**IBM**

# Famous Smoke Shop increases online presence and enhances security with IBM Informix

| Overview |
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| **Famous Smoke Shop**<br>Easton, Pennsylvania<br>www.famous-smoke.com |
| **Industry**<br>• Retail |
| **Products**<br>• IBM® Informix® 11.5 |
| **Business Partner**<br>One Point Solutions<br>www.One-Point.com |
| **For more information**<br>**ibm.com**/informix |

**Famous Smoke Shop is an online cigar retailer offering a full range of popular and premium cigar selections and accessories at discount prices to customers worldwide.**

## Challenge

Famous Smoke Shop needed to scale its business to support an increase in online orders and strengthen security of customer payment card information to comply with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS).

## Solution

Famous Smoke Shop implemented IBM® Informix® in 1994 to support all of its 24/7 business operations, including a retail store, onsite call center, warehouse and distribution facility. All computer-driven operations, including five different Web sites hosted internally, are directly linked to the Informix database. The Web comprises 65 percent of its business and online sales have increased by more than 10 percent each year since 2000.

"We wanted to upgrade to Informix 11.5, not just for maintenance and support reasons, but more importantly for the new security features, in particular, data encryption," says Chad Kercher, IT Manager, Famous Smoke Shop. "We wanted to make sure that our customers' data was safe, and we did not want to leave that to chance. The Informix upgrade offered the latest enhancements to scale our business plus the encryption capability we needed to better protect customer payment card information."

One Point Solutions—an IBM Business Partner focused entirely on Informix and other IBM data solutions—was heavily involved in the upgrade, not only from a technical standpoint, but also in a license planning and cost optimization role. Using IBM's flexible licensing model, One Point's license review resulted in significant cost savings and Informix engine versions better suited to Famous Smoke Shop's business needs. One Point's role in the upgrade planning also optimized performance on the new Informix version and minimized downtime during the upgrade.

*"For almost two decades, IBM Informix has run our operations and served us well. Informix is exceptionally reliable and requires very little maintenance."*

– Chad Kercher, IT Manager, Famous Smoke Shop

*"We've realized a 10 percent year-over-year increase in revenue since 2000 in online sales. IBM Informix provided the scalability and security necessary to support this increase and protect our customers' credit card information."*

– Arthur Zaretsky, President, Famous Smoke Shop

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Famous Smoke Shop has an in-house custom application used for order entry that allows customers to place orders through the call center and various Web sites—all connected to its rock-solid Informix systems. After making some modifications to the application to take advantage of the encryption and other Informix features, upgrading to Informix 11.5 went very smoothly and took less than an hour. The actual cutover took place within a 24-hour period over one weekend.

### Benefits

- Achieved continuous data availability for 24/7 operations
- Strengthened data security to protect payment card data and support PCI DSS compliance
- Reduced licensing costs through flexible IBM licensing options