

Banque Internationale Arabe de Tunisie (BIAT)

Sun Mainframe Rehosting Success Story.

Banque Internationale Arabe de Tunisie (BIAT), the largest private Tunisian bank, faced an urgent business challenge in an increasingly competitive banking industry. It had to provide faster and better service to its current customers in order to retain market share.

To meet this challenge, BIAT devised an ambitious plan for customer-focused banking solutions to keep clients loyal to BIAT bank services. BIAT selected Sun Microsystems Inc. to restructure its IT system, improve customer services in its existing 100-branch network throughout Tunisia, and add five new branch offices each year to fulfill customer demands for local service.

BIAT used a Sun Enterprise™ 10000 server and Sun Mainframe Transaction Processing Software to create this new IT system, migrating its banking applications from the existing mainframe to the Sun UNIX® environment, using a relational database, and adding Java™ interfaces for Internet and Web access.

The bank, which collects a rapidly-growing database of information daily from the 100 branches and runs batch jobs overnight, migrated 3,000 programs, 2,500 files, and 350 batch jobs with 6500 steps from the mainframe to the Sun Enterprise server, using a relational database, and adding Java interfaces for Internet and Web access. All applications were moved to the system in eight months and the mainframe was retired. The new system runs batch jobs 20 percent faster than the mainframe did, and there was minimal retraining required for developers on the new system.

Customer Needs Drive New IT System

BIAT's mainframe was limiting the bank's expansion and service capabilities. Running the core banking applications since the bank was formed in 1976, the system lacked flexibility to adapt to rapidly evolving market needs and customer demands. In addition, the existing system could not handle projected business growth, and high operational costs threatened to place the bank at a competitive disadvantage in the marketplace.



Company

Banque Internationale Arabe de Tunisie (BIAT)

Industry/Market

Finance/Banking

Applications/Solutions

- Restructure the IT system to create customer focused banking solutions
- Migrates banking applications from an existing mainframe to a Sun UNIX® environment

Products/Services

- Sun Enterprise™ 10000 server
- Solaris™ Operating Environment
- Sun Mainframe Transaction Processing Software
- Sun Mainframe Batch Manager

Key Business Challenges

- Support expansion of BIAT banking services to new branch offices in Tunisia
- Enhance customer relations by offering access to information via the Internet
- Fully automate standard transaction services while minimizing overhead
- Increase system speed to meet overnight batch window times
- Provide mainframe-like performance with flexibility for future expansion

Key Business Solutions

- Improved and expanded customer service through access to centralized database
- Reduced batch job running time by 20 percent to meet overnight batch windows
- Reduced cost of system ownership

Tunisian bank retains market leadership with faster and better customer service enabled by Sun IT system

“Sun is a trusted name in open systems environments and we knew our applications would run efficiently on this platform, helping reduce operating costs.”

Brahim Ben Ali,
CIO
BIAT

BIAT's requirements for a new IT system were very precise: the solution had to create and sustain client relationships by providing centralized customer information. It needed to fully automate standard transaction services and simultaneously minimize transaction servicing and operational overhead. And, finally, it had to be on a platform offering flexibility for future expansion and growth.

BIAT Finds a Solution with Sun

BIAT's process began with decisions on which technologies to use and which vendors to rely on to deliver the solutions in a timely and cost-effective way.

Early on, BIAT was impressed by Sun's success in migrating many legacy applications from mainframes to UNIX servers, especially large applications and difficult environments. Sun's products, the Sun Enterprise 10000 server and Sun Mainframe Transaction Processing Software were good matches for BIAT's needs. A key component of the Mainframe Transaction Processing Software was a Java product that offered a very efficient means to extend BIAT's applications to the Internet for a complete eBusiness solution to improve customer loyalty. Sun's software has been used to successfully migrate mission-critical enterprise applications from mainframe systems to open, affordable UNIX systems at more than 600 customer sites worldwide.

“We were impressed by the combination of Sun's automated tools and the extensive migration experience of the team. The pilot went very smoothly and gave us confidence that the larger migration could be successfully executed,” noted Brahim Ben Ali, CIO at BIAT.

BIAT was looking for a reliable means to rehost its large applications in a UNIX hardware environment that offered mainframe-equivalent technology. The banking firm chose a four-processor Sun Enterprise 10000 server, which is designed specifically to meet the challenges of today's data center. The server can be partitioned into sixteen dynamic system domains that can be created, resized, pooled and deleted on-the-fly in response to changes in application demand, helping to enable customers to run the most intensive, multi-terabyte applications for data warehousing, decision support, OLTP and data analytics on a single, scalable server. Sun is the only UNIX vendor to offer this mainframe-like feature.



“The Sun server parallels mainframe functions, ensuring that we have a familiar and manageable environment for our mission-critical applications,” noted Ben Ali. “The enterprise-computing architecture of the Sun server offers the robust solution to fully support our requirements – large numbers of users in mission-critical banking operations.”

Mission Critical Applications Move to Open Systems Environment

The BIAT challenge was large: rehost 3,000 programs, 2,500 files, and 6500 batch jobs, using Sun Mainframe Transaction Processing Software and Oracle® onto the Sun server. To do it quickly and efficiently, Sun teamed with TMI, a large, experienced Tunisian systems integrator. TMI has strong experience with Oracle and Sun, essential facets of the BIAT project.

First, Sun and TMI helped BIAT migrate a small pilot application to the Sun environment, quickly demonstrating that the entire legacy system could be successfully migrated using the Sun software.

“We were impressed by the combination of Sun’s automated tools and the extensive migration experience of the team. The pilot went very smoothly and gave us confidence that the larger migration could be successfully executed,” Ben Ali said.

Sun and TMI then worked closely with the BIAT project team to migrate the core banking applications to the new system. Within eight months, all had been moved to the new system and the mainframe was retired. Shortly after, Phase 2 of the endeavor added Java and Internet support.

Get the details.

Learn how enterprises use Sun mainframe rehosting solutions to reduce IT costs, improve performance, and gain open systems flexibility.

<http://www.sun.com/datacenter/mainframe/rehosting/>

An Evolutionary Approach Provides a Complete Solution

BIAT's return on investment in the new system includes a 20 percent reduction in batch job running time which will enable the necessary banking updates to be done overnight, increased productivity of bank employees through access to the new database, better system performance, and lower cost of system ownership. These benefits, provided by the investment in the Sun system, specifically meet BIAT's stated project goals of a centralized customer database to improve client loyalty, automation of transactions for reduced operating costs, and platform expansion capabilities for future growth.

With the Sun solution, we were able to improve customer service and operations, lower costs, and gain a flexible technology platform for the future," Ben Ali concluded. "It was just the right choice for us."

"Sun's evolutionary approach is exactly the right solution, allowing us to reach our goals."

Brahim Ben Ali,
CIO
BIAT

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