



The Office for National Statistics Relies on Informatica Identity Resolution to Increase Operational Efficiency

CHALLENGE

- High-precision, high-volume identity data search-and-match capabilities needed to improve efficiency of a comprehensive business register database

SOLUTION

- Informatica Identity Resolution

RESULTS

- Matches and links information across multiple databases to create a truly comprehensive business register
- Improves accuracy of business surveys and increases government responsiveness to its customers
- Reduces IT and administrative costs

“We needed something that could integrate with existing systems and find duplicate information across different data sets with no common linkage and different data quality standards. We no longer have to go to companies multiple times because now we can find the information we need in our databases.”

— John Perry, Head of Business Register Unit, Office for National Statistics

Saving U.K. Businesses Time and Money

Access to impartial information is vital to open, democratic societies. It enables governments to make decisions and citizens to understand what is happening in their country.

While technology has made it possible for people to share information—anywhere, anytime—paradoxically, this widespread availability of information can also be a hindrance to organizational effectiveness. As more and more data is stored in various systems, it becomes increasingly likely that information will be needlessly duplicated, entered incorrectly, or maintained in a format that is not readily accessible.

That was the situation facing the United Kingdom’s Office for National Statistics (ONS). The ONS is the government department responsible for collecting and publishing official statistics about the United Kingdom’s society and economy.

The ONS maintains the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR), a comprehensive list of U.K. businesses. The IDBR covers businesses in all parts of the economy, representing 99 percent of the economic activity in the United Kingdom. The IDBR provides a sampling frame for business surveys and is a key data source for business activity analysis.

Before the IDBR was implemented in 1995, different government departments maintained separate statistical databases and updated them by surveying businesses. Duplication of effort across the departments made this an inefficient, costly process. In addition, with data spread across different systems in different formats, it was difficult to develop a comprehensive view of business.

The system created a burden for small businesses. "They had to spend time they didn't have responding to multiple surveys designed to gather the same information," explains John Perry, Head of Business Register Unit, ONS.

The ONS needed a solution that would reduce the burden on businesses, improve quality of service, and cut costs. The department selected **Informatica® Identity Resolution™** (formerly known as Identity Search Server)* to handle high-volume, highly accurate identity data searches and matches.

Merging Databases to Create a Comprehensive Business Register

"What we were looking for was more than name key matching," Perry says. "We needed something that could integrate with existing systems and find duplicate information across different data sets with no common linkage and different data quality standards."

The ONS found what it was looking for in Informatica Identity Resolution, which is specifically designed to search, find, match, and group identity data. The software emulates an intelligent business user's ability to determine a match based on a variety of factors, overcoming spelling, phonetic, and other errors and omissions in the data. Built to work with multiple languages and character sets, the software offers the speed and scale to perform high-volume searches quickly against very large databases.

Originally, Informatica software ran alongside the ONS's Ingres database without requiring major changes to the existing system.

Recently, the ONS upgraded the software to run on a Windows server. This permits greater flexibility in how the solution is used today and in the future. The system handles 12 million addresses, representing more than 2 million existing businesses and another 2 million that are no longer operating.

The solution permits the ONS to use existing data much more efficiently by matching and linking information across databases. This synergy has enabled the development of a truly comprehensive business register, with a centralized company view that was not possible under the old system.

Improving Responsiveness to Customers

Now the ONS is more responsive to its customers and other government agencies that require company information. This is an important consideration because the ONS's budget is funded by other government departments; failure to provide a high-quality service could result in a loss of funding.

In the end, perhaps the most important accomplishment is that the new system reduces the burden on small U.K. businesses. The availability of more complete, more accurate information means fewer, more targeted surveys.

"We no longer have to go to companies multiple times because now we can find the information we need in our databases," Perry says. "And that means companies can take the resources they would have spent responding to the surveys and put them back into the business instead."

LEARN MORE

Learn more about Informatica Identity Resolution and the entire Informatica product platform. Visit us at www.informatica.com or call 800.653.3871.

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