



Keep on Truckin’ Informatica’s Pervasive Data Quality Drives Success in Transportation

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Achieving pervasive data quality is a worthwhile aspiration, says U.S. Xpress’ Dale Langley. Here’s why this transportation company is towing that heavy line.

What data challenges did U.S. Xpress face?

When I joined the company, one of the CEO’s top priorities was improving the business’ ability to make rapid decisions by addressing certain weaknesses in the business intelligence (BI) platform—everything from the lack of integration across platforms and data modernization to gaps in the enterprise data warehouse and BI tools. More challenging, there was no corporate wide data quality strategy in place, leaving data in disarray and at times making it difficult to respond to business inquiries.

How did you achieve pervasive data quality?

We started with an understanding that data can’t just be fixed once, or fixed in isolated places. So our data quality strategy became part of a larger information management strategy (IMS), which is foundational to the success of the company’s strategic initiatives, including our new website, customer relations, mobile communications and our business growth areas. The program encompasses the enterprise data warehouse, executive and operational dashboards, and new transactional database modernization and modeling.

What solutions have you deployed?

We chose the Informatica platform

because it was the most comprehensive solution. Specifically, we implemented Informatica Data Quality (IDQ) to standardize data across approximately 7,000 trucks as well as other tools to increase the accuracy and reliability of data. It’s graphically friendly, and it proved itself when we had IT and the business lines up and running on it in 90 days.

How important is business involvement?

It’s not just important, it’s mandatory. The key was making our business leaders understand their role as the data owners. Because of the strategic issues involved, they have been eager to participate. Sales leadership, for example, readily accepted the responsibility; and we have two business managers in IDQ training. Such involvement is empowering and ensures that business is truly leading the charge.

What hard-dollar impact has IMS had on the business?

Fuel cost reduction was an early victory. In the past, we couldn’t accurately assess how much drivers were idling. We created an operational dashboard, pulling in 900 data elements off the trucks through the Informatica platform. In just weeks, we dramatically reduced idle time—ultimately saving the company several million dollars. It’s been quite a milestone toward gaining business credibility and we’re now getting daily requests for “magical solutions” to business issues like these.

Did the project have a “green” impact?

Being good stewards of computing

resources is obviously a sound financial decision. We are always actively looking toward IT simplification as fewer applications, servers and data mean lower costs. But that’s good for the environment, too. We embarked on virtualization of server, storage and desktop, and the IMS program for simplification of the data footprint. In the first two passes, we identified 1,000 inactive data structures and reclaimed storage space.

What’s next in your data strategy?

We will continue to hone our ongoing IMS program. And we will persist in making data quality and data integration cornerstones to providing business with critical operational and executive decision-making intelligence, as well as supporting the strategic IT programs that align with the company’s vision.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Download the free white paper **Pervasive Data Quality** at www.informatica.com/downloads/7063_Bloor_Pervasive_DQ_wp_web.pdf.

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