



DataFlux Customer Gets Seamless Connectivity and Scalability for Data-Intensive Operations

Goal: DataFlux needed seamless, interoperable data connectivity across multiple databases and platforms for its dfPower Studio product.

Why they embed DataDirect:

DataDirect's ODBC drivers give end-users seamless data connectivity to multiple databases and excellent performance – even when processing huge volumes of data daily.

Business benefits:

Customer satisfaction: DataDirect meets DataFlux's customers' requirements for scalability and seamless data connectivity.

Technical benefits: DataFlux customers don't have to worry about installing or maintaining client library software with the DataDirect ODBC drivers. DataDirect also meets the customer's requirement for extremely high throughput on a daily basis.

"We're always looking for ways to improve performance. I know about DataDirect ODBC drivers. I wouldn't even consider a database vendor's driver. I'm always telling my developers to look for better ODBC implementations."

Gus Ramirez
Database Administration Manager,
Sun International

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For more information, go to:
www.datadirect.com

For more information on DataFlux, go to:
www.dataflux.com

Sun International Hotels Limited is an international resort and gaming company that owns premier casinos and resorts in the Indian Ocean, Dubai and The Bahamas, including the company's flagship property, Atlantis Paradise Island. They service about 1.3 million customers on any given day, processing requests for reservations, brochures, CDs, and videos from any one of several sources, including a web site and 1-800-BAHAMAS.

They are keenly focused on the quality of the data they receive—the lifeblood of their business. That's why they use DataFlux's dfPower Studio Solution. It enables them to standardize data on their SQL Server database, which is ultimately used to perform multidimensional queries and analysis for all organizations in the company—from sales and marketing to finance and reservations.

Because Sun International receives data inputs from multiple sources—reservations and check-in, web requests and fulfillment from the 800 number, e-mail promotions, and WorldRes, a major online hotel reservation network, the DataFlux solution had to provide seamless, interoperable data connectivity. That's one of the reasons why DataFlux embeds DataDirect Connect for ODBC drivers in dfPower Studio. Customers like Sun International need that kind of interoperability.

Clean data critical to business

All the data is used by a resort system and a casino and lodging system that runs on AS/400. Sun International goes through a number of processes to clean the data before it is output daily into a data warehouse on SQL Server. dfPower Studio is a key step in the process. Gus Ramirez, data warehouse and database administration manager for Sun International, described the process this way, "Data quality is of utmost importance to us. In fact, we're considering a new CRM system, but know that the data has to be sound first. If the data isn't right, it doesn't matter what you put on top of it."

dfPower Studio is used to standardize and match the data, creating persistent "match codes" based on user-defined conditions. For example, the match code creation criteria might be "Give me all names with a 100% match to this zip code." All the information is taken into the data-warehousing engine and OLAP (online analytical processing) where it is classified and standardized. The data is replicated between the SQL Server database and the AS/400 system so it can be mirrored in the real-time application.

Scalability is a given

Sun International processes a huge volume of data daily. Ramirez's department handles all reservations and inquiries for Sun International, as well as customer data for the casinos and resorts. For example, on a typical day in January, they received 354 requests for information from the web site. They usually get about 80 inquiries a day from the 1-800-BAHAMAS line, and the demand is increasing all the time. Its Atlantis Paradise Island resort has 2500 rooms, and is usually filled to 80% capacity. Visitors to their

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casino operations generate a significant amount of additional data. It goes without saying that Ramirez's team would not use tools that couldn't handle the input from many different sources.

Ramirez's team is also responsible for sending data to the fulfillment house to send information out to prospects. And they are charged with creating demographic data of customers for conducting independent customer satisfaction surveys.

Sun International depends heavily on this data to identify and market to past customers and potential resort and casino customers. They are still very much focused on the quality of the data. Explained Ramirez, "We are growing fast and are about to implement a new reservation system. We even have a task force set up to identify every data point so we can enforce business rules even more stringently in the future."

DataDirect Wire Protocol ODBC: for no-compromise performance

dfPower Studio provides seamless data connectivity to Sun International's SQL Server database using DataDirect Technologies' "wire protocol" ODBC drivers. With these new drivers, there are no database client libraries to install, so installation of the product was quick and easy for the Sun International team.

Ramirez is pleased that DataFlux uses the DataDirect drivers in its product. He said, "We're always looking for ways to improve performance. I know about DataDirect ODBC drivers. I wouldn't even consider a database vendor's driver. I'm always telling my developers to look for better ODBC implementations." Ramirez has no complaints about performance of the drivers-even when they processed an initial huge amount of data they were cleansing.