and designing custom solutions for unique organizational requirements.

Informix consultants bring a unique mix of technology skills and on-the-job expertise in a variety of industries, such as manufacturing/ERP, finance and banking, telecommunications, retail, health care, and media. From initial analysis, through planning and development, to implementation and beyond, their skills translate into strategic advantage for clients.

Getting more information about Informix Professional Services is simple. On the Web it's www.informix.com/services, or dial 1 800 331 1763 or the Informix sales office nearest you. To register for Informix training, please visit www.informix.com/training, or call 1 800 529 6999 for curriculum planning assistance.

Order this program using Informix part number 000-A4005.