

## TheStreet.com paves the way with Oracle on IBM BladeCenter



Alex Spinelli, CTO, TheStreet.com

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### Overview

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#### ■ Challenge

*To upgrade to Oracle Database 10g on a platform that helps ensure flexibility for dynamic business growth*

#### ■ Solution

*Deployment on IBM BladeCenter® with AMD™ Opteron™ processor-based blades, with a turnkey D2500 database appliance solution provided by IBM Business Partner GridApp Systems, Inc.*

#### ■ Key Benefits

*Improved scalability to accommodate incremental growth of the business, and improved agility to quickly integrate new acquisitions or launch new products*

While other dotcoms have come and gone over the last ten years, TheStreet.com has beaten the odds. Co-founded in 1996 by Jim Cramer, host of the CNBC television program *Mad Money*, TheStreet.com has not just survived—it has thrived. Based in New York, NY, this financial pioneer has built a reputation for providing investors with the latest financial news, research and commentary through a network of free and subscription-based online publications.

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– Alex Spinelli, CTO,  
TheStreet.com

After riding out the dotcom bust, the company began to broaden its business model beyond pure subscription, in addition to pursuing strategic acquisitions. “We’ve really managed to catapult ourselves in the last few years,” says company CTO Alex Spinelli. “Our mission now is to prepare the infrastructure for growth—to find technologies that can take us forward.”

#### Tackling Oracle

To meet that challenge, the company embarked on a complete refresh on most of the major technology categories. “The first area we wanted to tackle was the Oracle database,” Spinelli explains. “We had it running on a few big Sun boxes, and for a number of reasons it didn’t make sense to maintain that infrastructure as we made the upgrade to Oracle Database 10g. We faced some key challenges with that infrastructure, including cost and maintenance. And it just didn’t have the flexibility to do the things we needed to do when we needed to do them.”

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*TheStreet.com*

Instead, the company deployed the Oracle upgrade on Advanced IBM Business Partner GridApp Systems' turnkey D2500 database appliance built on IBM BladeCenter using AMD Opteron processor-based blades. Spinelli says the total cost of the implementation was not much more than what the company would have spent on Oracle licensing costs alone had they simply refreshed the Sun infrastructure.

“The IBM blades ended up making a lot of sense for us. We also considered a competitor's blades as part of the process,” he says, “but we quickly decided that for our requirements the IBM blade design was superior. IBM BladeCenter gave us the scalability and agility we were looking for, and at the right cost.”

#### **“Ready in minutes”**

Scalability and agility were the two key success criteria for the new implementation, especially considering the company's current phase of growth and acquisition. When it comes to scalability, Spinelli says, “The big box approach just doesn't work for incremental growth of the business. It only works

for large growth. But with BladeCenter, it is so easy to scale out horizontally. If business is growing incrementally, I can add blades as I need them at a relatively low price point.”

Spinelli says GridApp's D2500 appliance solution implementation of Oracle RAC on BladeCenter also gives TheStreet.com the agility to respond very quickly to the challenges of the business: “I know if we have a new acquisition tomorrow, or a new business partner, or a new product launch, I can be ready in minutes with a resilient, fault-tolerant solution.”

In addition to the Oracle upgrade, TheStreet.com is currently migrating several Microsoft® Windows®-based applications to the blades and is planning to implement VMware for virtualization. As the technology refresh continues, Spinelli says the company will continue to look for new ways to leverage BladeCenter.

“The new technologies can provide us with a low TCO,” he says, “essentially giving us more for less. The infrastructure is more cost effective *and* more agile.”

#### **For more information**

Please contact your IBM sales representative, IBM Business Partner or IBM Direct at 1 800 IBM-CALL.

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