

A Record Harvest

The Missouri Farm Bureau reaps the rewards of a timesaving solution provided by Huber & Associates and IBM®.



The Missouri Farm Bureau knows all about difficulties that sprout in rural communities. The largest agriculture organization in the state with over 100,000 member families, it has worked hard to address local concerns since 1915. Farm Bureau's contributions include implementing policies that are developed by members to improve the financial well-being and quality of life for rural Missouri. Farm Bureau also provides insurance services to its members.

"It is difficult, if not impossible, to make good decisions on behalf of our members without access to the right information in a timely manner," says Lyndon Mote, Information Technology Manager at the Farm Bureau's home office in Jefferson City, Missouri. "We want to continually improve our services and provide cost-effective solutions, so we can always meet or exceed our customers' expectations."

That's why the Farm Bureau's IT department along with Jeff Winters and Jim Huber from Huber & Associates, spent their 4th of July weekend on the job, working through a small window of opportunity to upgrade their system to improve nightly and monthly processing and backup time. If the window closed, they would have to wait until the next long weekend, in the fall or even winter, to make the change – an unacceptable alternative.

"Our processing and backup times were simply too long, and every hour we're down costs us thousands of dollars in personnel time and inconveniences customers who cannot receive service," says Mr. Mote.

IBM Premier Business Partner, Huber & Associates, Inc. designed a cost-effective solution that would get the job done, using an IBM @server iSeries server and logical partitioning. This solution would dramatically reduce both nightly and month-end processing time, harvesting big savings for the Bureau.

"The Missouri Farm Bureau put their trust in Huber & Associates when they needed to improve their system performance. By adding logical partitioning and upgrading their IBM @server® iSeries™, they drastically improved both nightly and month-end processing time. The benefit to the Missouri Farm Bureau and their members was immediate. Agents and claims representatives are now able to better serve their customers, while at the same time reducing costs."
Joe Rueda, IBM Sales Executive, iSeries ISV and Solutions, IBM Americas



“We’re very satisfied with the upgrade, the product, and Huber & Associates.” – *Lyndon Mote, Information Technology Manager, Missouri Farm Bureau*

Huber cultivates a solution that saves time and money

Huber & Associates is a Missouri-certified Women-Owned Business Enterprise and full-service computer consulting and technical services firm, with offices in Jefferson City and Springfield, Missouri. Huber & Associates has been working with the Missouri Farm Bureau since 1986, the year Huber & Associates was founded.

“We form long-term partnerships with our customers,” says Julie Paden, Account Representative. “We don’t just sell the ‘latest thing.’ We sell what will meet our customers’ needs, from the simple to the complex.”

Huber had earlier installed IBM Netfinity® and iSeries servers and helped with a Local Area Network for the Farm Bureau. All had served the Farm Bureau’s needs at the time, and Mr. Mote was happy with his investment in IBM.

“IBM has been a leader in coming up with new technology for many years,” says Mr. Mote. “They’re a solid company that will be a leader tomorrow as well as today, and that’s what I look for in an IT vendor.”

However, increasing demands on the system were straining resources. Mr. Mote wanted a timesaving solution that would also give separate production and test environments, improve response time and allow more time for administrative tasks. He also wanted to make applications more available to end users – about 850 employees including agents, claims representatives, county secretaries and other employees located in 135 offices across the state, many of whom needed to be able to respond to emergencies at night.

“I told several suppliers what I wanted to do, and Huber brought back a very cost-

effective solution that met our needs,” says Mr. Mote. “I trust Huber more than any vendor I have dealt with. They have the knowledge and the resources to do the job, and they deliver. Whenever there are issues, they show up promptly to fix it.”

IBM Business Partner:	Huber & Associates, Inc.
Solutions:	IBM eServer Solutions and Server Consolidation
Servicing:	North America
Customer Target:	Cross Industry

Planning sows seeds of success

Huber upgraded Missouri Farm Bureau’s existing iSeries server, and introduced logical partitioning (LPAR) technology to keep development and production environments separate and allow for future growth. Huber also installed software that would provide system management and availability for end users. An IBM TotalStorage™ Ultrium Tape Library leverages Linear Tape-Open (LTO) technology to cost-effectively handle growing storage requirements.

A new external Integrated IBM @server xSeries® server and the xSeries adapter for iSeries was dedicated to Missouri Farm Bureau’s accounting application, providing dual processing power and the ease of use of the iSeries disk and tape backup.

The implementation went smoothly, despite the fact that the decision to proceed was made only a few weeks before the July 4th deadline. Mr. Mote wasn’t concerned. “I’ve done several upgrades with Huber & Associates, and I haven’t had one bad experience,” he says.

“We brought in the equipment several weeks early and migrated data from the old disk drives before the upgrade,” says Ms. Paden. “We loaded the production environment and the test environment on the new iSeries, and put it through a battery of tests. When we do much of the work up front this way we reduce the risk and the initial installation time. It also makes the actual ‘go live’ period go much more smoothly.”

New system flourishes in fertile soil

The Farm Bureau’s new system has shrunk nightly processing from nine hours to three. Month-end processing, which used to consume 20 hours, is now accomplished in six. Those time savings translate into higher system availability for users and more time for administrative tasks.

“Before, we took several hours to backup the user libraries, and we had a difficult time doing a full system save,” adds Mr. Mote. “Now, it’s not only about 60 percent faster, it’s more comprehensive, and we can do a full save every night. And the faster, larger capacity tape drive on the iSeries and the LTO tape backup system provide more reliability, data security and integrity.”

Using separate partitions for production and development improves data integrity. The solution also enables testing of changes in the development partition before moving programs to the production partition.

“We’re very satisfied with the upgrade, the product, and Huber & Associates,” says Mr. Mote. “This is a very stable, available system that’s going to be very cost effective for Missouri Farm Bureau.”

You could call it a bumper crop of benefits.

For additional information on how **Huber & Associates, Inc.** can help your organization, contact us at **573-634-5000** or visit our Web site at **www.teamhuber.com**.