Island Pacific and IBM: bringing flexibility to retail data management

A partnership between Island Pacific Systems, Inc. and IBM enables retail organizations to optimize the management of merchandising and store operations software solutions. By doing so, retailers can extract more business value from their available data while improving the customer shopping experience, eliminating risks and speeding return on investment.

**Solution Overview**

Organizations in the retail industry are awash with data management systems required to run a wide array of business processes. These operations can include point-of-sale (POS), customer relationship management, vendor relationship management, merchandising, demand forecasting and more.

To cope with their growing data management challenges, many retail IT organizations have evolved into the role of systems integrator, maintaining large and entrenched development staffs to write programs and update source codes on their applications. Such operations are costly, while their systems are typically inflexible and loosely coupled. It does not have to be this way.

Island Pacific Systems, Inc. is a global leader in inventory management and other retail software solutions. For more than 30 years, the Irvine, California-based company has provided scalable, flexible and affordable solutions for retailers throughout the world. These solutions enable retailers to manage the entire scope of their operations, and to meet the many demands of their customers.

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**Highlights:**

- Modular and scalable retail management solutions
- Integrated suite features stand-alone applications
- Enables retailers to manage entire scope of operations
- IBM Retail Industry Framework validated solution
- Runs exclusively on the IBM Power™ series

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Island Pacific provides end-to-end solutions comprised of tightly integrated products that are needed to fulfill the entire retail supply chain management cycle. These modular and scalable solutions are compatible with existing platforms and databases so that end users can grow and change using their own schedules. It is an open service oriented architecture (SOA) system solution using application programming interface (API). Positioned above the whole system is a full asynchronous Java Script and XML (Ajax) Web 2.0 front end.

The suite is built around a core merchandizing solution that provides key retail life-cycle tools including item management, merchandise stock ledger, purchase order management, price management and physical inventory. Feature-rich store operations functions include a POS application to enhance the in-store experience. The Island Pacific Direct platform also enables the growth of end-to-end multi-channel retail process flows, while its mobile application allows retailers to process transactions anywhere in the store. Other tools analyze event-related performance such as deals and promotions, and ensure smooth operations of stores, warehouses and ticketing functions.

These integrated applications, most of them available as stand-alone products, perform critical functions at the right time and place across multi-channel touch points. They allow end users to make prudent merchandizing decisions, drive revenue and manage inventory.

Island Pacific enjoys a close relationship with IBM that has endured for more than 30 years. Its framework is built on the IBM SOA foundation, and it runs exclusively on the IBM Power series. Being an exclusively IBM solution enables Island Pacific to support multiple platforms, vendors and system software fully. It makes it easy to implement customer solutions quickly.

In addition, Island Pacific has achieved validation for IBM Retail Integration Framework, and Ready for Power Systems Software. These two milestones greatly benefit joint customers of Island Pacific and IBM. Validation with the IBM framework aligns Island Pacific with an ecosystem that is focused on SOA for innovation, while the IBM Power Systems Software validation enables it to demonstrate the integration between its solutions and the IBM Power Systems software stack.

The IBM Retail Integration Framework provides a comprehensive platform that enables retail organizations to deliver a smarter shopping experience to their customers, improve their merchandizing and supply chains, and enhance retail operations. The Framework enables retailers to extract more business value from their data and improve the efficiency of their data management. Power Systems software options enable the management of both physical and virtual environments. This includes, the capability to control data center energy usage and orchestrate processing resources to better meet business goals.

The partnership’s value to end users is profound. It enables them to take advantage of, and even upgrade, the systems they have in place. Doing so enables them to stay current with technology improvements while having more information at their fingertips. In short, it gives them total flexibility. The partnership also enables Island Pacific to provide the lowest cost delivery model and ongoing operational cost in the industry, which eliminates risk and provides a faster return on investment.

Island Pacific and IBM: A Closer Look
A fundamental change in the dynamics of core merchandizing has been created by the improved information access from this integration methodology. Customers have discovered a new world of flexibility from the SOA-based system, especially the innovative mobile point-of-sale capabilities that are fully integrated with Island Pacific's retail solutions. Mobile message calls can be instantly routed to different data systems and accessed by others, a previously impossible function.

A plug-and-play environment makes it easy to decouple any application, freeing end users from being entrenched in single products. This ability to migrate enables them to focus more critically on the absolute best applications for them.

To many customers, the true value of the partnership is demonstrated by the paradigm shift it initiates. End users who have maintained large staffs of systems integrators to meet their retail data challenges suddenly experience a welcome change. The expertise they require within their IT staffs is no longer represented by writers of source code, possibly including rogue developers. Instead, their talent priorities become individuals who are proficient in using Web services to integrate systems.
Many Island Pacific customers have a long-standing relationship with IBM System i®. They rely on its ability to integrate a combination of relational database, security, Web services, networking and storage management capabilities. IBM backs its i solutions with its trusted services and support infrastructure. The solution integration of Island Pacific and IBM System i affords customers an impressive list of business features that include:

- Improved productivity, efficiency and responsiveness
- Reduced cost of doing business through increase business flexibility
- Ability to change and grow with a customer’s evolving business solutions
- Rapid solution deployment
- Proven competitive Total Cost of Ownership (TOC)
- High productivity
- Unsurpassed reliability.

The value of the Island Pacific solution is also differentiated by the types of collaborative relationships that it maintains with customers, many of them long-standing. For customers that prefer a competitive software product, Island Pacific is eager to help them secure the most comprehensive and total solution possible.

Indeed, the power and convenience of the Island Pacific solution reflects the company’s eagerness to meet its customers’ need for a flexible solution that is easy to implement, has a low cost of ownership and results in a rapid return on investment.

Island Pacific's Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) is the vehicle by which all interfacing into Island Pacific Merchandising occurs. It implements the interaction between its Merchandising suite of products and all other applications. They include multi-channel, warehouse, financial, planning and allocation, sourcing and procurement, and any other system not being directly used within the Merchandising suite. It is also a key player in messaging/alerting.
Rely on Island Pacific and IBM experience

Between them, Island Pacific and IBM have decades of experience optimizing the management of retail merchandizing and store operations. Their three decade relationship combines the industry leading foundational pieces of IBM and Island Pacific’s deep, well integrated industry expertise in a specialty product. This has significant value for the customer.

Island Pacific

- **Technology** – In the challenging retail landscape, success depends on having the right product at the right time and place across multiple channel touch points.
- **Sector experience** – Retail is Island Pacific’s business and always has been. With over 30 years of experience implementing retail solutions, it understands the complex demands of retailers and has designed its solutions specifically to meet their needs.
- **Global support** – It offers local and global support for all of its solutions.

IBM

- **Global experience** – IBM is a global provider of industry solutions designed to help retail organizations deliver a smarter shopping experience to customers, improve their merchandizing and supply chains, and enhance retail operations.
- **Dependability** – IBM Power Systems enables the management of both physical and virtual environments, including the capability to control data center energy usage and orchestrate processing resources to better meet business goals.
- **Flexibility**. IBM’s broad range of hardware, software and consulting expertise helps businesses enhance production, improve asset management and optimize global operations.

For more information

To learn more about IBM in energy and utilities, contact your IBM sales rep or visit: [www.ibm.com/grid](http://www.ibm.com/grid)

To learn more about Island Pacific, please visit: [www.islandpacific.com](http://www.islandpacific.com)