



CLIENT BACKGROUND

Genus plc is a British-based business selling elite genetics and other products manufactured using biotechnology to cattle and pig farmers. Its mission is to breed better quality animals so that farmers can produce high-quality meat and milk more efficiently and sustainably. Comprised of three subsidiaries – ABS, PIC, and genus R&D – Genus is headquartered in Basingstoke, UK, and is a constituent of the FTSE 250 Index.

CHALLENGE

British-based Genus plc (FTSE: GENSF) sells elite genetics and other products manufactured using biotechnology to cattle and pig farmers. With over 30 offices around the world, its global mission is to breed better quality animals so that farmers can produce high-quality meat and milk more efficiently and sustainably.

For the past 16 years, Genus has run operations in two subsidiaries – ABS Global and Genus PIC – on a moderately customized implementation of Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS 11.5.10). EBS is used for finance (AP, AR, GL), order processing and fulfillment, supply chain, and inventory management. The ERP interfaces with the CRM and other custom applications. While not all the legal entities in Genus use EBS, a large percentage of the company's revenue runs through Oracle.

By 2016, the IT leaders at Genus had reached a key decision point. While they wanted to extend the EBS footprint beyond the current Oracle financial modules, they had determined that an upgrade to R12 would not provide enough additional benefit. They reviewed other enterprise system options, ultimately selecting MS-Dynamics.

Following the decision to move away from Oracle, they began to explore opportunities to reduce their legacy ERP support costs. IT leadership believed that Oracle's large annual support fees were too steep for the quality of support delivered. EBS was in a steady state of operation, and when a support issue was raised, the IT team was either self-supporting on My Oracle Support or experiencing a very long wait time for a live response.

Genus was faced with a challenge: how could it cost-effectively maintain the existing ERP, derive the most value from it, and simultaneously work on a migration strategy?

SERVICES PROVIDED

- EBS Support
- Tax & Regulatory – Financials/Localizations
- Oracle Database Support

INDUSTRY & ACCOUNT DETAIL

- Industry: Agriculture – Support Activities for Animal Production
- Annual Revenue: Approx. ~\$550M
- Corporate HQ: Basingstoke, UK

ENVIRONMENT

- E-Business Suite 11.5.10.2
- Modules: Foundation, Financial Management, Human Capital Management, Order Management, Logistics, Procurement, Sales & Marketing, Database and Oracle Technology
- Hardware: Dell Power Edge R610
- Operating System: Oracle Linux
- Database: Oracle 12c
- Integrations: Vertex, BI, Oracle CRM-On-Demand

GLOBAL LOCATIONS

- Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Middle East, Latin America, and North America

LANGUAGES SUPPORTED

- English, Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Latin American Spanish, German, French

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Our case studies give an inside look at the experiences of other companies that have used Spinnaker Support for their SAP & Oracle software support needs. Visit <https://spinnakersupport.com/client-success-stories/> to read other client case studies.

APPROACH

Genus leadership selected Andy Fenton, Head of Global Applications, to lead the team designated to research and perform due diligence on support alternatives. The search and selection process took six months.

The group, comprised of Fenton and functional analysts, chose a deliberate pace of investigation designed to give Oracle 90 days of notice and allow enough time for onboarding to a new provider. Oracle had recently completed an audit of Genus licenses, so that was not a concern for the IT team.

As a Gartner client, the Genus team began with a formal analyst review of the third-party support market and representative vendors. The team also performed an online search and review and assembled a business case on the benefits and risks of alternative Oracle support. Fenton then reached out directly to the top two providers. Following several discussions of capabilities and reference calls, the team put in a final recommendation to the CIO and finance director.

SOLUTION

Genus ultimately selected Spinnaker Support to replace Oracle's annual support. When switching to Spinnaker Support, Oracle customers gain more comprehensive and responsive service, save on their support fees, and can remain on their existing Oracle products like E-Business Suite for as long as they want and need, no matter what the version.

While pricing between the third-party support vendors was close, Genus believed that, based on customer references and general interactions during the discovery phase, Spinnaker Support would be able to deliver individualized attention and a more satisfactory working relationship. They also recognized that Spinnaker Support was litigation-free and had a low-risk profile—which played an important role in their decision-making process.

Genus plc became a customer of Spinnaker Support in July of 2016. During the transition away from Oracle-provided support, Spinnaker Support shared technical knowledge, advised on connectivity, and helped Genus to create an accessible, searchable archive on their network. This archive contained downloaded files, updates, and information that they were legally entitled to during their Oracle support period, including the updates to EBS v12 in case the company changed its mind about upgrading.

"The overall onboarding process was pretty seamless, and it wasn't difficult or onerous to switch," said Fenton. "To move away from Oracle and that 'safety blanket' is a bit of a leap of faith, and it helped that Spinnaker Support agreed to work with us immediately, before our contract with Oracle had expired. That allowed us to be confident in the service we were receiving before we finally 'cut the apron strings' with Oracle. It spoke volumes about how confident Spinnaker Support was in terms of their service offering."

Genus now receives full EBS support, which includes software break-fix (including custom code and interoperability issues), general inquiry support, technology advisory services, tax and regulatory updates, security and vulnerability management, and proactive status reporting. The third-party model delivers a broad range of value-added services through an expert global Oracle support team that has become an extension of the existing customer's team.

Almost immediately, Genus began to log support tickets for a wide variety of issues. In the first two years alone, Spinnaker Support addressed dozens of support requests around regional financials and billing (Spain, Mexico, and Canada), financial payables, receivables, logistics, order management, purchasing, shipping transactions, and background workflow. Many of the EBS tickets involved technical and performance issues such as errors, access issues, patching impact, proxy servers, certificate validation, and queries.

"The engagement from Spinnaker Support is excellent," added Fenton. "It feels like we've now got a partner who can help us actively resolve issues and jump on our systems to do that. Their approach to analyzing and solving issues is so much better than our old way of self-serve research."

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Andy Fenton,
Head of Global Applications

RESULTS

According to Fenton, one of the top results of switching support providers has been the cost savings afforded by Spinnaker Support. "We're now paying a quarter to a third of the Oracle annual support price," he said, "and we certainly didn't suffer at all for quality of solution. Increasing the support and engagement while reducing costs? You can't for ask much more than that."

After testing the service and gaining additional confidence regarding their decision to move away from Oracle-provided support, Genus then transferred its Oracle Database support over to Spinnaker Support to see additional savings. In 2017, Genus also contracted for Spinnaker Support's Oracle Database Managed Services to assist with performance issues.

Now with five years of alternative Oracle support under its belt, the EBS system at Genus requires far less assistance to run smoothly. Beyond the occasional technical and interoperability issues, the IT team at Genus is primarily concerned with Global Tax and Regulation Compliance (GTRC) issues for their international operations. Spinnaker Support and Genus meet monthly to track the status and completion of all existing issues.

As to its long-term plans, Genus has begun decommissioning EBS and moving parts of the business over to the designated ERP replacement, Microsoft Dynamics 365. Over the next 18 months, it will fully migrate off Oracle EBS completely. "We put the savings from third-party support toward the new system," said Fenton. "The savings were certainly a part of our original business plan, though we knew we would see an immediate benefit well before D365 went online."

Looking back on the entire experience, Fenton has been especially pleased that they've received far superior support for a significantly reduced price. "It was a win-win, really. What would I do differently? I just wish I'd done it sooner."

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ABOUT US

Spinnaker Support is the leading global provider of Oracle and SAP third-party support and managed services for mid-size to Fortune 100 global enterprises. Our customers benefit from more responsive, comprehensive, and affordable support services that ensure the smooth, secure, and compliant operation of their enterprise applications and technologies.

Whether you need immediate help for high-priority issue resolution or ongoing monitoring and maintenance, we have you covered. Our exacting standards and unparalleled expertise have earned us the trust and loyalty of more than 1,100 organizations in 104 countries.

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