

Technology: The currency of innovation

How Bank of India transformed the way it handles data with HP's assistance.



Progressive, forward-thinking, and highly customer-focused, Bank of India is one of the fastest-growing financial institutions in India today. So when both local and global expansion activities began outstripping the capabilities of its legacy data system, the Bank quickly saw the need for an overhaul. The Bank thus appointed HP to deploy a host of innovation solutions, including a new data centre and disaster recovery centre, to help it consolidate its data management processes, and spur growth for the future.



HP customer case study: With high performance data management solutions from HP, Bank of India can now manage its ever-growing business transactions with greater ease.

Industry: Banking

Objective

- Consolidate and centralise Bank of India's distributed data handling environment.
- Streamline data storage, access, and retrieval processes.

Approach

- Deployment of a new data centre and disaster recovery centre.
- Enterprise backup platform based on HP Data Protector and related software and hardware.

Benefits

- Enhanced data processing capacities and turnaround times.
- Improved reliability and efficiency boost business productivity.
- Simplified data management and long-term maintenance.
- Flexibility and scalability for future upgrades.

A hundred years of growth through technology

Bank of India was formed more than a hundred years ago in 1906, when a number of eminent businessmen came together to establish a private banking entity in Mumbai. Starting with just a single office of a modest 50 employees, the Bank grew rapidly over years and successfully established an enviable position among Indian banks. In 1969, Bank of India was nationalised, and complete ownership and control of the Bank were ceded to the government. Today, the Bank boasts over 2,644 branches located in many of India's states and union territories, with an additional 24 offices overseas.

Bank of India's philosophy is a progressive mix of the old and the new. While prudence and caution remain the twin foundations of their operations, more and more, the Bank pioneers cutting edge technology in everything they do. The Bank was the first among India's nationalised banks to set up a fully computerised branch and ATM facility in 1989. It was also the first Indian bank to establish operations outside of the country, in London, in 1946. This tireless spirit of innovation can still be clearly seen to this day: as part of an extensive bank-wide IT Transformation initiative, the Bank has undertaken several important projects to completely automate its operations. From the computerisation of its nationwide branches to the introduction of telebanking, ATM machines, Signature Retrieval Systems, Remote Access Terminals, and wholesale bank automation, Bank of India's trailblazing innovations clearly form the backbone of its many successes.

The search for an adaptive solution

Over the years, Bank of India's booming local and international businesses were doing so well that day to day transactions were rapidly beginning to exceed performance and capacity headrooms. The Bank's data management systems were under growing pressure to perform within shorter and shorter time windows. This was compounded by the fact that the Bank's 2,644 branches ran on a distributed TBM/ALPM environment – data activities were decentralised, individually and manually managed at each branch.

"Back then, with our business expanding in all directions, data management was, to put it lightly, a complicated affair. It wasn't just that the existing software and hardware weren't up to snuff. It was the sheer volume of data that was passing our way every day. To the management and especially to our IT department, the need for an automated system for data storage, access, and retrieval was pressing. The only question was: who do we turn to?"

Mr. P. A. Kalyanasundar
General Manager – Information Technology
Bank of India

To Mr. Kalyanasundar and his team, the automation of the Bank's data management activities held the answer. But more than that, it was important that the solution address other corporate objectives to maintain Bank of India's premier position in the Indian banking industry. Hence, the chosen solution had to be:

1. Robust, with excellent backup and recovery performance
2. Cost-effective, with a competitive price/performance ratio combined with a simple licensing policy
3. Easy to deploy, easy to manage, and interoperable within the Bank's heterogeneous environment
4. Excellently supported and reliably maintained
5. Flexible and scalable to meet future needs

HP's solution: Consolidation and centralisation

Bank of India's techno-commercial committee, comprising numerous IT users, IT managers, external consultants, and finance officers, weighed the various merits of competing solutions from a quartet of vendors. Ultimately, the committee decided that only HP, with its technical knowhow and in depth experience in providing solutions for the banking industry, met their selection criteria and possessed the solution that best fit their needs.

"At the end of the day, it was HP's highly regarded expertise in data management solutions that won our confidence. The HP team understood our stringent requirements well, and proposed solutions with exceptional clarity. We also decided on HP based on the advanced functionality of their products and services, especially that of their backup software."

Mr. P. A. Kalyanasundar

Based on Bank of India's specific needs, HP chose to centrally deploy the advanced HP Data Protector software and a number of other core banking solutions in two separate environments: a data centre and disaster recovery centre.

Two HP Superdome servers comprised the nervous system of the Bank's new data centre. The servers combine world class performance density with unrivalled scalability, thereby reducing operational complexity and protecting the Bank's IT investment well into the future. Other solutions implemented at the data centre include the HP rp34xx, rp44xx, rp74xx, and rp84xx servers, and enterprise-class HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Array 5000 and 8000, and XP12000 for high performance, capacity, and availability.

At the disaster recovery centre, it was incumbent upon HP to provide Bank of India with a system that offered 24x7 reliability for mission critical services. Therefore, for their breakthrough flexibility and high availability features, HP chose to install the HP rp84xx, rp34xx, rp44xx, and rp74xx servers in Bank of India's new disaster recovery centre. With these solutions in place, the Bank can rest assured that their key IT operations and banking processes will not be crippled in the event of a catastrophe.

Setting their sights on the future

It took less than two weeks for the deployment of the backup software at the new data centre and disaster recovery centre. Thanks to Bank of India's thorough planning and the intensive policy defining that went on prior to implementation, the entire process presented fewer hiccups than expected. On HP's side, the appropriate technical training programmes were conducted in house to ensure that the Bank's IT staff encountered as few difficulties as possible with the new environment.

As for HP's solution itself, the short and long term benefits offered by the two centres have already begun to repay the Bank's faith in the vendor's expertise. Indeed, the solution allows Bank of India to store, access, and retrieve the large volumes of data generated by business transactions much faster and more accurately than before. Ease of management and maintenance save the Bank valuable time, money, and manpower, with the result that precious resources can now be diverted to other areas for improvement. Efficiency and productivity too have been boosted to all new highs – a fact Bank of India's upper management were quick to take note of.

"The benefits go beyond improved performance, adherence to best practices, enhanced delivery, and all that. These factors are important, definitely, but for such a large, complex business as ours, our sights have to always be set in the not too distant future. And that's where HP's solutions really shine. Because with their innate cost-effectiveness and the superb aftersales support offered by HP, we've effectively lowered our Total Cost of Ownership while enjoying improved scalability to adopt new technology, to upgrade our services, and to move forward."

Mr. P. A. Kalyanasundar
