

# FlashPaper news so hot it might ignite

**Another 3000 app provider extended its MPE lifespan.** HP has been telling customers for the past year that their business plans will determine a migration schedule away from the HP 3000. Now it looks like the software vendors are following HP's advice, too. A second application vendor has told its 3000 customers they can stay on their systems as long as they need to — and OpenERP Solutions even released enhanced performance versions of the MPE/iX ERP software suite, formerly sold by eXeSys

OpenERP purchased the application and its customer base from eXeSys last August; the program was once called MM II, and its installed base now numbers about 100 companies, according to OpenERP GM Jeffrey Lyon. The GM said that his HP 3000 customers were likely to migrate off the platform at some time in the future, but he wasn't going to rush them.

"We have no financial reason to accelerate eRP's end of life," said Lyon. He added that the customers using HP 3000s "aren't giving us enhancement requests" for the eRP suite, which includes the MNT maintenance management software. Instead, the sites have been using the Customizer technology built into eRP, which lets customers make application changes quickly and easily. In conjunction with the extension of the HP 3000 software lifespan at OpenERP, the company announced that it's putting on hold the Bridgeworks project to build an open systems version of eRP. eXeSys engineers told Lyon in a series of briefings the project was still several years away from completion. *(See our February issue for more details on the eRP extension.)*



FIRSTLOOK

**HP continued its system improvements to the 3000.** Jeff Vance of HP's 3000 group posted an Internet message to the OpenMPE and 3000-L mailing lists updating customers about the company's work on MPE/iX enhancement requests. Several items that were only being planned last year now have delivery dates of this spring. The top-rated enhancement in the System Improvement Balloting (SIB), helping the 3000's network printing work with non-HP printers, is now being coded. Vance said HP intends "to have a patch available by Spring '05."

The No. 2 request on last year's ballot is also scheduled for this spring, when HP will make FTP services on the 3000 capable of more granular control. HP is doing a full implementation of the ftpusers and a partial implementation of ftpaccess. Ftpusers, which controls which users are allowed access to the FTP server, is complete and ready for system-level testing. The ftpaccess command noretrieve is finished, and Vance added that "We are coding a subset of the other ftpaccess features, including logging ftp commands and file transfers, the command deny feature, and possibly a few more. As with network printing, we intend to be finish the FTP work in the Spring '05 timeframe."

Also promised for this spring is the package of CI Functions — SPOOLINFO, VOLINFO, and DEVINFO to report on spoolfiles, LDEVs, and volumes — that rounded up the bottom of the 2004 SIB ballot. Vance also told customers that HP is including source trees and build scripts for releases of the open source products Samba, Apache, sendmail and others on the 3000. An update of the DNS tool BIND later this year will also include source code.

HP is still making up its mind about the project to enhance MPE/iX so its SCSI commands can support "one IO at a time" connections, as well as links to SCSI devices not currently supported on the 3000. Vance said HP's investigation to validate the request is complete; the vendor will decide next month if it will staff up the project.

One enhancement has been delivered. There's a new tool available today to report on the firmware levels in the 3000's Fast/Wide SCSI and MFIO multifunction cards. Posted on HP's Jazz Web site at [jazz.external.hp.com/src](http://jazz.external.hp.com/src) (scroll down to the FWSCSI link), the tool "only reports firmware revisions for NIO F/W SCSI, thus it is not intended for A- and N-Class systems. Recommended firmware 3728 or 3944, contact your support provider for updates." The firmware tool may later be distributed as part of the TELESUP account on HP's MPE/iX FOS tapes. *(See our February issue for more details on HP's 3000 updates, including data on maximum disk sizes to be supported.)*

**HP's other business OS got its Itanium chops.** The port that seemed important at the time for MPE/iX arrived for OpenVMS in mid-January, when HP rolled out the version of the operating system for Digital users on Itanium processors. OpenVMS 8.2 also runs on the AlphaServer platform, a carryover from the Digital product line that is being dropped from HP's product line like the HP 3000. Digital execs were still in charge when the company made the decision to port OpenVMS in 2001; at about the same time, HP was electing to halt its MPE/iX port to Itanium. HP executive VP Ann Livermore used the "strategic" sop for the VMS faithful, something the HP 3000 customers have heard about MPE/iX, too. "OpenVMS continues to be a strategic platform for HP," she said. "With OpenVMS now supporting Integrity Servers, we have expanded our multi-OS capability."

**HP combined its PC and printer businesses.** HP put its PC operations under the wing of printer VP Vyomesh Joshi, who will now head up the newly created Imaging and Personal Systems Group. Duane Zitzner, who'd been running the Personal Systems Group, is retiring. The two businesses posted comparable revenues for the most recent quarter of

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6.5 billion, but the printer unit's \$1.1 billion in profit dwarfed the PC business earnings of \$78 million. But at least HP made a profit in PCs; IBM's recently-sold PC business hadn't turned a profit for more than three years, according to the company.

Joshi has driven HP's printer business to the industry's top spot in printer profits during his 24-year career. Zitzner, a 15-year HP veteran, turned around the PC business and led it back into profitability. The new group is responsible for the company's printer, imaging and supplies business, projectors and digital cameras, desktop and notebook PCs, handheld products, personal storage appliances and workstations. HP's enterprise servers, support services, software and finance businesses make up the other major groups of the company's portfolio.

**Rosetta Store will speed IMAGE-Eloquence transfer.** The Allegro/ORBiT software product Rosetta Store will start helping 3000 sites shift data away from their IMAGE databases this year. New versions of both products which are now in beta test "can convert an MPE IMAGE database into an Eloquence database in a matter of minutes," said Allegro VP Gavin Scott, using new high-speed bulk-loading features Allegro has developed.

Scott adds that Rosetta Store's new version can now migrate all chain information as well as the data, "meaning that not only do you retain the 'primary chain' order as you would with most ordinary IMAGE tools, but in fact you retain the ordering of *all* paths in each dataset. So if you have applications that are dependent on the ordering of records in the database, it's possible for the first time to transfer this information into another database."

**IBM switched its iSeries leadership.** IBM's alternative to a switch from the HP 3000 is seeing a shift in its leadership. The General Manager spot in the IBM iSeries group got its second change in less than a year when Mark Shearer took over for Mike Borman this month. Borman had held his job less than six months; IBM asked him to take over a key position as head of sales of the IBM Software Group. Shearer has been VP of marketing strategy for the IBM eServer Group. Shearer's worked on the company's mainframe efforts as well as its push to put the POWER architecture, the RISC alternative to Itanium, into a wide range of devices across the industry. IBM told the iSeries Network that Shearer "was number two to [eServer executive VP] Bill Zeitler — absolutely just as formidable as Mike Borman when it comes to sales and marketing."

**HP now supports sendmail for MPE/iX 6.5.** Customers can now start beta-testing the latest version of sendmail for MPE/iX, according to vCSY engineer Mark Bixby, a release that the company will support for more 3000s than ever. The following sendmail 8.13.1 beta patches are now available from the HP Response Center: SMLHDB9(A) for MPE/iX 6.5, SMLHDCp0(A) for MPE/iX 7.0, and SMLHDC1(A) for MPE/iX 7.5

Bixby said the new version "primarily consists of all sendmail.org bug fixes since the previous MPE release of sendmail 8.12.1. With the 6.5 patch, sendmail is now supported by HP on 6.5 for the first time. Previously you could run the 7.0 or 7.5 version of sendmail on 6.5, but it was never supported by HP in that kind of environment."

HP is including full source code and build documentation with the release "for all of you homesteaders out there who expect to be running sendmail on MPE past 12/31/06." As always, HP needs customers to test this release to get this new version out of beta and into general release.

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