

# ChoicePoint Inc. increases scale and precision of campaigns while lowering IT costs with HP solutions



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—Scott Watkins, Vice President of Strategic Solutions  
ChoicePoint Precision Marketing Inc.

The ChoicePoint logo is located in a dark blue rectangular box. It features the word 'ChoicePoint' in a white, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a white icon of a speech bubble with a curved arrow pointing upwards and to the right.



“Each phase of the transition went well. In fact, we completed the project ahead of schedule. Now, with HP-UX 11i hard and soft partitioning, we can reallocate and add resources on the fly and deploy one server to do what formerly required three systems.”  
Jason Noel, Director of Information Systems,  
CPPM



ChoicePoint® Inc. is the number one provider of decision-making intelligence to businesses and governments. The company is applying its data-management expertise to direct marketing through one of its business units, ChoicePoint Precision Marketing Inc. (CPPM).

Serving Fortune 50 enterprises as well as startups, CPPM provides direct marketing and customer relationship management (CRM) solutions backed by one of the industry's most complete databases of market intelligence.

As an application service provider (ASP), CPPM offers a complete, integrated suite of services, from campaign planning and execution to continuous improvement. Whether companies outsource their entire direct marketing operations or simply subscribe to selected services, CPPM can manage their data assets at its network of data centers.

Since 1997, CPPM has employed HP Tru64 UNIX®-based HP AlphaServer systems and HP StorageWorks systems to run these databases and applications. Today its business-critical resources include a rapidly growing 50-terabyte infrastructure. Soon expanding to 80 terabytes, this environment supports Oracle9i data warehouses and innovative tools that can enhance and streamline data mining, modeling, and reporting.

CPPM recently transferred the data-integration engine serving a major customer from the Tru64 UNIX V5 operating system to an HP-UX 11i environment.

“As their marketing and sales operations grow in size and complexity, our customers count on us to deliver continuous high performance—and high return,” says Scott Watkins, vice president of strategic solutions at CPPM. “From the start, HP has proven its commitment to our success. Working with HP, we made a smooth transition to the HP-UX 11i environment, which provides substantial performance and price/performance advantages.

“Our clients depend on our solutions to drive their marketing and sales programs,” continues Watkins. “Our transfer from the Tru64 operating environment to HP-UX was a resounding success. We made the conversion without missing a beat. The move was entirely transparent to end-users. HP has been an outstanding partner.”

## Precision requires performance

“Half of our business is providing data,” says Jason Noel, director of information systems at CPPM. “Our database offers a blend of data unique to CPPM. The other half of our business is developing custom databases that our customers use for prospecting and CRM.”

Connecting to CPPM servers from their PCs, customers mine and model data on more than 250 million individuals as they design, manage, and evaluate campaigns.



Driven to continually increase their customers' return on data assets, CPPM develops tools and practices that compress database build cycles and streamline campaign management. Putting sophisticated tools within the reach of all customers, CPPM builds these capabilities into its core infrastructure.

CPPM's architecture also allows end users to define the terms by which they extract, translate, and load data. Such data agility and control enables CPPM customers to sharply hone their marketing and CRM initiatives.

Equipped to do more, sooner, with deeper data, many customers are increasing the frequency of database updates, building more complex models, and expanding their data marts. Some customer repositories have more than doubled in size within the past year.

Agility and high performance are musts at CPPM, which extends its flexible, modular approach to its core software. "We employ lean and fast programs," says Noel. "This software is not one big, complex unit but rather a suite of standards-compliant modules. Although the logic is rich, the design is simple, enabling us to optimize data-integration performance and adapt to customers' evolving needs."

Forward-looking CPPM required **an adaptive and resilient IT architecture to support** the ever-increasing scale and precision of its customers' CRM and marketing programs.

Working with HP, its proven IT provider, CPPM made a smooth, risk-free transition to a platform with immediate and long-term benefits in both performance scalability and economy.

## Benchmarked proof of price/performance gains

Before choosing the HP-UX 11i solution, CPPM conducted an in-depth architectural review that included five months of benchmarking diverse companies' UNIX platforms.

At an HP Benchmarking Center, HP and its partner Agilisys helped the CPPM IT team to evaluate diverse configurations using their own applications and data. "As a result of the benchmarks, we knew what performance we were getting before purchasing the system," says Noel.

For a major CPPM customer, the new HP-UX 11i environment provides a dedicated platform **that utilizes a data-integration engine running on a configuration** of three AlphaServer systems and a storage area network (SAN) based on StorageWorks HSG 80 systems.

"While moving our customer to a highly flexible, dedicated solution that meets its fast-growing needs," says Noel, "we gain excellent performance and investment protection from our AlphaServer platform, which continues to run our data-integration engine."

The customer's Oracle9i data repository, SAS application, and First Logic data-cleansing software now reside on a single HP rp8400 server with 12 PA-RISC processors running the HP-UX 11i operating system. The server is configured into two hardware partitions (HP nPartitions) and two HP-UX 11i Virtual Partitions (vPars). The new platform also includes a six-terabyte StorageWorks SAN based on an HP Enterprise Virtual Array 5000 (EVA 5000) storage system.

## Choosing HP: “The math was simple”—and the provider, a trusted partner

“We chose this platform because it can deliver the best price/performance paybacks now and in the future,” says Noel. “Key factors were overall system performance, cost—including total cost of ownership, the ability to consolidate servers, manageability and scalability, future

A single-vendor solution for servers, storage, and services from an IT provider that has delivered time and time again

product directions and our relationship with the IT provider.

“The HP-UX configuration met all of our requirements,” continues Noel. “Partitioning enables us to replace three servers with one. And this platform provides the highest degree of investment protection. We can easily scale up CPUs, I/O resources and memory and upgrade to new technologies with ever-higher paybacks without fork-lifting our boxes. A move to the Intel® Itanium® architecture is simply a board upgrade.”

Faced with the challenge of changing the platform of its core data-integration engine, CPPM also valued the proven track record of HP in service and support.

“HP Services are superb,” says Noel. “With HP, we gain a single-vendor solution for servers, storage and services from an IT provider that has delivered for us time and time again.”

CPPM also reduced risks by using proven HP StorageWorks SAN technology.

“Storage is an absolutely critical component in our large warehousing environment,” says Noel. “The HP EVA system is one of the most beneficial, real-world storage solutions in the industry. And management is vastly easier on the HP SAN,” Noel continues. “Plus, by continuing with the same StorageWorks products, we protect existing investments and minimize our learning curve as we move to the new platform. The math was simple.”

## Software ported to new platform ahead of schedule

HP provided HP-UX 11i evaluation servers to CPPM during the benchmarking phase. While validating its software on the test servers, CPPM also accomplished another step in the transition process—porting its software.

“It took just one engineer to move our software to the HP-UX environment,” says Noel. “Because we write standards-compliant code, porting was a non-event.”

After assisting CPPM with the processes of benchmarking and architecting the right solution, HP and Agilisys helped the company to plan and execute its move to the new server and operating system.

An HP project manager drove the three-week project to plan and install the new server and storage platform. She assembled a team and coordinated all onsite technical resources, including engineers from both HP and Agilisys.

“They did a great job and worked very tightly together,” says Noel. “Orchestrated by the HP project manager, HP engineers anticipated and answered all the tough questions and managed all of the logistics. Each phase of the transition went well. In fact, we completed the project ahead of schedule.”

While setting up the hardware and storage configuration and installing the partitions, the engineers transferred knowledge on HP-UX 11i management routines to the CPPM IT team. They also provided supplementary training on maintenance and support of the new environment.

The CPPM IT team obtained other educational resources through the HP Alpha RetainTrust program, which assists AlphaServer users in their transition to the HP-UX 11i environment. Designed to help users apply their Tru64 UNIX experience as they learn the new platform, these tools include materials that explain key differences between the Tru64 UNIX and HP-UX 11i operating systems as well as their common attributes.

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## Challenges

- Meet rising performance demands as customer campaigns increase in scale and complexity
- Secure industry-leading price/performance now and in the future, ensuring business continuity

## Solutions

- Configure HP rp8400 server with 12 PA-RISC processors with two hardware partitions (HP nPartitions) and two HP-UX 11i Virtual Partitions (vPars) and six-terabyte StorageWorks SAN based on HP EVA 5000 system
- Transfer to HP-UX 11i environment with support of HP Alpha RetainTrust program
- Install two hardware partitions (HP nPartitions) and two HP-UX 11i Virtual Partitions (vPars)

## Results

- Gain immediate and long-term performance scalability to run ever-larger and more sophisticated marketing and CRM programs
- Consolidate three servers into one, reducing annual support costs by 30%
- Further cut total cost of ownership by simplifying management and reducing data center usage

## More marketing innovation— and higher return on IT

“Our new platform gives us the agility to do more for our customers and adapt quickly to their changing needs,” says Noel. “At the same time, we lower our IT costs.

“With HP-UX hard and soft partitioning,” Noel continues, “we can reallocate and add resources on the fly. And by deploying one server to do what formerly required three systems, we reduce annual support costs by 30 percent. Plus, by using smaller, more powerful servers, we spend less on data center space. All these paybacks will multiply as we move forward.”

HP-UX 11i server virtualization also brings CPPM closer to the economy of a utility-like IT environment that dynamically matches resources with changing demands. The HP-UX 11i operating system is the only UNIX system with a goal-based intelligent policy engine—HP-UX Workload Manager. This component of the HP Virtual Server Environment automates allocation of resources.

“HP products and services are world-class in both quality and value,” concludes Noel. “And, from the most senior managers to the team who helped us move to the new platform, HP people are truly committed to our success.”

## At a glance

**Name:** ChoicePoint Precision Marketing Inc.

**Headquarters:** Alpharetta, GA

**Founded:** 1997

**URL:** [www.choicepointprecisionmarketing.com](http://www.choicepointprecisionmarketing.com)

**Products/Services:** ChoicePoint Precision Marketing Inc. is a business unit of Atlanta-based ChoicePoint Inc., a leading provider of decision-making intelligence to businesses and governments. Serving Fortune 50 enterprises as well as startups, CPPM provides direct marketing and customer relationship management solutions backed by one of the industry's most complete databases of market intelligence. As an application service provider (ASP), CPPM offers a complete, integrated suite of services, from campaign planning and execution to evaluation and continuous improvement.

## Technology highlights

- **Hardware:** HP rp8400 server
- **Operating system:** HP-UX 11i
- **Storage:** SAN based on HP Enterprise Virtual Array 5000 (EVA 5000) system
- **Services:** Gold Support from HP Services

To learn more, visit [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)

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5982-6057EN, 05/2004

