


Client Success Story

# Retailer Revitalizes Multichannel and In-Store Shopping Experience with Support Savings



## House of Fraser

**Client Profile:** House of Fraser Ltd. operates a chain of upscale department stores with 60 locations in the U.K. and Ireland, providing clothing, electronics, home, garden and beauty products, both in-store and online.

**Industry:** Retail

**Geography:** Headquartered in London, United Kingdom

**Revenue:** \$1.046 billion USD

**Employees:** 6,800 staff plus 13,000 concession staff

**Products Supported:** Oracle E-Business Suite 11.5.10, including HR/Payroll, Oracle Technology on Exadata, multiple Oracle databases

**Technology Platform:** Oracle Linux

## HOUSE OF FRASER

*"With Rimini Street, our EBS applications and Oracle Databases will be a solid and secure platform for our business needs moving forward, and a perfect fit for our strategy to optimize IT costs and better align IT to drive business innovation and competitive advantage."*

**Neal Johnson**

Director of IT Service and Operations  
House of Fraser

House of Fraser Ltd. operates upscale department stores with over 60 locations in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Founded in 1849, the company offers clothing, furniture, electronics and home and garden products to its customers.

### The House of Fraser Challenge

As part of a comprehensive cost optimization effort in preparation for being acquired in 2014, House of Fraser needed to reduce operational expenses while retaining premier-level support for its Oracle E-Business Suite (EBS) and also considering how it would fuel its growth strategy. Because 11.5.10 was about to go into full sustaining support, House of Fraser would not receive any new fixes, patches, certifications or tax and regulatory updates. An upgrade to R12 just to stay supported with Oracle would be costly and disruptive to the business, diverting vital resources from strategic revenue-generating initiatives. The alternative to this was to seek out an independent support solution for House of Fraser's older, customized EBS release.

"House of Fraser has a long and rich history, so it's unsurprising that we have an EBS environment that's highly customized," says Neal Johnson, director of IT service and operations for House of Fraser. "In fact, we are unbelievably complex. We have over 50 database instances that work together to create one giant application — it's a monolithic ecosystem."

Because these databases are on different releases, they create a challenging support environment. "And because we're in retail," Johnson says, "uptime is critical. An outage could mean millions in lost potential revenue."

As the retailer's applications were virtually "desupported," House of Fraser needed to find a premier-level support provider that didn't balk at highly customized EBS applications and complex database systems. Ultimately, House of Fraser decided to leverage Rimini Street for independent support of its EBS systems.

## Benefits

- **Achieved strategic flexibility:** Through independent support, House of Fraser knows it can reduce operational costs in the future to help fund the licensing of new Oracle technology.
- **Gained premier-level support for highly customized Oracle environments:** Rimini Street's Primary Support Engineer model and the tenure of its engineers ensures familiarity with House of Fraser's interconnected systems.
- **Receives tax and regulatory updates:** Rimini Street provides House of Fraser with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) updates as part of the annual support fee.

*"Everybody I've worked with from Rimini Street has been very positive, very accommodating and genuinely wants the client to be happy, which is great. In the heat of battle, the Rimini Street team doesn't stop and worry about the gray areas. They know when to pull out the stops and just find a solution, and I'm really grateful for that."*

### Neal Johnson

Director of IT Service and Operations  
House of Fraser

## For More Information

To learn more about House of Fraser or to read other client success stories, visit [www.riministreet.com/clients](http://www.riministreet.com/clients).

## The Rimini Street Solution

That decision transformed some immediate operational challenges into benefits: House of Fraser saved 50 percent of previous annual vendor support fees and received tax and regulatory updates as part of the annual support fee to Rimini Street, which reduced the pressure to upgrade just to maintain vendor support levels. Because of the success House of Fraser saw with its EBS support with Rimini Street, the retailer decided to move much of its database support to Rimini Street. In fact, after House of Fraser acquired an Oracle Exadata system and was facing an all-or-nothing mandate from Oracle for support, House of Fraser decided to move those databases to Rimini Street's coverage, too. "In a matter of days, we had that support transferred over and up and running," Johnson notes.

For other IT issue resolutions, House of Fraser uses Capgemini to provide tier-1 support. "When Rimini works on an issue, they are usually engaging with Capgemini, with our own technical people, as well as our service team, our IT department and business users in Finance or HR — and they work well with everyone," Johnson says.

"This is important because we have an integrated environment in which we've had some incidents where we weren't sure if we had a core Oracle problem or if it was something else," Johnson explains. "And I have to say, in the heat of battle, the Rimini Street team doesn't stop and worry about the gray areas. They know when to pull out the stops and just find a solution."

## Client Results

For House of Fraser, independent support provides a foundation of technical expertise that ensures stability. Better yet, that expertise is augmented by familiarity with complicated environments. House of Fraser has direct access to a named local Primary Support Engineer and receives Rimini Street's premium-level support services with 24/7/365 support coverage and a 15-minute response guarantee for Priority 1 issues.

In one incident, House of Fraser faced an issue heading into the Christmas holiday, a critical time for a retailer. "It was a big problem that was holding up our business — everyone was on conference calls all through the night," Johnson recalls. "After Rimini Street came in, we found that a user had uploaded five duplicate prices. Because Rimini Street understands the environment so well, they are better able to sort things like this out more quickly."

After optimizing its support and maintenance spend in exchange for superior service, House of Fraser has now turned its attention to new strategic initiatives. The company plans to move much of its infrastructure to the cloud, revitalize its multichannel customer strategy and build out a platform to better onboard acquisitions of other companies. The most interesting result of independent support for House of Fraser revolves around the company's growth plans as it considers purchasing new Oracle technology.

"We have an enormous capital investment program in place for the next several years, and believe it or not, we're looking at spending large chunks of that with Oracle," Johnson says. "Looking forward, we feel comfortable that we'll be able to work with Rimini on the support and operations side to achieve better run costs, and actually, better service."

### Worldwide Headquarters

3993 Howard Hughes Parkway, Suite 500, Las Vegas, NV 89169, USA Phone: 702.839.9671 Toll-Free 888.870.9692  
[riministreet.com](http://riministreet.com) [linkedin.com/company/rimini-street](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rimini-street) [twitter.com/riministreet](https://twitter.com/riministreet)

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LT-US\_061317