



BILL EARLE, OPERATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT OF IS FOR SHEPLERS

WORLD'S LARGEST WESTERN WEAR RETAIL BUSINESS MOVES INTO THE 21ST CENTURY WITH AMT-LION

ABOUT SHEPLERS

Sheplers (www.sheplers.com), headquartered in Wichita, Kansas, has been meeting the western wear needs of America for over 55 years. When they say "World's Largest", they mean the largest selection of cowboy boots, cowboy hats, men's and ladies' jeans, western shirts, western suits, western belts and buckles, western décor, as well as all other western clothing items. Sheplers has been rated among the top 10 of ALL catalogs in the U.S. for customer satisfaction. Sheplers has more than 700 employees in Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, and Florida.

SHEPLER'S SITUATION AND NEED

Sheplers' IS department had been running LINC and COBOL applications (approximately 1.2 million Lines of Code!) on a Unisys NX4621-42 for years. These were their core applications including Merchandise Inventory System for all stores, Catalog/Internet order processing, Inventory control and customer service, Store sales processing, Payroll, Accounts Payable and General Ledger. They had a number of external interfaces as well, including payroll direct deposit & SIP, EDI purchase orders and invoices, UPS freight invoices, and store sales, purchase orders, receipts, transfers and merchandise pricing both to and from the stores each night. Clearly this was a complex and very valuable system – this was their entire business!

Although this environment had served Sheplers well over the years, as business increased however their processing performance did not. On most days, their processing ran late which meant critical reports were late to the end users. They had also found it increasingly difficult to recruit LINC programmers. Solving even the simplest of problems became very time consuming and increasingly difficult. They needed a system that would allow them the ability to grow the company without having to worry about processing time. Sheplers

Operational Vice-President of IS, Bill Earle, started looking for a solution that would allow them to:

- 1) Migrate to Windows platform with a SQL database;
- 2) Greatly increase their processing speed (especially during the holiday season);
- 3) Combine the multiple programming languages into one; and,
- 4) Open up their ability to use all the new open system tools and resources.

THE SOLUTION FOR SHEPLER

Bill says "For years I have been looking for a way to migrate our current systems to another platform. Many companies had a solution for LINC but nobody was taking on the migration of COBOL. Needless to say, I was very interested in Asysco's Migration Technology (AMT) LION the minute



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Brian Lloyd (Asysco's U.S. President) told me that they were in the process of converting COBOL. One of my main goals was to find a way to migrate onto the new technology platform without our entire company changing how we run our business. AMT-LION was the answer."

Bill is talking about AMT-LION that specializes in Unisys mainframe migrations to a Windows environment powered by a SQL database. Sheplers chose AMT-LION because:

- 1) Asysco proved they could migrate Sheplers' DMS databases to MS SQL;
- 2) Asysco proved they could migrate LINC, COBOL, and Work Flow into the AMT-LION system;
- 3) Sheplers was impressed with the overall structure of the AMT-LION developer;
- 4) Sheplers was impressed with the operational capabilities of the AMT-LION Application Control Center (LACC); and,
- 5) The Asysco people.

THE PROCESS

Due to the complexity and the criticality of its systems, Sheplers determined it would be best to implement AMT-LION in two phases. As always, for both phases, Asysco completed a detailed discovery outlining the project, including a timeline. The first phase of Sheplers AMT-LION implementation which consisted of 2 applications and approximately 125K LOC took approximately 5 months and went live in August 2005. The second phase consisted of 14 applications and over 1M LOC, lasted approximately 9 months and went live in September 2006.

THE FINAL RESULT

"AMT-LION has brought us into the 21st century. The ability to now work with SQL databases is amazing. AMT-LION has given our IS staff many of the debugging tools never available on the mainframe. Because of this we are able to address and correct problems much faster. Much of our processing is done in batch at night. The increase in processing speed has been amazing. The functionality of the LACC has greatly eased the transition from the mainframe for our nightly operators and they have found it much easier to monitor the nightly processing than it ever was on the mainframe."

Even after years of working with CANDE on the Unisys system, Sheplers' developers have found AMT-LION extremely easy to learn and use. The developers can already see the advantages (current and future) of the AMT-LION development environment.

With AMT-LION, Sheplers has been given the opportunity to grow their business, reduce their operating costs significantly and take advantage of the open system tools that are readily available to be used with the new technology and SQL databases. All of this was accomplished and the Sheplers management and user base didn't have to change how they ran their business.

Is Sheplers happy they chose Asysco and AMT-LION? "Any migration or conversion is a lot of hard work. However, the results of the AMT-LION system have exceeded our expectations from the start." stated Bill. Tom Greene of Sheplers sums it up this way, "Making the cross-platform switch was a daunting task, but in Asysco Bill has found the technology and the talent that has allowed us to be bold without being irresponsible!"

CUSTOMER
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SECTOR
Retail

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