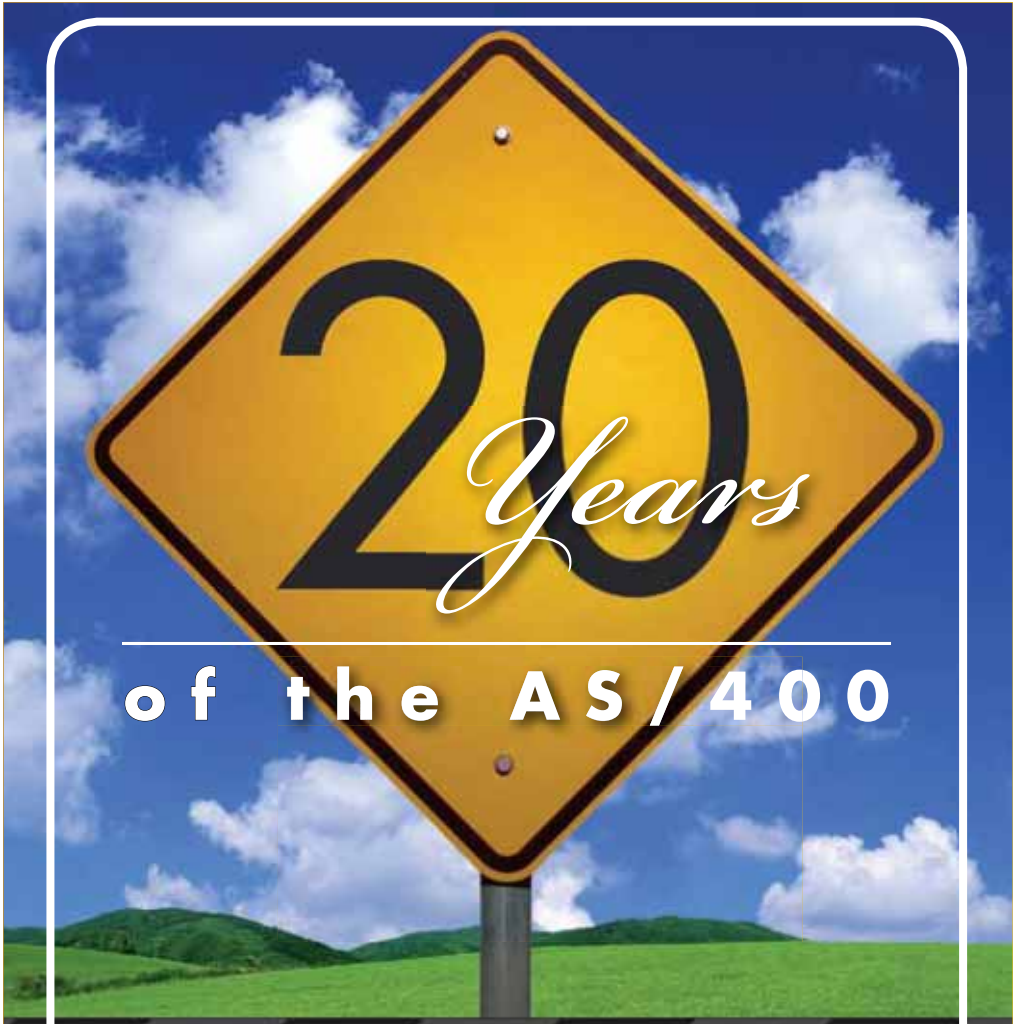

It's been called a lot of things—AS/400, iSeries, System i and now Power Systems—but most would call it a triumph of technology. Born as a mainframe for small businesses, the AS/400 platform was a marvel—a revolutionary plug-and-play server that could run an entire business and had thousands of software solutions from its inception. After 20 years, the AS/400 is still relevant to today's computing environments. Oh, it's come a long way; it's not the same machine IBM introduced that near 100-degree day 20 years ago. But the AS/400 has been hot ever since. Join *IBM Systems Magazine, Business Systems edition* as we travel the road of AS/400 history.

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20 Years of the AS/400

1988 June 21: IBM introduces AS/400, short for Application System/400, along with more than 1,000 software packages in the biggest simultaneous applications announcement in computer history. (By the time the first AS/400 is shipped, more than 2,500 applications are available.)

1989 The B70, a new high-end model for the AS/400, is introduced along with three higher-speed matrix printers for use with the AS/400 family.

1990 The AS/400 line broadens with two low-cost processors designed for small businesses or departments of large enterprises.

1991 A new $12,000 AS/400 entry-level model and OS/400 V2R1 are introduced.

1992 IBM ships its 200,000th AS/400, a 9406 model E35, to be installed at the main brewery and headquarters at Heineken Netherlands.

1993 A new F model AS/400 is unveiled that's up to 60 percent more powerful and offers price/performance improvements averaging 26 percent.

1994 IBM ships its 250,000th AS/400, a model F80, to The Coca-Cola Company in Belgium.

1994 IBM introduces a new generation of AS/400 computers called the AS/400 Advanced Series.

1995 AS/400 Advanced Portable, a low-cost, compact version of the AS/400, is announced.

1995 IBM converts the AS/400 from CISC to RISC.

1996 The company rolls out the IBM AS/400 Advanced Entry system, the first of which—and the 400,000th AS/400 shipped by IBM—is presented in Rochester to Greg LeMond, the three-time winner of the Tour de France bicycle race and a small-business entrepreneur.

1996 OS/400 (V3R2 and V3R7) becomes the first operating system to be certified Year 2000-ready by the ITAA (Information Technology Association of America).

1997 IBM announces a new family of AS/400e series servers to help small businesses take advantage of business opportunities on the Internet.

1998 Silicon-on-insulator (SOI) technology is introduced, marking a fundamental advance in the way chips are built.

1998 IBM delivers an AS/400 to a customer every 12 minutes of every workday during 1998.

1999 OS/400 V4R4 is released with more than 3.2 million new lines of code written primarily for e-business.

1999 AS/400 is the world's most popular multi-user, commercial business computer with more than 700,000 systems installed in over 150 countries.

2000 The AS/400 is renamed the IBM eServer iSeries and IBM releases the first Web application server in the eServer family.

2000 IBM begins volume shipments of the new line of AS/400e servers powered by the world's first production microchips made of SOI transistors and copper wiring.

2001 World Access, a global provider of telecommunications services, purchases the largest-ever eServer iSeries system—the eServer i840—to process billings for more than 100 million telephone calls a day.

2002 IBM announces the game-changing POWER4 microprocessor. The 32-way i890, running the new V5R2, nearly doubles the processing power of the previous top-of-the-line iSeries server.

2003 As part of the broadest transformation of its eServer iSeries in more than a decade, IBM announces the 825 and 870, which join the 890 at the high end of the iSeries family. Used by more than 200,000 customers around the world, the IBM eServer iSeries is one of the industry's most popular servers.

2004 IBM introduces the eServer i5, the first systems to be powered by the much-anticipated POWER5 microprocessors. It also changes OS/400 to i5/OS and releases V5R3.

2005 IBM announces a strategy toward On Demand Business and starts rolling out virtualization and integration tools.

2006 In January, the company rolls out the IBM System i5 line with POWER5+ processors and i5/OS V5R4 but later drops the 5 from i5, beginning the System i era.

2007 IBM announces POWER6 microprocessors and offers new System i 515 and 525 Express models with user-based pricing.

2008 i5/OS becomes a supported operating system on IBM BladeCenter solutions.

2008 System i unifies with System p to become Power Systems. The operating system name changes to IBM i.

20 Years of the AS/400 sponsored by

MPG's Navigator Family™

Performance Navigator®

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MIDSOFTWARE

IBM Systems MAGAZINE

RJS Software Systems—Protecting System i Investments and Developing for the Future

RJS Software Systems began as an AS/400® consulting business in 1990, but Richard Schoen, the company's president and CTO, quickly recognized a need for software solutions to help midrange companies solve real business problems.

Beginning in 1993, RJS began selling its own products, starting with AS/400 report-management tools. The company quickly learned that customer feedback was critical to help drive innovative development and has since developed most of its product lines in response to customer needs.

In the early days of the company's history, PCs were still in their infancy, and the AS/400 market was just beginning to grapple with client/server development, e-mail and the Internet. Since then, Internet use has exploded. Mobile devices and remote systems access have revolutionized business, allowing people to access information from anywhere at anytime.

RJS has followed that trend closely and developed a complete line of products that let customers capture and electronically manage information and generate and deliver electronic forms and reports.

Such development yielded WebDocs in 2000, the company's award-winning document-management software, and RPG2SQL Integrator in 2001, an innovative database-integration tool. Since 2005, we've released key products such as Enterprise Workflow and iForms, and enhanced WebDocs to include an advanced data capture module and packet printing add-on.

RJS will continue to help customers maximize their investments in Power™ Systems running IBM® i (formerly i5/OS®) but will also leverage investments in other platforms by developing products that let the i platform interact with and run applications developed for Windows®, Linux® and other platforms.

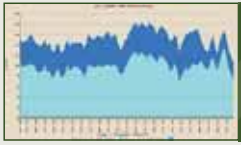
RJS Software Systems
Burnsville, MN
1-888-RJS-SOFT
www.rjssoftware.com

RJS Software Systems

Founded in 1990

Plan, Configure and Manage IBM Power Systems

MPG® got its beginning in the most unlikely of places—a natural childbirth class. Joe Camilli (System/38® and AS/400® consultant) and Randy Watson (technical marketing consultant) discussed AS/400 performance management while their wives were breathing in rhythm. In December 1987 they welcomed the additions of Randy's son and Joe's daughter. After developing the data-collection intellectual property, MPG was founded in August 1990.



In early 1991 MPG launched its first Software as a Service (SaaS) called Autotech®. The service provided customers with a monthly set of performance graphs/reports. A couple years later, MPG sold this intellectual property to IBM, which launched a service called PM/400. While in a support role with IBM, MPG was under a non-compete. After the completion of the support role, MPG launched Version 1 of Performance Navigator® in 1998. Today MPG is delivering Version 13.1.

With the beginning of the merger of the System i™ and System p™ hardware platforms into Power® Systems, MPG launched its UNIX® performance management product called Power Navigator® in 2006.

Midrange Performance Group
Boulder, CO
1-800-457-6744
www.mpginc.com

Founded in 1990

T.L. Ashford—'The Labeling Answer' since 1983

T.L. Ashford was founded in 1983, responding to the government suppliers' need to print a LOGMARS bar-code symbology on products to be shipped to U.S. government installations and warehouses.

T.L. Ashford's focus has always been on the IBM® midrange market, initially developing labeling software for the System/34® and System/36®. Through the years, the goal of the company has been to keep its customers on the cutting edge of technology and provide technical support that is second to none.

T.L. Ashford developed Barcode400 for the AS/400® server and added a graphical user interface (GUI). Other important features were added along the way such as compliance labeling and wireless printing. A library of compliance templates was created at the same time to provide Barcode400 users a simple solution to their compliance requirements. In recent years, radio frequency identification (RFID) printing has been added along with AFP/HP compatible printing, 2D barcodes and much more.

Today Barcode400 supports the System i™ platform and the company maintains the same goal of 100-percent customer satisfaction, a commitment to providing cutting-edge software.

T.L. Ashford
Covington, KY
1-800-541-4893
www.tlashford.com

T.L. ASHFORD

Founded in 1983

HiT Software Helps Customers Make Connections

In 1994, with frequent updates to the Windows® 3.x platform and third-party applications, HiT Software customers began asking us to enable them to connect Windows desktop tools such as Microsoft Excel®, Access®, Cognos® Impromptu, and Powersoft® Powerbuilder to their AS/400® server. From this our first product, HiT ODBC/400, was born.

As we all know, since then software solutions have hardly become simpler. To continue to address our growing customer needs, HiT Software added support for emerging standards: OLE DB, Java™ JDBC and .NET SQL middleware. With the millennium, XML also came to be a standard for data exchange between applications and business partners. HiT Software developed Allora to meet the need for seamless XML-database transformation. Our SafeConduct® was introduced in 2002 to secure DB2/400® traffic over the Internet. Also that year DBMoto® data replication was launched to help companies support business intelligence and e-commerce within their organizations.

Fourteen years later, while the Power™ Systems running IBM® i continues to maintain leading-edge server capabilities, HiT Software now serves thousands of customers around the world. HiT Software is and will be where our customers lead.

HiT Software, Inc.
San Jose, CA
(408) 345-4001
www.hitsw.com

HiTSOFTWARE®

Founded in 1994