

EMC Elevates IT Efficiency to New Heights with Advanced Customer Services



EMC Corporation
Hopkinton, MA
www.emc.com

Industry:

High Technology

Annual Revenue:

US\$11.2 billion

Employees:

31,000

Oracle Products & Services:

Oracle Premier Support
Oracle Advanced Customer Services
Oracle Assisted Services
Oracle Database
Oracle Real Application Clusters
Oracle E-Business Suite

Key Benefits:

- Improved business-technology alignment with dedicated Oracle experts
- Decreased risk and costs with proactive services
- Up to 50% faster problem resolution led to increased system availability and reliability
- Reduced upgrade issues through advance planning and onsite support

“We run an \$11 billion plus business with over 25,000 users on Oracle E-Business Suite. It’s the backbone of our business. Advanced Customer Services is essential to keeping that business running smoothly and profitably, by continuously improving the return on our Oracle solutions.” – Tony Pagliarulo, VP, Enterprise Applications, EMC

As the world’s largest provider of storage solutions, EMC is caretaker for more than two-thirds of the globe’s most important information. Whether it’s backing up banking data, preserving healthcare records, or archiving legal documents, EMC handles it all. And when you’re responsible for managing this much sensitive data, absolute confidence in your IT systems is a must. Even the smallest service disruption can cost you a customer for life.

To help guarantee customer confidence, EMC counts on Oracle’s Advanced Customer Services. An enhancement to Oracle Premier Support, Advanced Customer Services enables EMC to choose from an array of flexible, proactive support solutions. Through Assisted Services—one of Oracle’s Advanced Customer Services—EMC contracts a full-time, onsite Service Delivery Engineer (SDE) as well as a named Service Delivery Manager (SDM).

These two highly skilled experts provide EMC with proactive performance assessments, upgrade support planning, around-the-clock support management, and a range of other enhanced support services that increase system availability, improve IT effectiveness, and better align EMC’s business and IT priorities

Oracle's Deep Experience Locks EMC's Business and Technology Priorities into Alignment

Over the past five years, EMC has been aggressively making acquisitions in the software and services market. Quickly integrating these new acquisitions into EMC’s business systems is critical to the success of its growth strategy. In this rapidly changing environment, having two highly skilled Oracle

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resources deeply embedded in the EMC team helps ensure the right technology decisions are made well before new software is implemented. For example, when EMC recently decided to upgrade its Oracle E-Business Suite CRM applications and 9i database, management wanted a clear accounting of the benefits of the upgrade—as well as the risks. In response, the Advanced Customer Services team worked closely with their EMC counterparts to develop an ROI and risk reduction plan. This was exactly what Chad Brack, Senior Director of Enterprise Applications, needed. “There are a lot of business implications to upgrading software, so the ACS team’s deep understanding of our environment allowed us to properly prioritize based on our strategic goals.”

The advantage of having dedicated Oracle support resources becomes even more apparent when it comes to EMC’s business cycles. During a fiscal quarter-end, for example, financial systems must run flawlessly. Upgrade planning must take these critical business periods into consideration, something that Oracle’s SDE and SDM plot meticulously. “Whether it’s a big go-live or the end of a fiscal quarter, our Assisted Services team schedules appropriately, so that potential issues can be resolved without major impacts on our business,” says Brack. “Their priorities are our priorities, which tells me they are about as close to being an EMC employee as you can get.”

Proactive Services Provide Rock Solid Foundation for Efficient Management of Costs, Risks and Upgrades

Many IT directors will tell you the greatest challenge to success isn’t a lack of resources, but rather, poor execution. To construct a solid foundation for successful execution requires focus—not only on immediate and urgent issues, but also on enterprise-wide concerns that take into account the overall software lifecycle. And that’s where EMC depends on its onsite SDE for proactive technical assessments that optimize performance during the entire software lifecycle, from implementation through upgrade. “Our SDE is an elite resource,” says Brack. “He helps with everything from analyzing vanilla code to assessing database performance. He is constantly reviewing our configuration and making suggestions on how we might improve it.”

But for Brack, the value of this proactive advice and analysis goes beyond better system performance. It also results in better client

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service. “Regularly reporting to our customers on Service Level Objectives is part of my job. These assessments help me identify and track where we may need to adjust things to ensure we meet these SLOs.”

Another benefit of the dedicated Assisted Services team is the knowledge transfer that occurs both formally and informally. To bolster the close communication between Oracle and EMC, the Assisted Services team leads brown bag training sessions. “Our database administration team relies on these sessions for tips and tricks on building their Oracle competence,” says Brack. In addition to this interaction, EMC has access to Oracle technical experts through its customized web portal, which contains white papers, technical notes, and web conferences, as well as many other resources to aid in building technical skills and knowledge.

For higher level information, EMC management counts on the weekly meetings with the onsite and remote Advanced Customer Services team. Led by the SDM, these meetings enable EMC senior level staff like Brack to review priorities related to plans, stay apprised of risks, and track the impact of changes related to upgrades. “When we have questions, our SDM is there with the relevant answer, which ensures our upgrade plan continues moving forward.”

Faster Problem Resolution Leads to Ironclad System Reliability and Availability

EMC’s support needs are unique for the number of customizations they have made to their Oracle solutions. This creates a special challenge when diagnosing technical issues. The SDE’s knowledge of Oracle code and familiarization with EMC’s customizations helps lower the cost and risk of supporting these applications. For example, Brack recalls how this expertise proved invaluable during their latest E-Business Suite and database upgrades. “We had several issues that required escalation to development. Our SDE helped us cut time to resolution dramatically by suggesting three or four possible solutions in advance, which he put into the service requests. That extra work helped the Oracle development team quickly isolate and resolve the problem, and reduce our planned downtime by weeks.”

In escalations like this, a dedicated SDM, who understands EMC’s business and technical priorities, manages the process

from start to finish. The SDM is a key reason Brack estimates his problem resolution time is down by 50%. “With the SDM, we get a direct communications window into the rest of the Oracle organization. These resources work together to rapidly resolve problems and prevent future ones from occurring.”

Why Oracle?

EMC is much more than a customer to Oracle. In addition to running its business on Oracle, EMC embeds Oracle’s database in its own software, which it then sells to its own customers. Together, EMC and Oracle run a joint support center to assist mutual customers with interoperability issues.

Brack says it’s this tight relationship that encouraged them to choose the Assisted Services option through Advanced Customer Services. “We found the combination of onsite and offsite services a perfect fit for our needs. It matches our desire to provide the highest level of reliability without compromising quality, which is critical to winning our customer’s confidence over the long term.”

Implementation

Since 2002, EMC has implemented a number of major business transformation projects using Oracle products and services. In 2006, the company upgraded its CRM applications to 11.5.10, their database to 10g, implemented RAC technology, and rolled out a major ERP project that added more than 10,000 new users to its business system. Over the same period, EMC has contracted Advanced Customer Services to provide support for these Oracle products. As a result, all of these upgrades were accomplished on time and on budget.

EMC Corporation (NYSE: EMC) is the world's leading developer and provider of information infrastructure technology and solutions that enable organizations of all sizes to transform the way they compete and create value from their information.