

# A secure investment in the future

How the State Bank of India consolidated its data systems with HP to meet its growing needs.



One of the most successful banks in Asia, the State Bank of India has 66 offices in 29 countries that span all time zones. To better support its fast growing base of corporate and individual customers around the globe, the State Bank of India decided to boost its data management activities with advanced storage, retrieval, and protection solutions from HP.

**HP customer case study:** By integrating and automating its data systems with HP's help, the State Bank of India has enhanced its competitive edge and established an adaptive architecture.

**Industry:** Banking

## Objective

- Consolidate the State Bank of India's distributed global IT network.
- Simplify the bank's round the clock data management activities.

## Approach

- Deployment of HP OpenView Data Protector software to automate backup and retrieval processes.
- Installation of HP Virtual Library Solution to enhance backup windows and ensure scalability.

## Results

- Consolidation of multiple distributed setups across the State Bank of India's global offices.
- Automation of previously labour intensive data management activities.
- Enhanced availability and faster response times.
- Seamless scalability for future upgrades.

## An illustrious 200 years of heritage

The State Bank of India (SBI) is not only the oldest and largest commercial bank in India – in terms of profits, assets, deposits, branches, and workforce, it's also the biggest in Asia. SBI's total assets number USD 156 billion; in 2005 the bank posted revenues of over USD 13 billion. In line with its slogan, The nation banks on us, SBI provides a comprehensive spectrum of banking services to its customers the world over. Indeed, SBI's considerable successes can be seen in numbers: more than 80% of India's corporate companies are SBI's exclusive clientele; 17 million individual customers have accounts with SBI; and for 10 million depositors, SBI is their bank of choice.

SBI's 200 year old history is as colourful as India's own. The bank was formed in June 1806 as the Bank of Calcutta, but was later renamed the Bank of Bengal. An amalgamation of two Presidency banks, the Bank of Bombay and the Bank of Madras in July 1843, saw the reorganisation of the Bank of Bengal as the Imperial Bank of India. In April 1955, the State Bank of India Act 1955 was passed by the Indian parliament, paving the way for the Reserve Bank of India's acquisition of a controlling interest in the Imperial Bank of India. The new entity that resulted from the takeover was named the State Bank of India, which took on its present form with the merging of eight former State-associated banks as subsidiaries four years later. A mega bank was born, the largest in India, which could boast an expanded outreach that encompassed all areas of Indian business.

Today, SBI is synonymous with the booming Indian economy: dynamic, innovative, and ambitious in its goals – a fact recognised by all major international bank rankings. Indeed, in 2006 the SBI debuted in the Fortune Global 500 at the 498th spot, topping all other Indian businesses.



### **An disparate network complicates data management**

As part of SBI's progressive and forward-looking philosophy, the bank continually seeks to improve on every area of its operations, from customer service to high level banking activities, to meet the challenges of the new millennium. Through Golden handshake schemes and extensive computerising initiatives, SBI has always placed a premium on the importance of IT in driving growth.

In recent years however, the bank's continuing exuberant growth in the international arena was beginning to overburden its IT network. Stretched across some 66 offices around the world, the infrastructure was a patchwork of distributed and disparate systems. Multiple offices were logged onto SBI's single data server simultaneously at different time zones to perform backup and retrieval processes on a daily basis, severely complicating management at the IT level.

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*"It was a problem of scale. Our business had grown so fast and so complex that our current data processing systems were buckling under the sheer weight. Our global offices were performing backups at all hours of the day, and our IT staff were forced to work within extremely small windows to monitor the jobs. To continue in this way would be detrimental to both our employees and our business."*

Mr. Sudhir Rao  
Assistant General Manager  
State Bank of India

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To maintain its pole position among the leading banks in Asia, and to continue providing its customer base with an enviable level of service, SBI thus saw the need to revamp its infrastructure, to give its legacy data systems a new lease on life. To Mr. Rao and his team of IT staff, the solution was clear: automation.

### **Unique solutions from HP**

Wasting no time, Mr. Rao called upon both IT and business managers to work together and decide on the best solutions provider for this mission critical undertaking. To meet SBI's needs, the vendor had to be trustworthy, with a presence wherever SBI's offices were located around the globe. And the vendor's solutions had to be modular, cost effective, and most importantly, compatible with the bank's existing key applications and servers.

With the selection criteria strictly outlined, the hunt for an IT partner turned out to be simpler than expected. HP, above all others, met and exceeded SBI's requirements with its unique combination of cutting edge technologies and uncanny insights into the bank's specific needs. According to Mr. Rao, HP's setup was just what they were looking for: it catered to the diverse needs of a multinational company with an extensive network of offices around the world, and HP's assurance of a comprehensive end-to-end solution encompassing Project Management to Managed Services proved a decisive factor in SBI's selection.

With HP on their team, SBI immediately began the deployment of an automated backup system in its IT nerve centre. This was the first phase of the project, its primary objective to provide SBI with a synthetic backup framework which would minimise traffic burden on the bank's distributed network. To this end, HP installed HP OpenView Data Protector on SBI's servers, a scalable data protection software which automates high performance backup and recovery from disk or tape over unlimited distances.



HP OpenView Data Protector ensured an unrivalled fit with SBI's existing servers and storage systems, since all the bank's solutions were sourced from one single vendor.

However, the bank's backup and retrieval windows continued to shrink as more and more of SBI's global offices accessed SBI's data centres simultaneously around the clock. To directly address this issue, HP installed what Mr. Rao praises as a "unique solution from HP" – the HP Virtual Library Solution (VLS) 6000 series. Indeed, VLS's advanced performance, high capacity, and customised storage and management features were the perfect solution for SBI's overloaded servers. By emulating multiple tape drives simultaneously, VLS allows a much greater number of backup jobs to be carried out in parallel, and this effectively minimises backup times.

Both phases of the project were completed with assistance from the HP Support Team and SBI's IT staff. Working hand in hand, they ensured that every aspect of the installation, deployment, and testing of the new solution met SBI's needs perfectly. The VLS, for example, was a completely new technology to SBI. It took about one month to fine-tune the solution to ensure a best fit with SBI's business needs, with HP personnel providing constant training and personally addressing technical issues whenever they cropped up. But as Mr. Rao points out with great satisfaction, this teething period had absolutely zero impact on SBI's business operations, and customers suffered no downtime whatsoever.

### Banking on simplicity, security, and scalability

With the installation complete and initial bugs rooted out, the newly automated and consolidated data system has since been meeting – and exceeding – Mr. Rao's high expectations.

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*"If I had to summarise the system's benefits in just one word, it would be 'ease.' Ease of management, because our distributed setups have now been tied together with sterling results by HP OpenView Data Protector. Ease of response, due to the bigger, more flexible backup windows we've been afforded by VLS. And ease of use, with the noticeable leaps of productivity thanks to the new system's time saving features like Incremental Zero Downtime Backup."*

Mr. Sudhir Rao

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One area where HP's new solution has had a particularly profound impact on SBI's IT infrastructure is scalability. Because of the solution's modular nature, adding new hardware or software to boost productivity has never been easier or more cost effective. IT staff no longer have to worry over the library's drive limitations since extra storage space can be added on the VLS layer as and when required without replacing existing hardware. This flexibility effectively keeps SBI's Total Cost of Ownership low, and so future-proofs the bank's considerable IT investments.

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*"HP's solutions have supported our growth spectacularly. It really makes a difference when a vendor shares your vision and ambitions for the future. When the time comes for future upgrades, we'll definitely look back on this experience as a hard to beat benchmark."*

Mr. Sudhir Rao

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