

Brann Enhances Client Relationships with DB2 and SAP Solutions Running on Sun

Sun Success Story



Increasing Profitability Through Technology

Brann Worldwide, headquartered in Wilton, Connecticut, currently has 15 operations throughout North America and Europe, and is one of the largest direct marketing organizations in the world.¹ The firm recently expanded its capabilities to offer clients a full range of services in the areas of customer understanding, customer communications and customer interaction. As a result, Brann now offers clients the first end-to-end solution for increasing customer satisfaction at every “touchpoint” with the customer’s brand. The firm specializes in direct marketing campaigns as well as traditional direct mail programs, and offers a range of consulting services designed to help clients develop corporate marketing strategies.

Brann’s clients include global conglomerates such as VISA, Guinness, Tesco, and Sears. More than half of the firm’s billings are for time spent on client projects, and it’s imperative that the client feels every dollar spent on marketing programs is a dollar well spent. Brann keeps a critical eye on its client accounting systems as well as other business-critical operations.

The firm had been using a legacy accounting system designed for advertising agencies, but the system was outdated and unable to provide the level of forecasting or project management required for Brann’s growing operations. While using the system for limited accounting processes, Brann turned to developing a series of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to manage all other business processes. This system was not able to provide the controls or the analysis and reporting capabilities Brann’s global organization required.

Brann knew that in order to run a profitable and growing enterprise they needed an e-business solution that could control all internal operations, while helping improve communications throughout all its offices.

SAP Solutions Provides Flexibility and Control

Brann chose to implement an SAP R/3 system to power its critical business operations, including financial and project management, sales, and purchasing. Integrated with the ERP system is a corporate intranet portal, based on mySAP Enterprise Portal, which enables enterprise workforce collaboration, and a data warehouse powered by SAP Business Information Warehouse that captures the most current transactional data for business analysis. The combined solution provides Brann with increased management flexibility and control at the same time, by providing:

- Sophisticated HR and project management tools to measure utilization and profitability daily and help the firm rapidly deploy knowledge workers and monitor expenses as they occur.
- Significant increases in efficiency by having all day-to-day work documents and financials in one central location, which has allowed Brann staff more time to better service its clients.
- The ability to make autonomous offices separated by thousands of miles work together as if they were in the same building, sharing resources, technology, and knowledge.

The improved efficiency provided by the SAP R/3-based solution allows Brann to more completely integrate customer-facing functions with back-office operations, which decreases delivery times and operating expenses, and helps sustain a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

SAP® Pinnacle Award
Winner 2002

BRANN worldwide

Challenge

Build an e-business solution to control all business-critical operations, and improve communications throughout 16 offices across Europe and North America.

Build an e-Business Solution

IBM DB2® Universal Database™ and SAP applications running on Sun Enterprise servers provide:

- An SAP R/3 Enterprise Resource Planning system to manage all internal operations, including financial and project management, sales, and purchasing.
- A corporate intranet portal, based on mySAP Enterprise Portal, to enable collaboration across the enterprise.
- A data warehouse, powered by SAP Business Information Warehouse, to capture the most current transactional data for business analysis.

Sun Products and Services

- Sun Enterprise™ 3500 Server
- Solaris™ Operating Environment

1. According to studies performed by *Advertising Age*, *AdWeek*, and the Direct Marketing Association.

Sun's Technology Platform for a Multi-Tiered Architecture

Structured in a multi-tiered architecture, Brann's SAP system is comprised of three mirrored tiers, each running IBM DB2 Universal Database on the Sun Solaris™ Operating Environment (OE). The multi-tiered solution runs on Sun Enterprise™ servers, ideally suited for enterprise applications such as Brann's ERP, intranet services, and data warehouse operations.

Sun Enterprise servers deliver exceptional availability and performance features. Brann's downtime is significantly reduced through Sun's resilient architecture, advanced system management tools, and software enhancements, such as Dynamic Reconfiguration and Alternate Pathing. The modular hardware components of Sun systems, combined with the scalable Solaris OE, deliver outstanding investment protection and make it easy to raise performance and add capacity.

"Our implementation had to be scalable and available, and it had to perform well," said Cliff Nicholson, vice president and director of information technology for Brann. "Using DB2 as an embedded database running on Sun Enterprise servers provides a highly scalable, low-maintenance solution on which to run SAP solutions. The abundance of support services, plus the reliability of Sun and DB2 provide us with a 24 x 7, totally scalable solution."

A Win/Win Solution for Agency and Client

Brann's management views the SAP and DB2 solution on Sun as a comprehensive, long-term business investment. "Building a better financial infrastructure is harmonious with building better client relationships," said Vincent Legg, senior vice president and director of operations for Brann Worldwide. "SAP allows our company to stay fast on our feet and well informed, by giving us easier access to the business data and analysis we need to stay strategically involved with our clients' businesses."

Brann considers Sun the front-runner for system robustness and reliability. Sun's architecture addresses their needs for security, as well as scalability, availability, and manageability. Brann Worldwide's use of SAP and Sun technology to solve everyday business challenges gives the firm more time to develop a truly integrated and collaborative agency/client relationship. Simply put, SAP and Sun provide mission-critical enterprise solutions that help simplify Brann's IT strategic decision-making process.

About Sun Microsystems

For years, customers have turned to Sun Microsystems to help them expand their business, lower their costs, and gain competitive advantage. Sun is a leading provider of industrial-strength hardware, software, services, and technologies that power the Internet and enable companies worldwide to take their businesses to the next level. Sun can be found in more than 100 countries and on the World Wide Web at sun.com.

"With the SAP and Sun solution, we are able to view project status and financial results in real-time, thus making our forecasts and budgeting more timely and accurate. We are able to identify business process improvements based on the collected data, eliminating much of the inefficient manpower hours spent with our legacy systems, and therefore lowering the total cost of ownership."

– **Vincent Legg**, Senior Vice President and Director of Operations, Brann Worldwide

"Brann has doubled its SAP user base with no performance degradation over the past year. The combination of DB2's online reorganization ability, the scalability of the Solaris Operating Environment, and the reliability of Sun Enterprise servers gives us the platform we need to grow."

– **Cliff Nicholson**, Vice President and Director of Information Technology, Brann Worldwide

Get the details.

To find out more about SAP on Sun, please contact your local Sun or SAP sales representative or visit sun.com/sap

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