

# The show must go on: HIT Entertainment completes 5,000-mile data centre relocation with help from IBM and Business Partner Attenda

## Overview

### ■ Customer challenge

*HIT decided to adopt a global outsourced solution for data centre managed services, migrating elements of its server infrastructure from Dallas, Texas, to the UK. That meant relocating and upgrading hardware while maintaining 100% performance levels throughout, and calling for the dependable expertise that only IBM could provide.*

### ■ Solution

*Drawing on IBM's unique experience and skill sets around the iSeries™ (AS/400™) platform, and aided by close collaboration between IBM and Business Partner Attenda, HIT successfully re-created its Dallas environment in a new UK secure data centre. The project was successfully completed on time and budget, with no disruption to normal business operations.*

### ■ Customer benefits

- *As part of the company's global review, complete outsourced data centre solution improves security and service availability for 24x7 operations.*



- *Seamless synchronised weekend cut over with no unplanned downtime*
- *100% performance levels maintained throughout the migration project, without needing to recruit or train staff*
- *Remote management and better access to technical and operational expertise from IBM*
- *Built-in capacity and flexibility for future growth.*

HIT Entertainment is one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owners. Established in 1989, its operations include television and video production, content distribution, publishing, consumer products licensing and live entertainment.

HIT Entertainment's portfolio of world-renowned pre-school characters include Barney, Bob the Builder, Thomas and Friends, Pingu, Fireman Sam, Angelina Ballerina, Rainbow Magic and many others – in all, over 1,500 hours of children's programming in 240 countries and some 45 different languages, and selling into over 120 countries worldwide.

## **Attenda**

### **Global review prompts migration**

The business faced a number of changes so, as part of its global review, it decided to consolidate its server infrastructure into highly secure, enterprise-class data centres in the UK and US. As part of the consolidation program, HIT's IBM iSeries (AS/400) JD Edwards ERP platform was to be relocated from Dallas, Texas, to the UK.

IBM Business Partner Attenda Limited had managed HIT's website infrastructure for seven years and was contracted to provide outsourced data centre managed services across HIT's critical business applications including websites, internal server infrastructure using VMware virtualisation, messaging and VoIP applications, and the JD Edwards ERP system. The Attenda contract also included hosting a new digital asset management platform for efficient distribution and management of assets such as clips, characters and video for all HIT properties.

### **New skills needed**

With the decision to close its facility in Dallas, HIT faced multiple challenges. Coupled with the physical relocation to the UK and simultaneous upgrading of hardware, existing skills and expertise in Dallas also had to be replaced. However, at the same time, Ryan Tunstall, VP Global IT & Operations at HIT, wished to deploy his staff on business change projects rather than develop in-house expertise specifically for the AS/400.

So, Attenda called in IBM to fill the AS/400 skills gap. Under its brief, IBM was to assist the migration of software, data and services running on the AS/400 from Dallas to the UK, install the upgraded AS/400 computer in the Attenda-managed data centre, and provide ongoing maintenance and support. Effectively, this meant re-creating the Dallas AS/400 environment in the UK data centre.

This complex and critical project was completed on time, on budget, and with no unplanned downtime. Ryan Tunstall explains: "Cut over to the new platform was absolutely seamless – no-one even knew it had happened. Why so successful? Because our three companies – HIT, Attenda and IBM – collaborated so closely and worked so well together. And, bear in mind that IBM and Attenda had never actually done a joint project before, yet their relationship gelled immediately."

### **Highest possible service standards**

Although Attenda provides service management for the AS/400 to HIT, it contracts with IBM for the ongoing AS/400 support. This is delivered remotely from IBM's own UK monitoring location – checking performance, running backup routines, tuning and so on. Given such expertise on-tap, it was unnecessary for HIT to recruit or train any staff for this area. Additionally, the risks of implementation and ongoing support have been fully borne by Attenda and IBM.

Further, tight SLAs between HIT and Attenda, and Attenda and IBM respectively, help ensure that service standards remain the highest possible.

### **“It’s all about confidence”**

Following completion of the migration and data centre project, IBM and HIT have contracted and implemented a disaster recovery solution, based on IBM's business continuity centre in Greenford, UK. In case of emergency, the centre's own AS/400 has been configured to mirror the primary AS/400 platform and can be instantly on stream. Future plans also include work area recovery services.

“Choosing to work with IBM was all about confidence,” says HIT's Ryan Tunstall. “Having lost some of our internal skills base, finding best-of-breed partners was critical to success. These guys know everything there is to know about managing the AS/400 platform – and that paid dividends.”

### **For more information**

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– Ryan Tunstall, VP Global IT & Operations,  
HIT Entertainment



**IBM United Kingdom Limited**

PO Box 41  
North Harbour  
Portsmouth  
Hampshire  
PO6 3AU

Tel: 0870 010 2503

**ibm.com/uk**

**IBM Ireland Limited**

Oldbrook House  
24-32 Pembroke Road  
Dublin 4

Tel: 1890 200 392

**ibm.com/ie**

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