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December 1, 2002

Software Generates Competitive Advantage For Electric Utility

Case Studies; Southern California Edison

Engineers at Southern California Edison's San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station in San Clemente, Calif., determined eight years ago that they needed help managing real-time and historical operating data. They wanted an integrated system, accessible through any desktop, that would display current operating conditions and help them with analysis and modeling for preventive maintenance and troubleshooting. The selected software had to allow individual users the ability to set up analytical calculations--to determine real-time heat-exchanger performance, for example--on the fly, and permit them to capture data for distribution throughout the enterprise.

Opting for a commercially available package rather than developing their own custom application, San Onofre selected a system that allows all users to access data and collaborate on problems as they arise. The system was designed for power-generation applications, so there was no need to create fixes to adapt a more generic product. Unlimited licensing eliminates per-seat charges, as well as charges for adding instrumentation to be monitored. And a distributed architecture means servers can be placed anywhere in a facility's network.

The software was installed on the company's Novell network and has run smoothly since 1994. Facility personnel are able to stay on top of current operating conditions and create custom, complex engineering calculations, which have helped the plant stay competitive as the market has deregulated.

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