Hurd shows new Oracle machine; silent on scandal

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(AP) -- Former Hewlett-Packard Co. CEO Mark Hurd made his public debut as a co-president at Oracle Corp. Monday, showing off a new data-storage computer at the company's annual conference.

Hurd was forced out as HP's chief last month in the wake of a sexual harassment investigation. He accepted the post with Oracle in early September, to which HP responded with a lawsuit trying to block him from working there. The lawsuit is still making its way through the courts.

The appearance reinforces the important role Hurd is expected to play at Oracle despite the controversy, which he did not address during his talk at the conference.

Hiring Hurd was a coup for Oracle and Larry Ellison, its CEO. Ellison, who is also Hurd's tennis buddy, is shifting Oracle into direct competition with the computer and server maker it has long partnered with. Rivalry between HP and Oracle intensified when [Oracle](#) closed its acquisition of [Sun Microsystems](#) early this year; HP has said hiring Hurd has further strained the companies' alliance.

While HP's [stock price](#) plunged after Hurd's departure, Oracle's has leaped since it brought him on board. Hurd was reviled by many HP employees for the depth of his job cuts, but revered on Wall Street for his cost-cutting and stewardship in leading HP into new markets beyond

printer ink and personal computers.

The computer Hurd unveiled is part of Oracle's line of Exadata database and [storage machines](), key components in Oracle's push to steal business from HP and IBM Corp.

Hurd resigned from HP under pressure from the board, which found no merit to the harassment accusation during its investigation but did uncover inaccurate expense reports that didn't show that Hurd dining with the marketing contractor who would later become his accuser. He insists he didn't prepare his own expense reports and points to the fact that his accuser's name was on some of his other expense reports.

HP, for its part, appears to be getting closer to naming Hurd's replacement. Many observers envision an insider who was already on board with Hurd's vision for the company's future scoring the gig. Top candidates include Todd Bradley, chief of HP's personal computer division; Ann Livermore, head of services, [servers](), storage and software; and Vyomesh Joshi, head of HP's printing division.

HP is expected to announce its selection before a meeting with analysts scheduled for next week.