

## CASE STUDY

# Stratus Saves Time, Money with Integrated RightFax and Oracle e-document Delivery

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*"We went from processing purchase orders in five days to no more than five minutes." —Cecilia LeBlanc, Stratus Technologies*

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As a fault-tolerant solutions provider, Stratus Technologies considers quick and accurate delivery of systems and services important to its overall success. To meet customer needs, Stratus faced the challenge of automating its purchasing and inventory control processes. It required a faster, cheaper way to track and deliver documents. Also, it needed a system that could be easily managed and controlled, but required limited maintenance.

## COMPANY BACKGROUND

Stratus Technologies, Inc. ([www.stratus.com](http://www.stratus.com)) is a premier supplier of fault-tolerant computer systems and services. Founded in 1980 as Stratus Computer, Inc., its systems allow businesses around the world to offer better and more efficient service to their customers.

Stratus, with U.S. headquarters in Maynard, Massachusetts, maintains hundreds of alliances and partnerships with leading ISVs, system integrators, and value-added resellers to deliver complete, full product solutions centered on continuous availability. Its customers include 115 of the Global 500 companies in markets that demand nonstop computing such as financial services, retail, travel, public safety, healthcare, manufacturing and electronic commerce.

The company has been named by *FORTUNE* magazine as one of the 2002 "*FORTUNE* 100 Best Companies to Work For." More recently, Stratus' ftServer<sup>®</sup> technology received honors from IDG's 2003 Computerworld Innovative Technology Awards.

## CHALLENGE

Like many businesses, Stratus faced a time- and paper-intensive process to create and deliver critical business documents. Purchase orders, for example, required buyer input, printing, signature authorization and a cover sheet. Buyers then had to distribute the four part forms to vendors, end users and the purchasing department—a process that took up to five days.

Inventory documents were also delayed by time-consuming methods. Stratus' Express Logistics Centers often did not receive pick lists until several hours after an order was placed. If the pick lists arrived too late, parts would not be shipped until the following day, potentially affecting customer satisfaction.

To automate its purchasing and inventory documents, Stratus began using Oracle Purchasing application in 1997. Then and now, Oracle Purchasing allows Stratus to manage and control information throughout the organization, enabling employees to make quick, yet accurate decisions.

Stratus also added Oracle Order Entry, a solution through which Stratus generates invoices for distribution to its traffic department, manufacturing partners and freight forwarders. The automatic invoices identify shipment components and associated value—information used for delivery to domestic sites as well as exportation to international locations.

In all, approximately 200 employees continue to use Oracle applications. Though the Oracle solutions met Stratus' key challenge to obtain accurate and consistent information in a timely manner, the company still needed an efficient way to exchange information with its multiple manufacturing facilities and vendors.

## SOLUTION

Market leading Captaris RightFax proved to supply the e-document delivery capabilities Stratus needed for efficient information exchange.

Stratus first implemented RightFax technology in 1998. With more integrations than its competitors, RightFax delivers the most interoperable and flexible solutions for automating business information delivery from front- and back-office applications.

To implement RightFax, Stratus worked with Applied Software Technologies, a leading Massachusetts-based provider of collaborative supply chain and mobile solutions.

Stratus most recently migrated to RightFax Enterprise Server incorporating Universal Information Exchange (UIX). Close to 30 purchasing and order administration department employees use RightFax on a daily basis to send business information directly from Oracle applications.

### Five Days to Five Minutes

Using the integrated capabilities of Oracle and RightFax, Stratus' purchasing department immediately experienced a significant reduction in processing time and expense. "The integrated solution has streamlined the whole process for us," Cecilia LeBlanc, Information Systems Manager for Stratus Technologies' Oracle Enterprise Applications, said. "We went from processing purchase orders in five days to five minutes."

With RightFax, Stratus scans the necessary authorized signatures into the system and buyers simply push a button for purchase orders to be directly faxed to vendors and other contacts. "RightFax is very simple to use," LeBlanc noted. "For employees in the purchasing and order administration departments, it is as easy as sending documents to a printer."

The reduction of cycle time for order fulfillment receives high marks in customer satisfaction. "Faster delivery of documentation means faster delivery of products to our customers," LeBlanc said. "Using RightFax, we avoid delays by getting information to customs or to the freight forwarder more quickly."

LeBlanc noted the U.S. Customs office itself is making efforts to reduce manual efforts by moving to e-document delivery methods.

### Two Days to a few Seconds

"Using RightFax to deliver data to our warehouses has cut a two day cycle down to seconds," LeBlanc said. Previously, pick lists were sent via other methods, including email. Now, Stratus faxes pick lists instantly to its warehouses worldwide. This gives the warehouses the maximum lead time, usually allowing them to ship business-critical spare parts the same day. This is a "critical capability," according to LeBlanc.

She explained: "We offer different levels of support to our customers. For those that have requested expedited delivery of parts, it's very important that Stratus has timely reports of what is being requested or sent and that it comes from the proper location."

### \$1.20 to 10 cents

Since documents are generated in Oracle and electronically distributed by RightFax, Stratus has significantly reduced associated mailing and processing costs. Stratus no longer buys four part purchase orders, stationery for cover letters or envelopes for hand stuffing and mailing. According to a Captaris study, when purchase orders and other documents are manually handled, they cost more than \$1.20 (USD) each. In contrast, RightFax automatically delivers the same documents for approximately 10¢ per document.

RightFax use also returns an additional—but unexpected—benefit: According to employees, Stratus saves an incredible amount of filing supplies and space since the company has eliminated the need to store hard copies of purchase orders.

## Complexity to Ease-of-use

A solution for delivering business-critical documents from back office systems has the potential to be complex; however, LeBlanc said "ease-of-use and simplicity" are perfect words to describe RightFax and its integration with Oracle. Among other features, RightFax returns detailed fax monitoring and tracking logs, allowing users to know when documents are successfully delivered.

As a result, straightforward functionality for users leads to less strain on the IT department, according to LeBlanc. "It's a joy knowing RightFax is dependable and runs with minimal involvement from IT folks," she said. "We've found we can rely on the quality of RightFax to do its job."

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Applied Software Technologies** - is a leading provider of collaborative supply chain and mobile solutions.

Founded in 1989 and headquartered in West Springfield, Massachusetts, it provides customers a more innovative and streamlined approach to connecting with work groups, business partners, suppliers and customers.

Applied Software Technologies has been recognized by *Inc. Magazine* as one of the fastest growing companies in the U.S. and by Deloitte & Touche as a member of the "Technology Fast 500." For more information, please contact: [www.appliedst.com](http://www.appliedst.com).

**Captaris** - is a leading provider of Business Information Delivery solutions that integrate, process and automate the flow of messages, data and documents. Captaris produces a suite of proven products and services, in partnership with leading enterprise technology companies, delivered through a global distribution network. Captaris has installed over 80,000 systems in 44 countries with 93 of the Fortune 100 using the company's award-winning products and services to reduce costs and increase the performance of critical business information investments. For more information please contact us at [www.captaris.com](http://www.captaris.com) or call +1.520.320.7000.

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