

## SAP Customer Success Story Consumer Products – Confectionary Products



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Art Murray, Manager of Applications Testing, Quality Assurance, and Training,  
The Hershey Company

### AT A GLANCE

#### Company

- Name: The Hershey Company
- Location: Hershey, Pennsylvania
- Industry: Consumer products
- Products and services: Confectionery products
- Revenue: US\$4 billion
- Employees: 13,000+
- Web site: www.hersheys.com
- Partner: Internal team

#### Challenge and Opportunity

Eliminate the disparity between the service-level standards of the Mexican and U.S. telecommunications networks

#### Objective

Find infrastructure weaknesses and correct them before connecting Mexico operations to the Hershey SAP® software landscape

#### SAP Solution and Services

SAP LoadRunner application by HP

#### Implementation Highlight

Involved 6 rounds of tests at 8 locations – half during off-hours, half during workday period

#### Why SAP

- Comprehensive testing capabilities
- Easy-to-use functionality – right out of the box

#### Benefits

- Provided the results that helped to locate several infrastructure weaknesses and correct them
- Resulted in improved efficiency of the company's communications network in Mexico

#### Existing Environment

mySAP™ ERP application

#### Third-Party Integration

- Database: Oracle
- Hardware: Sun
- Operating system: Sun Solaris

## THE HERSHEY COMPANY

### SAP® LoadRunner by HP Helps Hershey Correct Infrastructure Weakness, Enabling Clean Connection Between Mexican and U.S. Operations

When is a kiss not just a kiss? When it's from Hershey, of course. Then it's something special, and it seems that just about the whole world knows that because, beyond North America, The Hershey Company exports its products to more than 90 countries around the globe.

Founded in 1893 by Milton S. Hershey in the Pennsylvania town that bears his name, The Hershey Company is today the largest North American manufacturer of quality chocolate and non-chocolate confectionery products. With revenue of over US\$4 billion and more than 13,000 employees worldwide, The Hershey Company markets such well-known brands as Hershey's, Reese's, Hershey's Kisses, Kit Kat, Almond Joy, Mounds, Jolly Rancher, Twizzlers, Ice Breakers, and Mauna Loa, as well as innovative new products such as Take 5 candy bars and Hershey's Cookies.

One of the countries that not only buys Hershey products but manufacturers them as well is Mexico. Back in 2005, Hershey decided it was time to tie its Mexican operation into its U.S.-based SAP® software landscape. Given the differences between the two countries' telecommunications systems, Hershey's IT people considered it prudent to verify network performance early on – before the project traveled too far down the road to go-live.



### **Prudent Advice: Test Early**

“If you find out you have a performance problem a month before go-live, there’s little you can do about it,” says Art Murray, manager of applications testing, quality assurance, and training at The Hershey Company. “The time to find that out is when you’re still developing the system; when you still have the lead time to find a solution, order it, and get it installed and tested. If you’re going to do performance testing, depending on your environment, you want to do it as early as possible to keep your options open.”

The process began with what Murray calls a “sanity check” to see how well the existing SAP applications would function when they were accessed remotely, starting with the manufacturing

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*Art Murray, Manager of Applications Testing,  
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facility in Mexico. Hershey needed to know how much bandwidth was available during both peak and off-hours to accommodate loads from Microsoft Outlook, for example, and activities like file sharing.

To perform the tests, Hershey turned to the SAP LoadRunner application by HP. The SAP LoadRunner application enables organizations to test processes before they go live and helps project

teams like Hershey’s make necessary corrections and then retest before the processes are delivered to their end users. With its thorough, integrated diagnostic and validation functionalities, SAP LoadRunner can help reduce slowdowns in development schedules and lower the costs associated with such slowdowns.

### **Two Countries, Two Networks, One SAP Software Instance**

In this case, Hershey needed to know how its mySAP™ ERP application would perform across two networks and across two countries – in particular, what kind of response times users would see under those circumstances. “We ran six rounds of tests over the course of a year,” says Murray. “Some were off-hours tests, and some were run during the day. We performed that testing at eight locations, including the manufacturing facility. And the first thing we noted was that the SAP software system was not the bottleneck.”

Murray recalls, “I took a person who had never seen SAP LoadRunner – and I’ve only had minimal hands-on experience myself – and we were able to perform very effectively exactly the tests we needed to see where we would begin experiencing a slowdown in performance. We turned the results over to our network people and our team that specializes in SAP technology, and they drilled down deeper. The SAP LoadRunner application is very powerful, but even so, right out of the box we can get a whole lot of good information. Our SAP specialists and our network people love it.”

### **Microsoft Outlook and File Sharing Concerns**

So, where were the problems, and what did Hershey do about them? “We found that accessing Microsoft Outlook and file sharing across the network were the big issues,” says Murray, “and that the most frequent users are the U.S. people who are

located down here. So first, we put in a second line primarily to support our contingent of U.S. employees in Mexico. Second, we changed their Outlook servers from remote to local. And finally, we uncovered some older PCs in one location that were unable to effectively perform the SAP functions through Citrix. We swapped those out for new ones. And that fixed that problem.”

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SAP LoadRunner was instrumental in revealing these performance impediments. The application delivered other advantages as well. Notes Murray, “In a number of cases where the project manager asked us to repeat a test in an alternative location because the network was different from that at the manufacturing plant, we already had the scenarios built, and we were able to respond to those requests very swiftly. We were pretty well able within a week’s time to execute the results and give them back to our infrastructure people.”

### **Network Capacity Increased**

Over a period of 10 months, the IT team members made a number of improvements and changes based on the information they got back from their performance tests. As a result, Hershey increased its network capacity. It also reduced the impact on the production network in Mexico by reconfiguring certain interfaces. “We were able to ensure that the infrastructure was sufficiently configured to support reliable remote access to our critical SAP functionality,” says Murray.

The value of all this is undeniable but almost impossible to quantify. “What are the costs if the system is down?” Murray asks rhetorically. “What does poor performance cost you? What if your sales operations were twice as slow as they are today? How does that affect your business?” Rather than learning the answers to these questions the hard way and running up unnecessary costs, Murray prefers to stick with the SAP LoadRunner test regimen.

Since Hershey adopted the SAP application, Murray has seen the demand for SAP LoadRunner testing increase dramatically. “Over the past three years, we’ve had an increasing number of requests to use SAP LoadRunner,” he says. “I never have to promote it.”

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