



Schneider National Leverages Informatica to Replace Custom Code and Improve Developer Productivity

“The Informatica data integration platform is a key element of our data warehousing and business intelligence initiatives. Through these initiatives we have been able to be more responsive to customers, and recoup our investment in Informatica through improved productivity, reduced costs, and improved leadership position in the marketplace.”

—Tom Cummings, Manager of Knowledge Services, Schneider National

CHALLENGE

Integrating data across eight different relational and non-relational systems that contained nearly 3 terabytes of data

INFORMATICA SOLUTION

- Informatica PowerCenter®

BENEFITS

- Improved operational efficiency
- Quicker, more cost effective development
- Ease of use and maintenance

NUTS AND BOLTS

- Data Integration: Informatica PowerCenter
- Sources: Oracle, DB2, Sybase, flat files
- Target: Oracle
- Platform: Sun Solaris

Schneider National, Inc. is the leading provider of premium truckload and intermodal services.

The Challenge

Schneider had eight different relational and nonrelational systems and nearly three terabytes of data spread across a variety of different business units. These systems collected invoices, freight payment information, claims data, and carrier delivery information via satellites from Schneider truck drivers and warehouse operators around the globe.

As a technology leader, Schneider needed to collect enormous amounts of data to store on their mainframe systems. However, a number of significant challenges were encountered converting data into actionable information. These mainframe systems housed many different types of data including specialized file systems and non-relational databases. The problem was that each of these data types required different methods for accessing data.

To satisfy business user requests that spanned multiple systems, Schneider relied on the use of custom code—an imprecise and time-consuming task. For example, when requests were made for freight information, the company’s IT staff developed custom programs by reporting directly against its operational systems because there was no central repository that contained refined and reformatted business information. This process proved to be very cumbersome to maintain, taking more time and resources than Schneider felt was appropriate.

The Solution

In looking to create a flexible and scalable data warehouse architecture to support hundreds of business users, Schneider selected the Informatica. Since its initial implementation, Schneider has successfully developed a number of highly successful data warehouse applications. Today, instead of requiring the assistance of dedicated IT resources, business users get answers to detailed questions within minutes by accessing the company's data warehouse.

By taking an incremental data warehouse implementation approach, Schneider has built an industry leading, large terabyte-sized data warehouse. After initially focusing on the transportation parts of its business in a rapid five month implementation, the scope of the company's data warehouse has quickly expanded and currently encompasses four of five business units.

Through its data warehouse Schneider is analyzing financial data, carrier maintenance and equipment information, claims, and carrier performance. The company's most innovative data warehouse application is Schneider Logistics SUMIT® application suite. Through SUMIT Schneider provides customers access to a variety of web-based reports and multi-dimensional analytics, including payment schedules and history, freight arrival and shipping times, freight charges, and freight routes. Customers can also view their payment history, freight arrival dates, and import data back into their systems or into spreadsheets for further analysis.

The Results

Improved Operational Efficiency

Schneider's data warehouse has helped improve its competitor position, due to improved decision making capabilities, increased productivity, and faster payment resolution.

Greatly Improved Productivity

Schneider has developed business applications in less time and improved development productivity by supporting its business users with less IT resources—one Informatica developer now produces the same amount of work that previously required up to four developers writing custom code. By standardizing all mappings and developing a set of best practices, the company's developers now work in different areas and move from project to project without needing to be an expert in business logic.

Ease of Use and Maintenance

By visually defining mappings and transformation through the easy to use Informatica Designer GUI, Schneider has been able to quickly train developers. Indeed, Schneider's developers have been able to successfully execute Informatica mapping sessions within a week and with little training, develop 20 business rules on the fly, deliver a data accuracy scorecard, create profiles on account history tables and develop other business rules that were then added to the scorecard.



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