

The Authority on Reference Data

Two Client Wins, a Partnership Agreement and an Upgrade for Eagle

It has been a busy couple of months for Eagle Investment Systems. Not only has the vendor released Version 9 of its data management, investment accounting and performance measurement suite, it has also signed a deal with Sun Microsystems to allow Access to be available via Sun Solaris 10 OS. It has also completed two client implementations.

Eagle released the latest incarnation of its suite at the Sifma show earlier this month. John Lehner, president of Eagle, says: "Version 9 represents a major technical and functional upgrade of the suite and Eagle has reworked the technical platform to provide better performance, usability, and more technical options to clients," he explains.

The latest version of the suite offers new functionality around supporting complex instrument types and it also supports Sun Solaris, Microsoft Windows and Linux OSs and Oracle 10g and Microsoft SQL Server 2005 databases. It supports current versions of operating systems and databases to ensure higher availability, enhanced performance and a secure foundation to run all applications, says Lehner.

The upgrades were based on input from clients and the requirements of new industry regulations. Data management now offers improved usability across the workflows, says Lehner, it offers a redesigned rules editor for more intuitive interaction. New features include the ability to handle multi-leg swaps for derivatives, a pricing option for direct access to pricing information and the ability to make modifications, which enables access to readily-available audit information.

Investment accounting delivers new functionality to support the processing

and settlement of swaps. New features were added to Eagle's Mutual Fund Accounting solution to support clients that work with third party administrators and investment managers. This latest version provides the ability to conduct more in-depth analysis of data for dissemination to a client's various audiences.

The performance measurement suite now provides a dynamic performance analysis capability, which was introduced to enable clients to regroup and filter security level performance at any time to support *ad hoc* analysis. The workflow around the GIPS composite management module now enables an end-to-end solution to help clients maintain the composite through an automated process all the way through to creating necessary disclosures. The performance attribution module was expanded to include additional methodologies that helps meet both client and evolving industry requirements for both equity and fixed income attribution models.

As well as Version 9, Eagle also announced at Sifma that its application service provider (ASP), Eagle Access, is now available on Sun Microsystems' Solaris™ 10 Operating System (OS).

Eagle Access is using the Solaris 10 OS to offer its clients lower operational costs by enabling a streamlined approach to managing multiple servers across an organisation, the vendor contends.

The ASP model has risen in popularity among Eagle's clients, according to Lehner.

One such client is US equity and fixed income asset management firm Ark Asset Management, which decided to move from its installation of the Eagle investment

management suite to the Eagle Access ASP earlier this month. Ark has been a client of Eagle's for six years and its needs have gradually changed over time as the firm has outsourced its middle and back office to iX Partners, says Lehner.

Ark implemented Eagle's data management, accounting, and performance solutions in 2003. Since then, Ark has incrementally shifted its technology strategy from internally managing its middle and back office systems to a totally outsourced model and the migration to Eagle Access will be the final step in the process.

The migration process to the ASP model is currently ongoing, says Lehner, and it typically takes a few months to complete this process. iX Partners will continue managing the remaining in-house technology and will interface directly with Eagle Access on Ark's behalf.

Eagle currently has around 25 to 30 ASP clients and Lehner reckons that this number is likely to increase significantly over the next year, especially among the smaller firms. "Six clients displayed interest in moving to the ASP model at our client conference this year," he says. "But this was not just limited to the smaller players in the market."

Lehner adds: "The ASP model is a significant part of our business – right now, from a business standpoint, it is bringing in about 40 per cent of our business. The rest are choosing to install the software."

Boston-based investment management firm Eaton Vance implemented the installed version of Eagle Investment Systems' data management and mutual fund performance solution earlier this month. The selection of Eagle's offering

is to support the investment manager's plans to outsource the servicing of its institutional business to Bank of New York Mellon (BNY Mellon) Asset Servicing, of which Eagle is a subsidiary.

"Just over a year ago, Eaton Vance came to market with a requirement to look at an entire enterprise wide data management solution. They wanted to service the front and middle office with regards to data and they were also in the process of outsourcing to BNY Mellon," explains Lehner.

"It is very common for people to deploy our data management solution alongside an outsourcing decision. We have many other clients that have chosen to do this. They do that so that they can outsource the accounting functions or other functions to the provider, but then have control of the data internally for their own reporting purposes," he says.

According to Eagle, the implementation

process took a period of seven months and involved automating and centralising data. Eagle's data management solution was chosen to improve operational efficiency and data quality, the vendor explains. "It was a very successful implementation because they were very focused on what they wanted to accomplish. They had very clear goals and most importantly very clear leadership and guidance on the project. It is very easy for the scope of these projects to increase and the focus to be lost, thus elongating the process and adding complexity," Lehner says.

Eaton Vance's goals for the project included consolidating its view of assets from multiple custodians, centralising its security reference data, and distributing the data to other middle and back office systems. "It allows them to provide the required level of service to their traders and portfolio managers in the front office. It is completely transparent as to

where the back office is and who is providing that service," Lehner adds.

What was interesting is that simultaneous to this project, Eaton Vance was going through an outsourcing process, he adds. "So there were changes going on within the back office and this made things a little more complicated. They were clear about the goals of the project and every challenge they faced they were able to overcome as a result."

John Shea, vice president and chief information officer of Eaton Vance, says: "We chose Eagle's solution to build our investment systems data warehouse knowing we had a short timeframe to complete a complex system integration project. In collaborating with Eagle, and applying its best practices, we continue to centralise, automate, and publish our data to internal and external systems quickly and efficiently."