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## Case Study: APOLLO GROUP<sup>SM</sup>

*Off-the-charts growth took Apollo Group, Inc., from its small-garage beginnings to a global education provider. Such unbridled success also meant tweaking software to keep up with demand.*

Top Apollo executives quickly took notice of recurring performance issues with their Oracle E-Business Suite applications and overnight batch jobs that spilled into daytime productivity.

"It was already starting to become troublesome but it hadn't hit a crisis yet. But we could see the crisis coming," says Grant Gasson, Vice President – Corporate Applications at Apollo. "So we put together a 15-point performance plan. One of them was recognizing that we should get other help."

Apollo Group turned to Hotsos, a software "triage" firm, to identify the root of its system slowdowns. Apollo quickly embraced Hotsos's bundled solution: HAWCS software, Profiler, on-site Oracle optimization training and hands-on, expert consulting.

With Hotsos' HAWCS workload management software onboard, time-consuming tasks turned into an automatic snap for this education company dealing with hyper-growth.

"HAWCS automates what we were previously collecting manually, but also gives us a far more complete picture of our E-Business workload," Gasson says.

"I don't want to see the Hotsos guy alone very much," says Gasson, who manages five divisions at Apollo. "There needs to be that interaction so there's that knowledge transfer."

Apollo Group Inc., which includes University of Phoenix, Institute for Professional Development, College for Financial Planning and Western International University, among other subsidiaries, first turned to Hotsos for performance training and code optimization of Oracle's E-Business Suite. But astounding growth since 2001 put tremendous strain on their system. The sheer amount of users and transactions meant churning through an extraordinary amount of data. More hardware wasn't the solution.



"We have put more processors in our system, but we recognize that you can throw more hardware at it but that's still just masking an underlying problem," Gasson says.

Large batch jobs were often restarted with scheduled system shutdowns at midnight, which became a growing frustration.

"We were running out of night to complete these jobs. We were starting the day behind the eight ball already."

In a collaborative effort with Apollo's database administrators, Hotsos turned burgeoning jobs into an optimal end-user experience. The powerful HAWCS tool helped analyze and manage the system. Careful thought, order and sufficient optimization of queries eliminated unproductive lull times. Now Apollo Group worries considerably less about potential system difficulties.

"Hotsos didn't just come and identify it and go. They sat down and showed us how to identify it. It's the whole feed a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. Teach him how to fish and he'll eat for the rest of his life. They're teaching us how to fish and find the stuff on our own so we're not reliant on them. For an education company, that's singing our tune."

Once a month, the Hotsos consultants spend several hours going over HAWCS results, pointing to potential issues before they become problems. They then meet with Apollo staff to go over the results and recommend improvements to optimize the system.