



FE Global deploys IBM System i5 as a catalyst for growth



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- Tay Hung Chuan, senior IT manager, FE Global Electronics Pte Ltd

The Client

Established in 1990, FE Global Electronics Pte Ltd is one of the leading electronic components distributors in the pan-Asia region. With more than 45 regional offices and more than 750 talented staff worldwide, FE Global strives to cover greater grounds, staying at the forefront of new technologies and bringing greater value.

FE Global is a trusted partner for some of the world's most reputable principals and global clients from a wide spectrum of industries – information technology, consumer electronics to telecommunications. Not contented with just providing products, FE Global has

expanded its offerings to include a range of value-added services from material management solutions to design and development.

FE Global now has 80 major suppliers and 1000 active customers.

Critical decision for a better future

With its expanded services, FE Global experienced a significant increase in business and a commensurate increase in information processing, management and archiving needs. FE Global needed an information infrastructure that would provide effective communications across the company and offices in the region to help the management make the best possible business decisions.

To remain competitive in the electronics distribution industry, FE Global needed to consolidate its new SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution to lower IT support costs and efficiently manage its operations.

The key to the ERP solution is a software which is able to support multiple languages, especially Chinese, to sustain business operations in China and Taiwan.

FE Global required a centralized environment, with business transactions and activities consolidated into a central database that will help to speed up business performance and analysis. Due to the use of various currencies across the region by the business operations, FE Global was faced with the challenge of managing the individual inventory management systems more efficiently and effectively.

The company also expected the new operation to aid in better management of the accounts receivable to improve cash flow in running the business.

System i5 – the logical choice

After a strategic assessment of their needs and working closely with IBM Premier Business Partner S & I Systems, FE Global decided to implement its core Enterprise Resource Planning solution – SAP, on the IBM System i5 platform with DB2/400 database system, taking advantage of its high reliability and low total cost of ownership. S & I's extensive knowledge of IBM

products, helped FE Global in the sizing the hardware.

“We had experience with the power and reliability of the IBM AS/400 systems [the predecessors to System i5 product family] and we were impressed with the price and performance potential of the IBM System i5 platform,” says Tay Hung Chuan, senior IT manager, FE Global Electronics Pte Ltd. “One of the key selling points of IBM System i5 was the ability to run multiple partitioned solutions on the same system.”



IBM System i5 products

With the outstanding processing capacity, logical partition (LPAR) resource virtualization and intuitive management tools of the IBM System i5, FE Global is able to gain power and capacity it needed to run its core business applications. At the same time, the company also has the scalability to improve its business processes by continually adding new applications to the same

platform – thereby keeping the hardware cost down which contribute to a lower total cost of ownership (TCO).

FE Global also takes advantage of the switch disks and Independent Auxiliary Storage Pool (iASP) technology in the System i5 to maintain high availability. The iASP clustering allows two i5 products to share the same disk pool of resources and it helps to provide a higher uptime than one single footprint.

“In the event of a failure on the primary system, the backup partition can very quickly restart production, automatically taking additional resources from the test partition,” comments Tay.

The key to business continuity

Besides reducing TCO, improving uptime and ensuring business continuity was just as critical to FE Globe's decision to consolidate its data center architecture.

According to Tay, the consolidated server architecture on a System i5 environment has simplified the FE Global data center architecture, making it simpler to manage and much easier to scale. “The configuration of our two IBM System i5 520 models also gives us confidence that our employees and

customers will have access to the information they need 24x7," he says.

Another reason which has also significantly contributed to the purchase of the System i5 is the ease of maintenance and support of the systems by knowledgeable expertise.



Better Business Performance
**IBM Premier Business Partner –
S & I Systems**

Trusted partners

FE Global worked with S & I Systems, an IBM Premier Business Partner, to design and deploy the new infrastructure for SAP. Tay comments, "We were convinced very early on that the new solution would be from IBM, since our experience with the System i5 platform has always been excellent. S & I Systems helped setup the LPAR, iASP and the servers, and demonstrated the value they bring as an IBM Premier Business Partner – we received support from IBM expert developers very quickly too."

"S & I's knowledge of the iASP technology was particularly important in helping us to get the best from the new solution."

A reliable and scalable system for continued growth

The powerful IBM System i5 systems provide FE Global the reliability and scalability needed to expand workloads without requiring the addition of hardware or IT staff. And because the system offers multiple growth and upgrades, FE Global can expand its solution as its business needs grow.

"The i5 platform is oriented towards growth," comments Tay. "Whether it is growing customer base, greater communication needs or adding new business applications, we are confident that the IBM System i5 environment can grow with our demands."

After using the platform for one and a half years, Tay remarks, "Till to date, I can't think of any reason why I am not satisfied with the i5 environment."

For more information

Please contact your IBM sales representative or IBM Business Partner.

Visit our Web site at:
www.ibm.com/systems/sg/i/

For more information about FE Global, visit: www.fe-electronics.com

For more information about S & I Systems, visit: www.si-asia.com



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