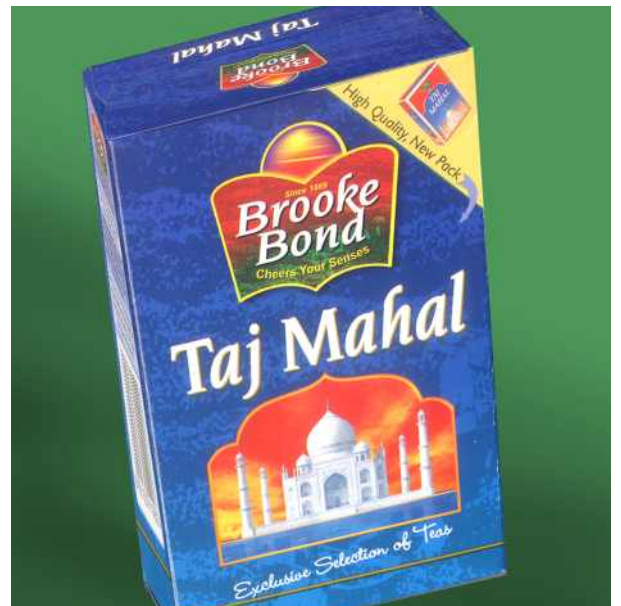




Meeting HLL's needs,  
everyday, everywhere

HLL, India's largest FMCG Company,  
is now an Adaptive Enterprise.

hp



Hindustan Lever Limited (HLL) is the largest FMCG conglomerate in India, with over 100 brands in the market—most of them, household names. These include cosmetics, personal care products, beverages and food products. The company's scale of operations spread across the entire country, reaching nearly every village. This vast reach is achieved by a head office, four main branch offices in the four metros and further depots, and representatives at various locations throughout the nation. And this setup is deployed across marketing, sales and distribution!

HLL's motto is to meet the everyday needs of people everywhere. And while achieving it, it has a commitment to high standards of performance, quality and productivity. This goal has meant continuous learning and embracing new ideas—aiding in the management of business, marketing and sales.

### Enabling HLL leverage value from their IT

The constant endeavor of HLL's IT Services has been to bring the best-of-breed business solutions, business value and benefits across all operations. With the implementation of robust transaction systems enabling internal integration, the company's current IT strategy is focused on extending the supply chain to suppliers and distributors, deploying a broadband terrestrial and VSAT based network, developing a remote online transaction processing with centralized processing, ensuring web enabled transaction systems and corporate data warehouse operations, and data center infrastructure consolidation.

In view of the business criticality, it was essential that the IT operations and the service levels be of world-class standards. Further, the goal was to use the best-of-breed IT support processes and standards to ensure desired availability and service levels among end users.

"Earlier, we had decentralized IT infrastructure management which had its own support staff, and several local vendors providing IT support services," says **Vipin Rastogi, Head IT Infrastructure at HLL**. "There were multiple contracts with multiple vendors. This non-integrated approach resulted in duplication and wastage of resources, limited service level, and lack of coordination. Accountability was also a key problem." As a result, few critical problems remained unresolved.

With the aim of making the working processes smooth and seamless, HLL was going in for an IT overhaul that involved, among other things, supply chain optimization, data warehousing, customer management, and overall consolidation of IT infrastructure in the company. The need of the hour was centralization and standardization of IT service delivery procedures.

### The Imperatives

The new thrust—to ensure availability, reliability and security of its IT infrastructure near 100 percent—was imperative for HLL. Consolidation and centralization also meant that the entire infrastructure be perfect and the system foolproof. HLL was also looking at implementation of an ITIL-based service management process, tools, and cost reduction by avoiding duplication. And the logistics were enormous—more than 4,500 computer terminals and servers across the country!

The quest for an integrated approach saw HLL IT management invite various IT solution providers for comprehensive services including IT infrastructure management requirements.

A checklist was evolved to evaluate vendors based on various parameters. These included:

- Organization profile and share of outsourcing business in their portfolio
- Track record and organizational stability
- IT infrastructure management delivery capability
- Pricing model flexibility

HLL sought prompt and highly focused service, as it was crucial to their business. "We wanted every incident to be resolved within agreed service levels and also every incident to be documented and analyzed, so that progressively every problem could be eliminated," says **Vipin Rastogi**. It was also necessary to adapt to changing needs and environments within HLL's computer systems and user base. This apart, HLL also required streamlined and standardized processes at the best price possible, and the bottom-line being user-friendliness and foolproof single-point problem solving.

The expectations included:

- Centralized operation enabling ease of service
- Streamlined procedures that integrated tools and processes, and ensured accountability
- Sustained service levels across locations, users, tools, platforms, and processes
- Constant monitoring of vital resources and processes aimed at preventing rather than solving problems
- Customer-orientation that created a single-window system for attending to customer needs



K.G. Mohan,  
Chief Information  
Officer HLL

### The Logistics

HLL's peculiarity was the kind of reach they had—about 200-odd locations around the country. It was important to track every little detail at each of these offices. How does one track a few thousand PCs and printers, and dozens of servers? How does one track usage of its hardware and software? And what about its security? These issues had to be addressed. They had to be standardized and the contract had to encompass everything to do with these machines and their usage.

Request for Information was given to nine large vendors. This list was trimmed to four in the second round, and later to two in the final round. And HP Services' solution package did provide the answer to all these questions and problems.

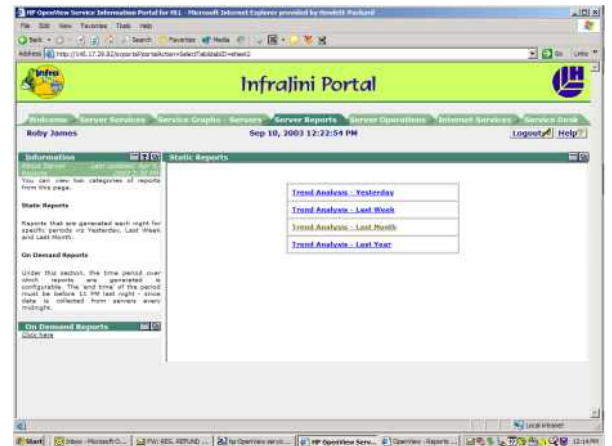
Once HP Services was identified as the successful bidder for the contract—worth \$10 million over five years—the engineers at HP Services clarified the specifics of the solution with the HLL management. With discussions, the clarity of vision on both sides increased, and the nature of the problem and its solution understood.

### The Benefits of the HP Services Solution

Says **Marshal F Correia, Director - Managed Services HP India**, "The tools to be implemented and their benefits were discussed at length." He added, "One of the points that emerged was that the tool had to be of international standards and with proven results."

HP's international exposure stood it in good stead. **Kapil Jain, Vice President HP Services**, says, "HP's extensive and experienced service team had worked on projects all over the world using proven techniques. This enabled us to provide value and ensure optimum service to HLL."

According to **K.G. Mohan, Chief Information Officer - HLL**, "HP Services has enabled HLL meet its main objective, that of making the working processes smooth and seamless, and standardized the IT service delivery procedures. The ITIL / ITSM compliant tools, processes and the approach of HP Services made the difference for HLL. HP Services provided a flexible and reliable IT infrastructure, besides offering cost-effective solutions and services. As a result, we are a step closer to customers, and a step closer to our motto of meeting the everyday needs of people everywhere."



## The Services & How They Work

HP had developed its own customized package around ITSM processes, which is based on the globally accepted standard, ITIL. Says N.M. Sundaram, Country Manager - Marketing & Strategy, "This meant that we had a set of integrated tools built using the best practices developed over the years and had become the industry standard. This tool was tweaked and adjusted to the needs of the solution that HLL desired."

### One tool for the entire range of operations:

The advantages inherent in HP's approach were many. For one, it provided one packaged tool that is capable of tackling all the issues at hand. Second, considering that the contract spans five years and is worth \$10 million, it was necessary from the point of view of the client to ensure that the solution included a robust management of change that was almost certain to occur.

HP's suite based on ITSM processes can be used for all the relevant purposes, and further is flexible enough to a constantly changing environment. It can handle, for instance, a hundred additional users and machines, and can also easily adjust to the movement of users and machines across locations. The security of the systems is managed by DART service that scans the systems and points out areas where security needs to be tightened.



HLL IT Team

### The Benefits of Automation:

Automation is a key component of the HP Services package, and it ensures two important things:

1. Fewer people would be necessary to manage the processes.
2. It cuts down the human element, and hence the chance of human error, to the minimum.

"It also made it easy for the top management of the company to track what was going at a per user level, and in real time too. So, whatever information that, say, the CIO of HLL wanted about any of the processes, was available updated to the minute," explains [Marshal F Correia](#).

### Addressing Problems of Users:

HP's solution envisaged the setting up of a Service Desk. The desk would attend to incidents (if possible, remotely) and also ensure closure and accountability in the process. Further, the data on the entire procedure is logged so that there is no possibility of any problem evading a solution or someone directing the responsibility away.

Here, too, the logistics were rather mind-boggling. For example, a problem faced by a VIP user would have to be given higher priority. Or a crucial server dealing with millions of invoices per day would have to be attended much faster than a PC. Further, a user's problems had to be graded according to the gravity and impact it might have on the user's productivity and the entire chain. This required a wide variety of responses, which necessitated flexibility in the tools being used.



Vipin Rastogi,  
Head IT infrastructure

## The Service Desk

HP's service desk not only addressed the problems related to software and hardware, but also monitored the servers on a continuous basis, working proactively all the time to prevent, rather than solve problems. As an example, [Susanta Bhattacharya, Transition Manager of the project at HP](#) describes, "If a server's performance dipped below an optimum level, the correction process would immediately and automatically be set in motion. The information would be passed on to the supervisor. Depending on the nature of the problem, it would be assigned a criticality and the job assigned to a set of engineers along with a timeline. If it isn't addressed by then, it is automatically escalated by the system, through e-mail, to the next higher level."

The system didn't fail even if the person, to whom a task is assigned, was not at his seat. This was ensured by sending a message to the engineer's pager or mobile phone. This completely automated process ensured accountability through the entire lifecycle of the problem.

All calls are logged with central service desk and then rerouted to the desk nearest to the location where the call was made from. The moment the user is identified, the call gets logged against his name in the database. Every user is mapped in this database, which contains information about the user's machine, the software being used and previous call history. So it's immediately possible to check whether the problems are new or is a recurring issue.

Each problem is given a severity index, with 1 being most critical and 4 being the least. Similarly, the user, or site, is also given a classification as A, B, C, or D, with A being the most important. So, depending on the user and the problem, the severity level is automatically assigned, and consequently a response time schedule too.

The automation also made it possible for the engineer to attempt a solution remotely by taking control of the computer sitting at his desk at Bangalore, Mumbai or other major centers. If a remote solution were not possible, as in the case of a hardware problem, an engineer would be sent to the location to rectify the problem.

The central service desk and server management team located at HLL's Infrastructure Management Center at ITPL, Bangalore, operates 24x7 so that any critical problem will be addressed and solved in the shortest possible time.

## The Transition

In a project of this magnitude, it is imperative that a smooth transition be made from the earlier system. For this too, a timetable was charted regarding the timeframes for the various services to become functional. First, HP Services took over the present operations and then progressively delivered the new system so that there were no disturbances. "High team spirit was maintained throughout the project. The HLL and HP teams collaborated in designing the entire delivery model, including implementation of ITSM compliant tools and ITIL process," says [Vipin Rastogi](#).

## Customer Relations

Users had to move en masse to a new process. This entailed capturing their interest and giving it an identity separate from the other IT projects going on at HLL. As [Marshal F Correia](#) puts it, "The new service was intended to be friendly and personal. For this, an innovative communication route was adopted. The entire service was branded as Infra Jini to give users an idea of the friendly and personal nature of the service." This little "infrastructure genie" gave the service a personal touch and was popularized by means of posters and mailers. The Infra Jini is also present on the desktops as a clickable icon, which took the user to the website from where he can log a call online.

Increasingly, 'service' is the catchword around the world, and providing the customer prompt service and a worry free environment are fast becoming the factors that make the difference. Especially if a genie can provide that with a smile.



## The Post-Transition Experience

To ensure success of the transition the focus on the end-user was always maintained because they were the ultimate beneficiaries of the project. If they didn't acknowledge the difference the program would have fallen short. The seamless cut-over from transition to a progressively richer service experience was important. To enable smooth transition a war-room composed of Transition and Post-Transition Teams was setup to micro-manage any issues. A new paradigm ITSM process and tools was pressed into service.

"The entire transition exercise under the Infra jini branding allowed the experience to be a more informal and an easily accessible idea," says Vipin. "A metric of this was the volume of service requests recorded. More calls meant more people knew of the friendly Jini. And the results were there to see. Over 60,000 requests representing 200 locations and 5000 users in just 8 months!"

Another metric applied was the rate at which methodological refinements were executed. Once operational stability was achieved the team initiated the Continuous Improvement Programs to ensure better user experience.

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