

4 Ways for CIOs to Increase Production Capacity Using IBM i on Power8

As a manufacturing company, you have a whole market to choose from when deciding how to solve your operational and data storage needs. Like any other capital expenditure (CAPEX), your purchasing and/or rental decisions are critical to your company's growth or failure, even in the best of times. (e.g. You rent a warehouse to store the wholesale refrigerators that you make, and then suffer a setback by purchasing a fleet of delivery trucks that aren't strong enough to support their weight.) CAPEX snowballs for good or ill, which is why IBM i on the Power8 microprocessor is worthy of serious consideration for your production needs.

IBM i is an operating system (O/S) designed for managing complex commercial and industrial manufacturing applications for companies all over the business world. Since its launch in 2008, IBM i has been supported by the IBM Power Systems microprocessor series, currently in version POWER8. Despite occasional speculation about the O/S's future, industry experts point to its popularity, effectiveness, and sustained market share as evidence that it will remain relevant for years to come.

All of this is well and good. But what use is a flashy operating system without any insight for to get the most out of it?

1. Identifying “Uptime High Availability”

Although it can be a mouthful, “Uptime High Availability,” refers to the best practices a company can use to limit unplanned downtime and maximize desired uptime in production. High availability is the industry standard measurement a computer system's capacity for operational uptime versus its unplanned downtime. It's important to note that it's not necessarily a measure of overall production volume, but is based on the manufacturer's desired usage. A small manufacturer may have high availability in its single factory, while an international firm with dozens of factories may have an overall lower high availability. Targeting the factors that increase high availability will naturally lead to more uptime, more revenue, and more market share.

2. Hunting with Analytics

Finding those those areas of inefficiency and weakness that are undercutting your high availability potential requires advanced software that can handle complex tasks on an industrial level. IBM i is the arrow to strike it (we can even say that Power8 is the bow, if you'd like). IBM i high-end analytics can assess your operations, and can be used as a basis for recommending operational changes. For example, “DB2” is an IBM i relational management database that integrates a client's O/S, database, and server, tying in all earnings and expenditures.

Underperforming areas of the company, engineering and staffing, and ineffective management

tactics become more easy to identify and fix. Money saved can also be reinvested into the company,

3. Don't Get Tripped Up by Success

Perhaps the most important, and often overlooked, aspects of company growth is the question of what actually happens if you're able to achieve your plans. And what if there is an opportunity for even more growth and profit than expected? "Scalability" is a valuable solution for this. In the traditional practice of "remote server hosting," clients rent storage and computing space-often off-site- on a shared server managed by a third-party company specializing in IT. However, there were hard limitations on bandwidth and data storage use, particularly on a shared server where a spike in activity from another company could crash your own operations. "Cloud hosting," however, makes redundant copies on multiple servers located different geographical areas. Drawing upon a much larger pool of data space and servers, you have access to much more of bandwidth and data space for operations. What's more, you only pay for the amount of space that you use. Your IT infrastructure is ready to grow on a moment's notice, allowing a spike in production capacity demand to be immediately acted upon.

4. Look for Objective Solutions

A final way to increase production capacity is to seek an outside perspective with third-party consultancy. A certified IBM i support vendor can help you unlock your system's full potential and increase its capabilities across the board. Forecasts, macro-trends, and a deeper picture of supply chains can facilitate precise coordination between factories, staffers, IT and distributors. Investing in an objective perspective in the short-term can prevent you from leaving money on the table later.

The Bottom Line

Setting your goal, finding the path, and preparing for what comes next can be a staggeringly complex and consequential process in modern business. IBM i on Power8 can provide you with the resources and expertise to increase your production capacity and give you the edge you need to compete.