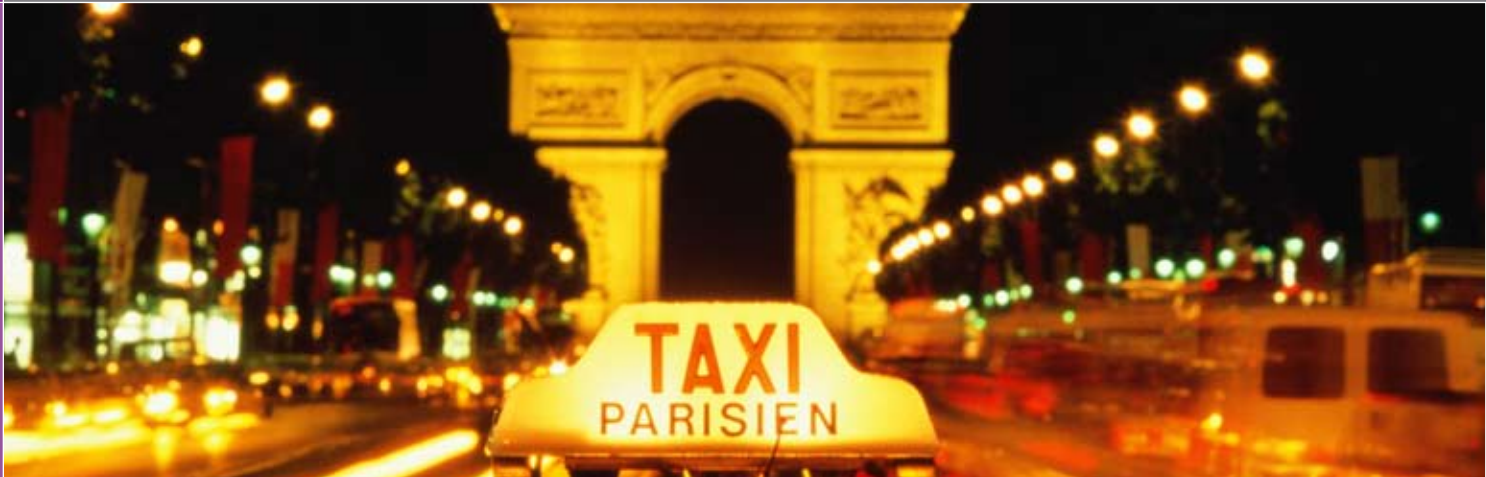# For Les Taxis Bleus, an SGI® Enterprise Solution is Just What the Customer Ordered

*"On any given day, we'll take 40,000 calls from customers in need of taxis. We needed a system that shortens wait times for customers and works non-stop, day and night."*

– Patrick Del'Vecchio,
Director of IT systems,
Les Taxis Bleus

More than 30 million visitors descend on Paris every year. They join the 12 million residents of the Île-de-France, or Paris Region, many of whom regularly travel the streets of the French capital.

Those teeming millions ensure that the City of Light never stops, never sleeps, and never satisfies its thirst for the thousands of taxis that keep Paris on the move.

Few know this better than Patrick Del'Vecchio, director of IT systems for Les Taxis Bleus, or Blue Taxi. Del'Vecchio understands how vital Paris cabs are to the city, and he sees demand growing.

"On any given day, we'll take 40,000 calls from customers in need of taxis," says Del'Vecchio, whose company serves as a booking center for more than 3,000 independent cab drivers throughout Paris and the Île-de-France. In early 2007, as the number of calls continued to increase, Les Taxis Bleus realized that its UNIX OS-based reservation management, order processing, accounting and billing systems were in danger of falling behind.

"We needed a system that shortens wait times for customers and works non-stop, day and night," says Del'Vecchio, who notes that as the burden on its existing enterprise infrastructure increased, it became impossible to guarantee 100 percent availability of its reservation management system. That was a problem for the Paris Region's leading cab company, which on average services a new customer every two seconds. Anything less than 100 percent availability could result in lost revenue – and that was unacceptable.

*"Now back-ups happen faster, and we don't have to choose between backing up our enterprise data to tape or actually managing our bookings and billings,"*

*— Patrick Del'Vecchio, Director of IT systems, Les Taxis Bleus*

**An Enterprise Solution from SGI**

Les Taxis Bleus turned to SGI. Already a long-time user and ardent fan of SGI server solutions, Les Taxis Bleus understood that SGI was uniquely able to leverage its 25 years of experience as a global leader in High-Performance Computing (HPC) to address the data-intensive computing challenges that are commonplace in today's enterprises.

Working with SGI and Aenix, a major French systems integrator, Les Taxis Bleus selected a new SGI® Altix® XE server and SGI® InfiniteStorage solution to underpin its Oracle® 10*g* enterprise environment. The resulting SGI and Oracle infrastructure supports the company's non-stop workflow while reducing latencies and inefficiencies that otherwise might keep customers waiting.

A staff of 120 Les Taxis Bleus call center agents takes cab requests via telephone and enters them into a reservation system. A radio link then automatically dispatches the order by interactively communicating with drivers via a device located inside each cab. An on-board electronic payment terminal sends the customer's credit card information back to the server to complete the transaction. The SGI and Oracle solution also drives Taxis Bleus' internal accounting system.

Transaction processing and radio communications are administered via a four-core SGI® Altix® XE 240 server equipped with 8GB of memory and running Red Hat® Enterprise Linux® v.4. The system taps an Oracle 10*g* database and 1TB of SGI InfiniteStorage 220 direct-attached Fiber Channel storage, which neutralizes infrastructure bottlenecks that might otherwise impact service delivery and customer satisfaction.

The entire configuration is replicated in a fully redundant configuration that backs up the primary system – ensuring that the SGI solution delivers the no-compromise reliability, availability and serviceability (RAS) that Les Taxis Bleus requires.

**A Reliable, Always-On Oracle Environment**

Les Taxis Bleus decided to move to the SGI Altix XE platform to take advantage of the latest multi-core Intel® Xeon® processors. After only a few months, it became clear that the strategy was paying off.

"At peak load times, our previous system sometimes became a bottleneck, with half a dozen applications fighting for resources," recalls Del'Vecchio. Indeed, the burden of simultaneously handling taxi bookings, trip management, electronic terminal payments, in-hotel automatic booking systems, radio modem control and tape back-up slowed the order bookings to such a point that orders were actually lost.

*"We have 100 percent availability with Altix XE, so we never miss a call."*

*— Patrick Del'Vecchio,*
*Director of IT systems,*
*Les Taxis Bleus*

The SGI Altix XE platform solved the problem – and then some. "We've seen a big improvement over our old processing times, no matter what applications are running or how heavy our order load is," reports Del'Vecchio. Today, every booking request quickly enters the system, and if a cab is available, the customer is informed that it's on the way.

"With this SGI solution running our Oracle database and transaction processing system, we're always ready for the daily onslaught of call and transaction traffic," says Del'Vecchio. "We have 100 percent availability with Altix XE, so we never miss a call."

The faster SGI Altix XE system also has enabled the IT team to conduct tape back-ups at any time of day. Previously, the unpredictable process required so much of the host server's resources that back-ups could only occur during exceptionally slow traffic times. "Now back-ups happen faster, and we don't have to choose between backing up our enterprise data to tape or actually managing our bookings and billings," says Del'Vecchio.

### Room to Grow

The company also wanted to leverage the scalability and reliability of the SGI Altix and SGI InfiniteStorage platforms to rapidly and efficiently handle transaction volumes as they grow. A single SGI Altix XE server can accommodate up to 8 Intel Xeon processor cores and 32GB of memory, and can scale to hundreds or even thousands of processors in a cluster configuration. SGI Altix XE clusters come fully integrated and factory tested, with a complete cluster management software stack to simplify deployment and management. SGI Altix XE systems can also be custom configured for perfect right-sizing.

More companies than ever are seeing how SGI's enterprise solutions offer the lowest TCO of any solution in their class, commanding as little as one-quarter the price, half the floor space, and one-quarter the power of competing server and storage systems. SGI's enterprise solutions process and manage large amounts of data faster and more affordably than any solution in their class – including offerings from IBM, HP and Sun[1].

SGI's expertise in designing dense, energy-efficient systems, along with its reliance on technologies based on open standards, gives enterprises the advantage of record-breaking performance from solutions that cost less to acquire and maintain.

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>
> *– Patrick Del'Vecchio, Director of IT systems, Les Taxis Bleus*

In addition to Intel Xeon processor-based SGI Altix XE systems, the SGI Altix family includes servers featuring Intel® Itanium® 2 processors. Based on real-world customer results, those Altix systems have been shown to run Oracle databases up to five times faster than IBM pSeries servers. In fact, in 2007, SGI delivered the best and only "All Linux" benchmark result with a medium-sized Oracle Database10*g* running the Oracle E-Business Suite 11i (11.5.10) Benchmark, which measured average response times for 2,000 online users[2].

[1] These benchmark results are available on Oracle's website: http://www.oracle.com/apps_bench-mark/html/results.html#medium. A joint SGI-Oracle whitepaper is also available on Oracle's website: http://www.oracle.com/apps_benchmark/html/white-papers-e-business.html.

[2] These benchmark results are available on Oracle's website: http://www.oracle.com/apps_bench-mark/html/results.html#medium. A joint SGI-Oracle whitepaper is also available on Oracle's website: http://www.oracle.com/apps_benchmark/html/white-papers-e-business.html.