

Success Story



DBArtisan and Rapid SQL

ORGANIZATION



cinema
network

Val Morgan Cinema Network

APPLICATIONS

- Database application that track nearly all aspects of cinema advertising business

TOOLS USED

- DBArtisan®
- Rapid SQL®

CHALLENGES

- Moving from a home-grown system to a standardized platform required migrating from Sybase to SQL Server
- No disruption to business and no downtime of any systems permitted
- Required full-scale testing between both existing and new system prior to launch
- System management needed to remain simple

RESULTS

- Use of in-house development teams and Embarcadero tools improved cost efficiencies
- Cross-platform tools extended IT teams capabilities without additional cost or training
- Wizard-driven utilities simplified a complex database migration

"DBArtisan and Rapid SQL helped streamline the system migration from Sybase ASE to SQL Server in less than six weeks"

Val Morgan Cinema Network is recognized as one of the world's leading providers of screen advertising, with operations in Australia, New Zealand and a joint venture in the UAE. In Australia and New Zealand Val Morgan holds the advertising rights to virtually all cinemas, including those operated by the major cinema exhibition chains and leading independent operators. The company's attention is focused on the national advertising market with approximately 80 employees based in offices throughout Australia and New Zealand.

CHALLENGE

Val Morgan developed an in-house system – CinVendo on which almost all aspects of their business were managed. The system was built on Sybase® PowerBuilder® and ran on Sybase ASE. To enhance corporate reporting and business intelligence capabilities CinVendo needed to be more tightly integrated with a recently acquired GL package. During the evaluation and selection of this package, it was clear that the majority of business software was now being developed to integrate with Microsoft® SQL Server or Oracle® systems and in fact the solution selected did not support Sybase. Although there were no issues with the Sybase platform itself, the company needed to define the strategic direction of the IT environment – stay with a single RDMBS platform, or expand to multiple platforms. The decision was made to migrate CinVendo from Sybase to Microsoft SQL Server. By standardizing on one platform, the company could realize cost savings and take advantage of services to support the reporting and data warehousing initiatives. The migration to SQL Server was no small undertaking in both scale and complexity. No disruption to the business could be sustained during the project and every aspect of the systems, from triggers to stored procedures, needed to be fully tested to address the subtle differences between the two platforms. Finally, the resulting system had to be as simple as possible for the IT department to manage.

SOLUTION

The Sybase database consisted of four hundred tables, seven hundred stored procedures, over eight hundred foreign key constraints, and more than nine hundred indexes. As a large number of business critical systems were all supported by this database, a successful migration was essential – performance, availability, and scalability of the new environment could not be compromised and the database management learning curve had to be kept to a minimum. Val Morgan looked to Embarcadero Technologies' leading cross-platform database management solutions to assist with the migration project. Embarcadero's database administration solution, DBArtisan, and development environment, Rapid SQL, were used to setup and configure the new SQL Server database. The IT department was already familiar with DBArtisan having used it as an integral administration tool for all their databases for a number of years and was confident in its data movement capabilities. Rapid SQL allowed the development team to test SQL and stored procedures, debug bad performing queries, and check results, while integration with PVCS ensured secure version control. Rapid SQL's search capabilities and task development were invaluable in ensuring an efficient and successful migration project.

BENEFITS

Portal section

With a small IT team, it was imperative to keep costs down and also to ensure the technologies that ran the business were rationalized so as to minimize management and support overheads. The company was able to handle this project entirely with in-house development using standard tool sets. Val Morgan had initially selected DBArtisan to manage its Sybase environment because it was recognized as the leading solution in this space at that time. With cross-platform support, when the company

migrated to SQL Server there was no need to invest in a new administration tool, or retrain resources. The IT team was able to extend their capabilities to manage the new platform at no additional cost maximizing the availability, performance, and security of database applications.

Proven Functionality for Higher Productivity

Although Microsoft SQL Server offered its own suite of management applications, the company did not feel that they were sufficient to support this project. Val Morgan chose to stay with DBArtisan and Rapid SQL as they were already familiar with the technology and its ability to provide the functionality they required. Using software which was known to the development staff enabled them to be more productive and shortened the development time for the project. Val Morgan could continue to build their database applications with confidence that the products would continue to evolve and deliver robust and efficient management and development platforms.

Simplified Database Migration

Data migration is a complex task, DBArtisan's wizard-driven utilities for migrating schema objects and associated table data from one database server to another gave Val Morgan the means to confidently migrate the entire database from Sybase to SQL Server. DBArtisan could also perform

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combinations of cross-DBMS platform migration for common database objects, such as tables, data, users, indexes, and views. Both DBArtisan and Rapid SQL were used to evaluate query plans, debug, and test the new environment, ensuring that the migration project had been completely successful and the new system was ready for use. Testing of SQL and stored procedures was also another important function that DBArtisan and Rapid SQL performed to ensure optimal performance of the new system.

Strategic Utilization of Corporate Data

Closer integration between CinVendo and the finance GL package was a key strategic initiative for the company and essential to enhancing their business intelligence capabilities. Migrating CinVendo to SQL Server was an essential first step in making this a reality. Embarcadero Technologies solutions were able to support the project every step of the way, allowing for a successful transition from Sybase to SQL Server.

CONCLUSION

From a development perspective, nothing operates differently from before, which is in and of itself the benefit. There was no negative impact on productivity or cost due to the decision to continue using the Embarcadero products for the task and for ongoing management of the new system. The CinVendo migration was completed in six weeks. The system went live without any disruption to the business and this was thanks to the level of comprehensive testing that the IT staff was able to carry out during the project. The system and specifically the query performance have been improved dramatically. DBArtisan and Rapid SQL will continue to be the tools for choice for database management and development.