



## Business Challenge

Ryerson aimed to distinguish itself from competitors by improving customer service functionality, but supporting IT infrastructure needed an upgrade to deliver on its goals.

## Transformation

Ryerson upgraded to SAP® Business Suite powered by SAP HANA®, supported by IBM® Power® Systems, for excellent flexibility and scalable capacity, ease of maintenance, and cost efficiency.

### Business benefits:

**28%**

increase in transaction speed for day-end closing processes

**14%**

faster completion of sales processes for ready-to-ship products

**7%**

improvement in sale processing time for custom orders

# Ryerson

## Metals processor and distributor polishes up customer service to outshine competitors

Ryerson is a leading value-added processor and distributor of industrial metals, with operations in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and China. Founded in 1842, Ryerson has around 4,600 employees in approximately 100 locations. Visit Ryerson at [www.ryerson.com](http://www.ryerson.com).

*“SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA on IBM Power Systems enables Ryerson to work faster and more efficiently, which is vital in the metals industry.”*

Doug Sulzen

Director of Technical Services

Ryerson

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## Sharpening a competitive edge

The global metals processing and distribution industry is highly fragmented, with many businesses jostling for marginal gains. Any competitive edge a company can achieve through improving efficiency or providing value-add services can deliver major benefits.

Doug Sulzen, Director of Technical Services at Ryerson, one of the industry's leading U.S. metals processors and distributors, comments: "At Ryerson, we're always trying to maximize our efficiency and optimize business processes wherever possible. Speedy response is a major focus for us and differentiates us as a customer service leader. This means that a core aspect of the IT department's work is to enable the rest of the company, especially our sales teams, to work efficiently by providing excellent technical delivery at all times.

"We wanted to develop our e-commerce site, add self-service functionality, and provide round-the-clock support for customers. However, our version of SAP ECC was reaching the end of its life, which made integrating additional functionality into the system extremely challenging. We selected [SAP Business Suite](#) powered by [SAP HANA](#) to provide the best strategic route forward."



## Choosing solutions to match ambitions

To optimize the power and performance of the new SAP solutions, Ryerson next considered appropriate infrastructure options, and chose to implement two [IBM Power Systems E880C](#) servers running the [SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications](#) operating system. IBM Power Systems offer high performance, flexibility, reliability, and ease of maintenance - factors that meet Ryerson's commercial objectives.

Doug Sulzen explains: "IBM showed that we could run SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA with just two servers. In contrast, one competitor required 14 servers to deliver the same capabilities. By using the advanced virtualization capabilities of [IBM PowerVM®](#), we can scale capacity as required on servers we know will meet our exacting reliability standards."

Ryerson engaged IBM business partner [Meridian IT](#) to design and deploy the infrastructure for its new SAP workload, implementing the IBM Power Systems servers, and creating the virtualization layer.

Ryerson selected IBM Lab Services to provide guidance on best practice for deploying SAP HANA on IBM Power Systems running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, as well as assisting with SAP certification processes. The combined Ryerson, Meridian and IBM team completed the project in around eight months – on time and on budget.

Pete Pekal, Senior Manager of IT Enterprise Operations, Ryerson, comments: "In discussions with possible vendors, it soon became apparent that IBM and Meridian IT were extremely knowledgeable about deploying SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA and IBM Power Systems.



“Our main objective is to support continuous improvement in our excellent customer service, enabled through SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA on IBM Power Systems.”

**Doug Sulzen**

Director of Technical Services  
Ryerson



“The confidence and experience that IBM and Meridian IT brought to our SAP implementation on IBM Power Systems made us much more comfortable with the migration.

“We expected the implementation to be a long and difficult process, but thanks to excellent work from Meridian IT and IBM Lab Services, we were able to complete the project relatively quickly.

“Meridian IT provided us with excellent infrastructure support for many years, and this implementation was no exception: the Meridian IT team was efficient and dedicated to the task at hand.

“The fact that IBM included support from IBM Lab Services in its proposal was a huge benefit for us. The IBM Lab Services team essentially gave us white-glove service, demonstrating best practice for deploying SAP HANA running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications on IBM Power Systems, and completing the SAP certification processes.”

## Delivering great customer service

By implementing SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA on IBM Power Systems, Ryerson has gained the agility and raw system performance to help it realize its customer service ambitions.

Sales teams are completing transactions to process orders for ready-to-ship stock-keeping units around 14 percent faster, while the new solution has cut the time needed to finalize custom orders by about seven percent.

Ryerson also now completes batch processing tasks more quickly, with day-end and week-end closing 28 percent and ten percent faster respectively on average. With essential processes completed more rapidly, sales staff are free to spend more time on client engagement and other value-add tasks.

## Key components

**Applications:** SAP® Business Suite powered by SAP HANA®

**Software:** IBM® PowerVM®, SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications

**Hardware:** IBM Power® Systems E880C

**Services:** IBM Lab Services, Meridian IT (IBM Business Partner)



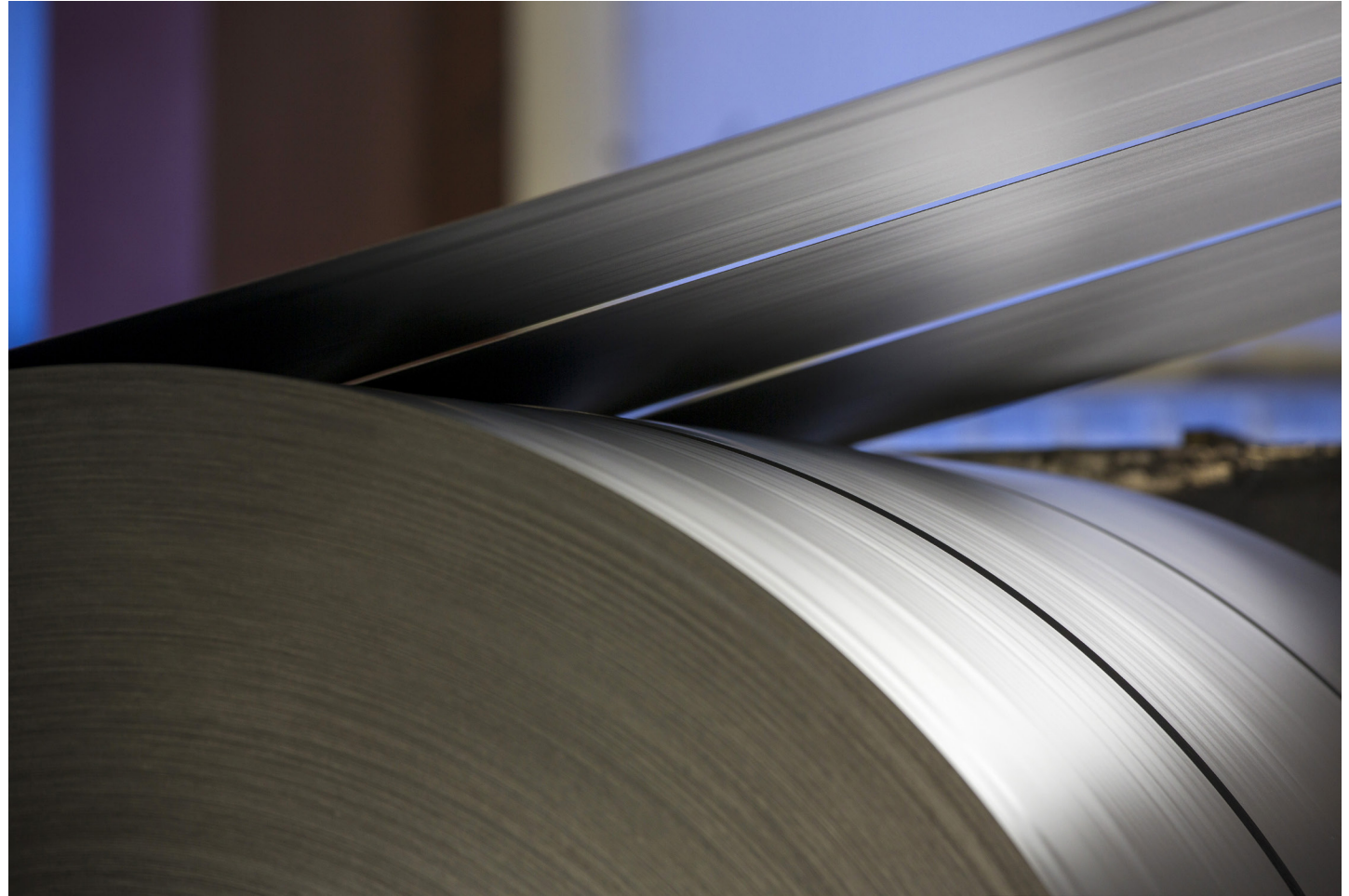
28%

increase in transaction speed  
for day-end closing processes

Doug Sulzen comments: "Our main objective is to support continuous improvement in our excellent customer service. With SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA on IBM Power Systems, Ryerson will be able to support powerful new functionality, laying the groundwork for improving our e-commerce site and bolstering customer support efforts to smooth the path to purchase.

"IBM Power Systems servers give us a flexible, cost-efficient platform with scalable capacity to fit business demand. Using IBM Power Systems servers, we have been able to reduce the rack space by 75 percent, as well as gain major energy savings and vastly improved processing speed."

Doug Sulzen concludes: "Implementing SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA on IBM Power Systems enables Ryerson employees to work faster and more efficiently, which is vital in the metals processing and distribution industry. We are delighted with our solution from IBM and SAP, and we look forward to exploring the full functionality of SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA, underpinned by the performance and reliability of IBM Power Systems."



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