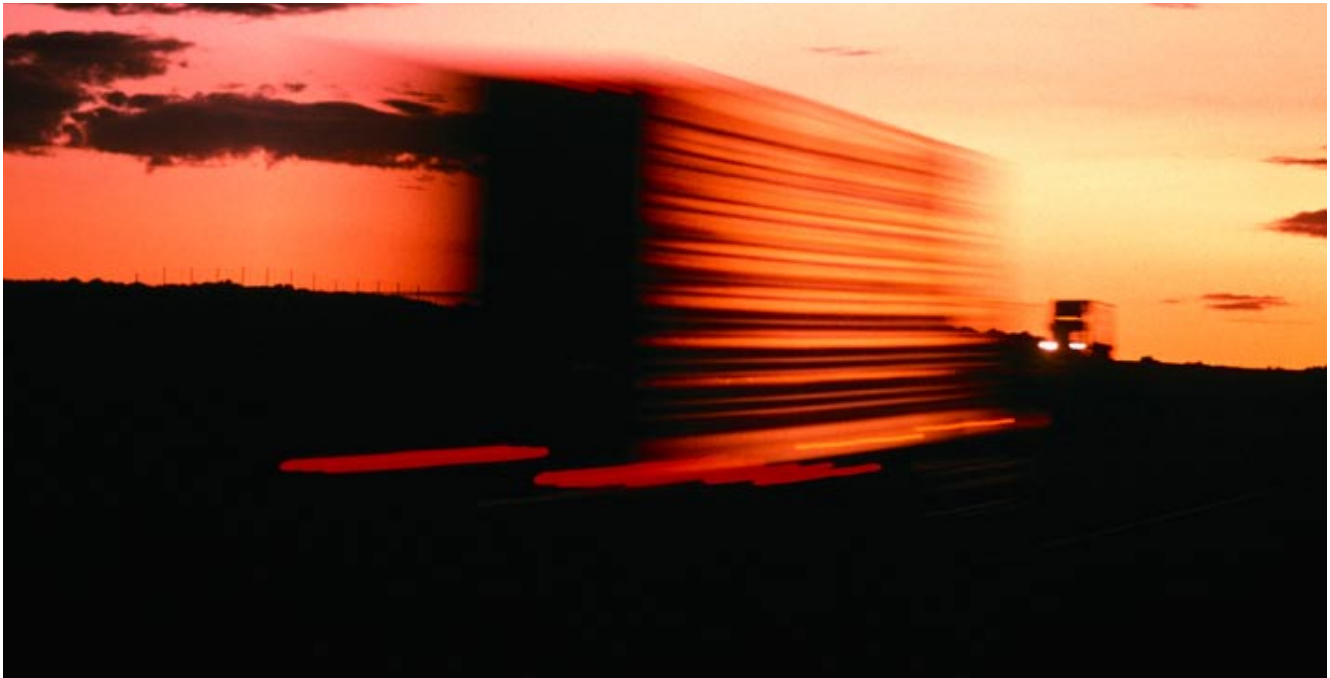


IBM Business Partner puts trucking industry innovator in the “express” lane with IBM Express Runtime



Overview

■ **IBM Business Partner:**

Mid-Comp International, Pty, an IBM Premier Business Partner specializing in developing software solutions that take advantage of current and emerging technologies

■ **Client:**

Bosselman Energy Corp.

■ **IBM PartnerWorld Offerings:**

PartnerWorld Industry Networks
IBM Virtual Innovation Center
Technical support

Bosselman Corp., has traveled a long distance since 1948 when its founder opened one of the first American truck stops, a venue that would become synonymous with speed, efficiency and good, strong coffee.

Today, the company operates numerous travel centers – these 24-hour trucking oases are equipped with modern conveniences like wi-fi Internet access – and 38 Bosselman Pump and Pantry convenience stores throughout the Midwestern region of

the U.S. More than 1,000 people are employed across a convoy of affiliates such as Bosselman Energy, Bosselman Tank and Trailer, Fuel Systems Inc., Bosselman Carriers, and Grandma Max's Restaurants.

While IBM technology can't add much to the coffee, it is helping Bosselman with speed and efficiency and that's thanks to IBM Premier Business Partner, Mid-Comp International. The Australia-based firm has delivered an IBM Express Runtime-based solution on the IBM **eServer™** iSeries that is improving supply chain management in the mid-market company and giving Bosselman what Harry Galbraith, director of Management Information Systems, calls, "a single view of the truth" across the company.

"The goal of every CEO is to know everything that's going on in the company and to be able to go to one place to find out," says Galbraith. "Frankly, I didn't think it was possible until I went to Australia and met with Mid-Comp. That's how complex our requirements were."

Compelling reason

Bosselman is a diversified corporation with warehousing, distribution, inventory management, financials, point of sale, and service maintenance functionality required for the different parts of its business. Its travel centers, for instance, provide a one-stop shop for fuel, food, automotive components, truck maintenance and business facilities. More than 30,000 unique items are sold in its travel centers and

convenience stories. All repairs to vehicles serviced in Bosselman centers are tracked, creating vehicle history records that serve as a compelling reason for customers to continue returning.

The company's challenge was to find a fully functional supply chain solution that was affordable and could be expanded across such a diverse enterprise. It sought a centralized view of the business spread across thousands of miles and one that would grow with the company. After all, Bosselman adds at least one new facility each year and has done so over the last 50 years.

"When we looked at the standard offerings, the products were all functionally rich, but the implementation and unique configuration requirements meant that a time table of years not months," says Galbraith. "And the licensing and maintenance costs meant that the total cost of ownership was excessive. Each time we spoke to a supplier the per user license costs were staggering."

Mid-Comp, an independent software vendor and systems integrator, knew its IBM-based solution, Odyssey, would end Bosselman's search for a supply chain solution that was browser-based, platform-independent, affordable, genuinely real-time and easily implemented.

Tremendously appealing

Odyssey is based on IBM Express Runtime, which combines IBM

WebSphere Application Server – Express and IBM DB2 Universal Database Express Edition. What makes Express Runtime the preferred deployment option for Business Partners like Mid-Comp is its integrated nature – one install, one license and a single point of contact for support. Express Runtime includes tools for application development, solution assembly and deployment, enabling Business Partners to easily develop and deploy their business applications with the Express Runtime components.

"With IBM Express Runtime we can offer sophisticated IBM middleware for a very good price. At the same time, we are delivering a solution that's much simpler to implement and administer. This is tremendously appealing to customers like Bosselman," says Bjarne Matzen, director of Research and Development for Mid-Comp. "Far less learning is involved and they can be up and running in no time. And, as a Business Partner, Express Runtime reduces the complexity we encounter in an implementation and, as a result, minimizes the time and effort we invest. That's very compelling."

In fact, the first phase of the Bosselman solution went live after only 10 weeks – a timeframe made that much more astonishing when compared to other vendors' projections, which ranged from months to years. Initially being implemented for inventory management at the Bosselman Travel Centers, the Mid-

Comp solution also included point-of-sale systems interfaces, full scanner-based operations for purchasing, receiving, and stock takes, along with sales and financial reporting.

Odyssey will gradually be rolled out throughout Bosselman. Following implementation in the travel centers, the solution will be rolled out in the company's oil repackaging and distribution facilities, fuel tanker manufacturing and repair facilities, 38 convenience stores, and a truck service center. A total of 14 companies will migrate to Odyssey over the next few years.

"In Odyssey we found the Holy Grail. A feature-rich supply chain system with an architecture that delivered complete flexibility and also the lowest total cost of ownership of any product on the market today," says Galbraith. And, attributing much of this to IBM Express, Galbraith says, "When I think of IBM Express, I look at it from that point of view that it's a cost-effective platform. I don't have the requirement for a full-blown IBM WebSphere solution. IBM Express offerings take care of all our requirements now and into the future."

Main attraction

While Odyssey was the main attraction, Bosselman was equally drawn to Mid-Comp's style of doing business – that is, partnering with its clients, and building and implementing solutions based on extensive research and development. Support Mid-Comp receives through IBM PartnerWorld

gives the Business Partner easy access to wide-ranging research and development resources that help it win clients like Bosselman and provide a high level of service.

Technical and development support were provided through the IBM Virtual Innovation Center, which played a critical role in testing Odyssey for the Bosselman implementation. Moreover, Mid-Comp continues to take advantage of benefits associated with IBM PartnerWorld Industry Networks. Industry networks are available to all IBM Business Partners and provide industry-specific support that enables Business Partners go to market faster and win new business. Mid-Comp participates in the automotive, fabrication and assembly, retail, and wholesale industries.

With industry insight available through PartnerWorld Industry Networks and Mid-Comp's newest team member – Bosselman, which has entered into a joint venture with Mid-Comp to market Odyssey in North America – the Australia-based Business Partner has hit the road to success.

To learn more about Mid-Comp International, visit <http://www.midcomp.com.au> and to learn more about Bosselman, visit <http://www.bosselman.com>. Visit ibm.com/partnerworld to learn more about IBM Express offerings and PartnerWorld Industry Networks.



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