



# The Wheat from the Chaff



## HELIO HELPS BABYSTYLE® AVOID UPGRADE OVERKILL

On [babystyle.com](http://babystyle.com), parents of newborns can order a “super cute” bottle of Little Twig baby wash. It’s designed to leave kids not only clean, but calm and ready for bed. After the little ones are safely tucked in, Mom and Dad are free to pour that silky-smooth water right down the drain. But just the bath-water...

When the Los Angeles-based [babystyle](http://babystyle.com) sought advice about improving its hardware and software infrastructure to meet growing customer demand for its maternity and baby merchandise, some consultants suggested solutions akin to throwing out the baby with the bath-water.

[babystyle](http://babystyle.com), which uses a Storage Service Provider (SSP), was told, by one of its providers, to cancel its co-location arrangement and buy its own storage. Equally expensive and disruptive was the advice to discard its existing software applications and switch to another cluster server application.



## A BETTER APPROACH

Following these suggestions would have been an unnecessarily aggressive and costly endeavor for [babystyle](http://babystyle.com). Fortunately, Helio Solutions takes a more customer-centric approach. The Helio goal is to save customers money, leverage their existing investments and deliver IT solutions that meet their business requirements.

So when [babystyle](http://babystyle.com) hired Helio to assist in designing and implementing a new infrastructure that would be capable of handling the company’s booming business, Helio’s first job was to take a good look at what [babystyle](http://babystyle.com) really needed and what it could live without. Helio engineer Chris Ciborowski remembers those initial meetings, where Ken Kilar, [babystyle](http://babystyle.com)’s Vice President of Technology and Infrastructure, spoke about the other consultants’ sky’s-the-limit recommendations.

“That solution was far too aggressive,” said Ciborowski. “There was no business justification for doing what they recommended ... They weren’t having any problems with their Sun Microsystems™ hardware. Their systems and applications just needed to be re-architected, updated and enhanced.”

The Helio Solutions team soon befriended Kilar and gained his trust. They knew Kilar needed a solution that he could justify not only from a technological perspective but also from a business point of view. “We were able to offer hardware and software upgrades that would improve performance and scalability the business required.”



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### NO TIME FOR BABY STEPS

Once company executives signed-off on the Helio-recommended solution, time was of the essence. babystyle was about to embark on a wave of new catalog distribution with forecasted sales the business depended on. Since much of the babystyle website traffic comes from interest generated by the print catalog, the new solution needed to be up and running before catalogs arrived at customers' homes.

Making the case particularly challenging was the fact that the migration could not interrupt the flow of business through the website. The Helio Project Management team was there every step of the way to ensure a seamless transition. Chuks Onuoha recalls, "We needed a seamless integration of new hardware into their environment. There was a very small window for downtime."

Additionally, babystyle's use of a SSP required special expertise on the part of Helio. "You have to understand their world," explained Ciborowski. "To provision the new HA (high availability) environment, there were changes that needed to be made to the managed storage environment. The customer looked to us to help develop that architecture." This involved knowing what questions to ask of the SSP operators and to ensure the new equipment and software worked seamlessly in the co-location facility. The Helio team also took great pains to stress-test the new systems.

As a Sun Microsystems iForce<sup>SM</sup> Partner of Sun Microsystems, Helio worked closely with Sun<sup>TM</sup> to successfully offer and execute the migration where babystyle's business was running faster and more efficiently on two Sun Fire<sup>TM</sup> V480 servers with twice the processing power. The Sun Fire V80 servers gave babystyle the flexibility to scale their processing needs without wasting precious space while helping to reduce total cost of ownership. The company's memory footprint was doubled, its Veritas cluster server package was upgraded to the latest version and its Oracle database now has plenty of growing room.



### CUSTOMER-CENTRIC - EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

"The project was well managed by Helio Solutions' professional services team," said Kilar. "We are very pleased with the result of this implementation and would recommend Helio to anyone seeking High Availability cluster server services."

The babystyle story is a clear example of Helio's top-ranked expertise in designing and implementing HA computing solutions. Dave Condensa, Helio President and CEO explained, "The babystyle project demonstrates our approach to HA computing solutions. We make it our job to keep our customers from making unnecessarily costly or disruptive decisions. We always strive to leverage and protect our customers' IT investments."

Helio sees its role as providing solutions for its customers that help them grow and thrive. This can be complicated, and as with parenting, patience and understanding is paramount. The Helio philosophy places great emphasis on learning about a customer's business needs and challenges before making any recommendations – always protecting the best interests of the customer. So the bath-water goes, but the baby gets to stay.

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