



MAINTAINING GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY IN A SEASON OF CHANGE

The rise of online travel giants, direct booking services from airlines and hotels, and the elimination of airlines commissions have put margins of many travel agencies under pressure, if not out of business all together.

For the Norway's second largest corporate travel agency who serves over 300,000 customers, the entire business model of the firm changed when airlines stopped paying commissions. Now, with only a small booking fee that can be charged with the issuance of an air ticket, Berg-Hansen's flight booking operations has to be ultra-efficient. Because the company made decision early on that IT can be the competitive difference, Berg-Hansen's decision to move the majority of its airline bookings onto a customer self-service Web interface was made in time to deal with these changes. Today, Berg-Hansen processes more than 60% of its air reservations through Web self-service, while travel consultants are available to assist customers with more complicated travel needs. "We are in an intensely competitive business. Every day, we have to answer the unspoken question, 'why are you better than your biggest competitor?'" says Bent Olsby, Senior Software Development Engineer at Berg-Hansen. "This transition to corporate-friendly self-service booking has enabled the company to weather an industry-wide shakeout."

The move to more self-service and concurrent drive for more internal productivity has resulted in two IT challenges. The IT infrastructure has to run efficiently and be agile enough to change with modifications to business process. In addition, the mitigation of security concerns, including data encryption and backup, had to be performed at a pace that matched business conditions. For example, even with a low margin per booking, they need to keep a record of the reservation for several years in their system due to refunds, customer contracts and accounting rules. "Reliable data backup and availability are essential to the business," says Bent Olsby.

PROGRESS® OPENEDGE® 11 ADOPTION

Berg-Hansen has relied on the Progress OpenEdge Application Development platform as the core of its systems, such as bookings and accounting. Progress OpenEdge also powers the large databases that support the business. And it serves as an integration hub for numerous dependent systems, such as the Amadeus application used for bookings, in an N-Tiered architecture. Berg-Hansen is unusual in that it does not maintain a data warehouse. Rather, all historical customer data is stored in a central repository. The benefit of this approach is to speed up the booking process and recalling



CHALLENGE

Lead with efficient and corporate-friendly self-service booking

SOLUTION

Progress® OpenEdge® as the core systems platform, including new rollouts of TDE and disaster recovery

BENEFIT

Doubling revenue while maintaining steady headcount; high system performance; reliable backups

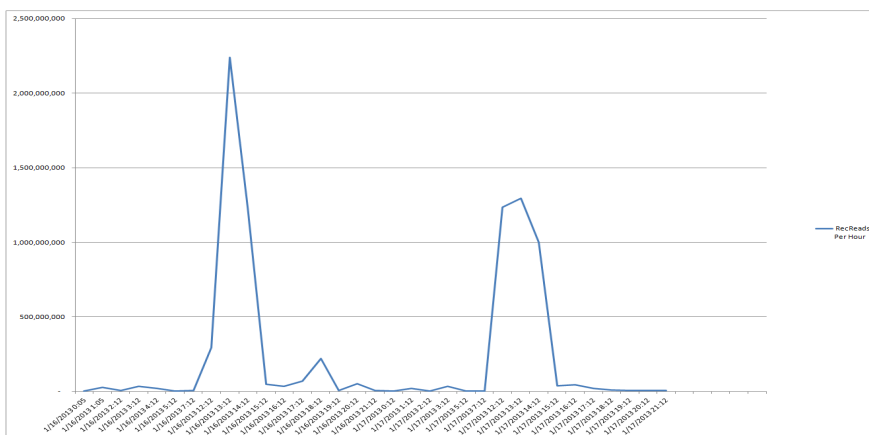
of customer histories for travel consultants while having a secure data back up and failover solution with Progress replication.

Today, as Berg-Hansen is deployed on Progress OpenEdge 11 and they are working on deploying Progress OpenEdge 11.2, the company continues to leverage the technology for advances in database replication and Transparent Data Encryption (TDE) – all without degradation to system performance or uptime. The IT team is also planning to evaluate the new Progress OpenEdge mobile features. Recently rolled out upgrades include:

- ▶ **New Web Service APIs** – To open up system functionality and data for multiple and changing platforms. For example, booking and itinerary services are made available to different platforms on the Web, and for the Native Mobile apps such as iPhone, Android and the soon to be released Windows App. This reuse of business logic and the ability to support any platform is an example of the kind of process optimization that drives efficiency and productivity.
- ▶ **Advanced replication** – Replication runs on a continuous cycle, creating only a few seconds of delay between the production and the replicated databases. Transaction logs are also archived off site in 20 minute intervals on all databases. The new replication architecture gives the IT organization new failover options, ensuring seamless business continuity.
- ▶ **Improved system performance** – The move to Progress OpenEdge 11 has allowed the IT department to consolidate servers while increasing system performance. Because Progress OpenEdge 11 supports both 32 and 64 bit operating systems, IT can put more diverse applications on fewer servers. Also, by using 64-bit more memory can be addressed from one machine, giving an even better database performance.
- ▶ **New Web front end written in C#** – Progress OpenEdge 11 makes it possible to introduce applications written in new languages without compromising on performance or scalability. Berg-Hansen is now deploying a new Web front end written in C#. The IT department foresees no problem in scaling the new front end with existing server infrastructure.
- ▶ **Transparent Data Encryption (TDE)** – Given the PCI regulations governing credit card transactions, Berg-Hansen needed to encrypt standing customers' credit card data that is in its database. Progress OpenEdge 11 makes it easy to implement Transparent Data Encryption (TDE) for this purpose. TDE makes it possible for Berg-Hansen to encrypt customer data in its databases without any adverse impact on system performance. TDE is also included in the replication process. Berg-Hansen can keep up its aggressive replication program without concern for data breaches. Progress OpenEdge 11 oversees continuous encryption as its replicates the company's large databases.

“Progress OpenEdge has provided the agility and efficiency the company needed to shift its operations online and to continue growing without sacrificing productivity.”

*Bent Olsby
Senior Software
Development Engineer
Berg-Hansen*



Recent peaks in record reads were handled seamlessly by the Progress OpenEdge database

MAKING IT PART OF THE JOURNEY

Berg-Hansen is in the travel business, which provides an apt metaphor for the way the company operates. "It's a journey," says Bent Olsby. "We left our old business behind years ago. Now, we're on a course for a future that looks bright, even if it's not quite clear where the industry is taking us. IT allows us to be on that journey." The Berg-Hansen IT department, through its use of OpenEdge over the course of a long partnership with Progress Software, has made the journey possible. "Progress OpenEdge has provided the agility and efficiency the company needed to shift its operations online and continue growing without sacrificing productivity," concludes Bent Olsby.

The company has nearly doubled in size over the last ten years while keeping headcount flat. This remarkable growth in productivity and revenue in such a rapidly changing business landscape is a testament to solid management overall but, in particular, to an extremely focused and diligent IT operation.

ABOUT BERG-HANSEN



Berg-Hansen was established in 1875 and is owned today by Aircontactgruppen AS. Together with their partner, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, they are one of the world's largest travel agency chains. In Norway, the company is represented throughout the country.

Berg-Hansen has a range of travel solutions for customers of all sizes. They have products suited for business travel, meetings, seminars, conferences, and company tours. In addition, Berg-Hansen can handle leisure travel involving everything from charter tours to custom dream vacations.

Solid partnerships with high quality providers and effective service contribute to reducing their customers travel costs. The company provides 24/7 assistance on reservations, questions, and changes to fast and efficient help should something unexpected occur. www.berg-hansen.no

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation [NASDAQ: PRGS] is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or in the cloud, on any platform or device, to any data source, with enhanced performance, minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

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