

Rimini Street®

Upgrading Server Operating Systems for Stable ERP Systems

REAL REASONS TO UPGRADE SERVER OPERATING SYSTEMS

The servers of your IT infrastructure touch almost all of the other layers of your technology stack – from databases, ERP applications and networks down to the functioning of desktop browsers and office applications. Upgrading server operating systems is often deemed necessary in order to deploy new functionality and maintain security; server OS upgrades may also be required to comply with the support and maintenance agreements you have with your ERP vendor. For organizations that have stabilized the ERP portion of the technology stack, upgrading the OS on servers running the applications or database can have undesirable effects – from breaking compiled code and disrupting customizations to opening security holes. However, there are ways to protect the ERP portions of the technology stack from changes to the server OS and to minimize or eliminate any repercussions from an upgrade – such as incompatibilities among OS, browsers and applications.

MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF SERVER OS UPGRADES

There are times when succumbing to the siren call of an upgrade is a operational necessity, especially when it affords a new capability that will lead to business advantage. In this case, the ERP application vendor may require that changes to the applications (patches, upgrades) are also necessary to maintain certification. Rimini Street sees most of these application upgrades as unwarranted, as the vendor has simply decided to not invest in regression testing their applications against the new server OS. In these cases, Rimini Street can provide support to keep applications insulated from server OS upgrades, instead of risking the time and expense of an application upgrade.

ENCAPSULATION TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE

Rimini Street advises clients to follow an encapsulation strategy to protect and preserve their stable ERP systems from changes in external components, such as server operating system upgrades, as well as changes to client and desktop software. Encapsulation techniques, such as server and client virtualization and application firewalls, keep core business systems operating while enabling necessary changes in the IT environment.

Virtualization software, such as VMware, effectively decouples the OS of the server from the application and client layers of the technology stack. With Rimini Street guiding your virtualization strategy, you can choose either to upgrade server-side operating systems to take advantage of new features – or to skip an upgrade that has no immediate benefits. All while ensuring that your application stack continues to operate as needed.

STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY CAPABILITIES

Rimini Street provides interoperability, upgrade flexibility and security and compliance guidance that extend the overall life of your systems. We provide end-to-end services and can show you how to avoid the expense of upgrading other parts of your technology stack and extend the life span of your IT investment while containing the total cost of ownership. Rimini Street employs experienced technology engineers to respond to your changing and dynamic IT environment. Our experts can:

- **Insulate existing technology** to protect, preserve and extend the life of applications.
- **Guide you in the application of a holistic approach to security** to keep systems compliant without constant patching.
- **Enhance interoperability** with innovative middleware solutions that keep your enterprise applications working as technology stack layers come and go.
- **Enable new features and functionality** with customizations and add-ons that play well with legacy systems.
- **Future-proof your system** and provide expertise on legacy technology as IT strategy changes.

Rimini Street helped a \$2 billion global leader in customer management craft and execute a complex strategic plan for upgrading multiple server operating systems – without disrupting the company's suite of PeopleSoft 8 applications.

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CLIENT SUCCESS WITH RIMINI STREET SERVER OS UPGRADES

A global leader in customer management – with annual revenues of \$2 billion and more than 77,000 employees – uses a mix of ERP, customer service, and sales support applications to serve its worldwide clients. With many different computing platforms to manage, careful planning was required when upgrading server operating systems so as to not disrupt the stability of the applications. The imminent desupport of several aging Microsoft Windows XP and Windows 2000 server platforms presented a challenge for the company’s existing PeopleSoft 8.x ERP system and PeopleTools report generators. Rimini Street guided the company in choosing the right combination of 2003 and 2008 server platforms to support its PeopleSoft 8.x applications. In addition, a select number of power users needed to access to PeopleSoft nVision report generator, which could not be used on new Windows 7 clients. Rimini Street recommended virtualizing PeopleSoft nVision using Citrix – a solution that provided power users with the access they needed from any location.

Rimini Street extends the overall life of your vital ERP systems while reducing TCO by focusing on usability, performance, interoperability, security and compliance.



THE CHALLENGES OF SERVER OS UPGRADES FOR STABLE ERP SYSTEMS

Upgrading the operating systems of application and database servers can provide a business advantage. Rimini Street can guide you through the pitfalls of technology stack upgrades by encapsulating the application suite, thus protecting it from changes to server operating systems – as well as changes to client software and databases.

RIMINI STREET TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION BRIEFS

This document is one in a series of Rimini Street Technology Solution Briefs.

ERP applications typically include a wealth of features and functions. However, as elements of the total system landscape change and evolve – mobile devices, operating systems, browsers and so on – ERP applications are under constant pressure to keep pace with their surrounding environment.

Each Technology Solution Brief describes a single infrastructure issue common to legacy enterprise applications and describes the types of solutions offered by Rimini Street as part of our standard support services.

CONTACT RIMINI STREET FOR MORE INFORMATION

There is no “one size fits all” solution to upgrading server operating systems while preserving your stable ERP platform. Contact Rimini Street for an in-depth discussion of your specific ERP landscape and upgrade needs.