SYMMETRY™

SAP Partner™

Case Study

FREEMAN

Freeman Gets Project Back on Track Through Valued Symmetry Partnership

Subsequent to a tightened budget and delayed response time with its previous IT vendor, Freeman entrusted Symmetry's team of experts to architect a manageable, high-performing SAP® environment at a lower cost of ownership.

About Freeman

Donald S. "Buck" Freeman, founder of Freeman Co., discovered his passion for event planning and party decorating as a young student at the University of Iowa. Through his forward-thinking nature and entrepreneurial ambition, he established the first Freeman Decorating Company in 1927. Over 80 years later that same visionary passion has transformed Freeman into the face-to-face marketing leader it is today.

Located throughout North America, Freeman services clients worldwide with full range face-to-face marketing solutions and brand-building events, including exhibit design, rental and transportation, audio, visual and electrical set up. Backed by sound research, industry trends and customer insight, Freeman delivers innovative results that shape the way its clients do business.

Turning a Pain into a Gain

Nothing adds more stress to a company's operations, than when its system is undergoing phased updates. Pile on high costs and inattentive service from your vendor and employees are left feeling the effects. As a result, budget plans need to be reined in more and your internal resources wind up spending extra time taking extra steps each time new business demands arise.

This is a situation Freeman realized all too well. After accruing excessive outsourcing costs and lacking flexibility in service, Freeman decided it was time to transition its IT solution away from its current vendor arrangement. The company needed a reliable outsourcing partner confident enough in its resources to keep Freeman's SAP system running just as smoothly as before. However, Freeman needed a vendor partner that could deliver the full customer support and cost effectiveness the company required for its IT operations.

Freeman resolved that remote managed support was still the most logical route for its needs. On-site consulting would simply entail over-the-top expenses, while off-shore support could lead to miscommunication and shortage of real-time accessibility. Essentially, Freeman knew it deserved the best of both worlds in quality of service and a prudential spending plan. Now, it was just a matter of finding a partner who could deliver on those objectives.

After asking around and reviewing a plethora of vendor profiles, a business ally encouraged Freeman to partner with Symmetry's team of experts.

The company vouched for Symmetry's technical managed services based on its own positive relationship through the years. Interested, Freeman reached out to Symmetry to feel out whether the team had what it would take. After sitting down with the client manager and Basis support team to discuss timelines, environment challenges and budget, the decision seemed like a no brainer.

Straight away, the Basis support team began its assessment and mapped out a structured plan for landscape enhancements and an in-place system migration. After review, the team figured out the necessary improved efficiencies that would increase uptime and overall performance within the SAP system. In addition to addressing operational needs, Symmetry provided an upfront fixed rate and outline of key project milestones, taking the guesswork out of Freeman's forecasted budget and timeline.

Phased down to 6 servers under 6 months

The main project goals for Freeman and Symmetry were to consolidate the number of servers and improve the overall functionality of the SAP operating system and database. Despite project initiation from the prior hosting company, much of the system still required maintained management and reconfiguration. Since Freeman was relying on its SAP solution for human resource and business intelligence, the support team architected the software – ECC, Netweaver BI, Solution Manager and Netweaver PI – to improve talent management, corporate processes, payroll and workflow. Symmetry additionally helped Freeman spec out the central hardware for its system.

The next phase required support packs for every portal. It was important that all platforms were in sync, so each portal and system was able to talk one another. The support team performance tuned the integrated platforms and portals to create a seamless relationship. From there, Symmetry recognized the parameters were not set correctly by the prior hosting and Basis company, due to over-configuration. Thus, phase three involved a new hurdle: the Basis support team needed to simplify the complexity of the overall environment. By building in redundancies and testing the performance, the Basis support team created a more scalable, secure environment, while remaining on track. "Symmetry was never the bottleneck during our upgrade process and

No Runaround, Simply Experience

Practice Makes Perfect

Affordability shouldn't cost you quality. When it comes to getting a job done right, you have to consider time and money…and time as money. With Symmetry, you receive cost-effective, quality project management, from start to finish – no hiccups or headaches between.

Symmetry's philosophy is that its team can meet any client's promised budget and timeline, because each specialized, trained team member has the experience to back it up. Symmetry's experts are armed with tools and sound background in all aspects of SAP solutions, whether it's hardware, operating systems, databases, SAP or third party applications.

could scale up everything quickly," explains, Morgan Craven, IT Director at Freeman Corporation.

By the fourth and final phase, Symmetry migrated the entire SAP system from 26 physical servers to six servers, while upgrading the necessary key components. At project end, the Basis team handled all aspects of implementation, from troubleshooting, system syncing, performance tuning, migrations and go live, without tying up Freeman's internal resources or falling behind schedule.

Keeping tempo to finish strong

Symmetry went one step further to verse Freeman's internal IT resources on the SAP system's essential ins and outs and performance capabilities. From there, Freeman utilized Symmetry's expertise to help find an in-house Basis professional. However, after reviewing candidates, Freeman decided to continue its partnership with Symmetry for future support.

"Symmetry has a much broader base of skill sets to pull from than any one individual would or could have. Those skill sets have been brought to bear on several occasions to work through technical issues and improve efficiencies in other areas. Their support model of having dedicated resources on our account is more like an extension of our IT team, as opposed to other outsourced Basis support models."

As for the road ahead, Freeman is optimistic. "Things have been working very well. We have enhanced performance in several areas of our SAP environment. We are in the process of optimizing our disaster recovery plan for SAP, and will be looking for assistance from Symmetry in other SAP upgrades of our operating companies."

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From Symmetry's standpoint, the team's main success was its ability to establish trust. Trust to migrate and enhance Freeman's SAP system. Trust to improve productivity. Trust to help search for Freeman's in-house resource pool. And trust to, in return, rely on Symmetry for system support and future upgrades.

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About Symmetry

Symmetry Corporation, an SAP Services Partner Certified in Hosting, Cloud and SAP HANA® Operations Services, provides technical managed services, security administration and project consulting in support of SAP solutions for customers in the U.S. and around the world. Based at Symmetry's Center of Expertise in Milwaukee, Wis., our large staff has extensive experience in Basis, the SAP NetWeaver® technology platform and security consulting. With a proven methodology for delivering technical managed services in support of SAP software, Symmetry delivers flexible, high-quality solutions that help reduce the total cost of ownership and enable high-performing, secure, stable SAP solution-based environments.

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