



DataDirect Helps Progress Energy Simplify Support of Applications Across Thousands of Desktops

Goal: Streamline access to Oracle databases across 3,000 remote desktops.

Why they chose DataDirect: Fast and reliable access to Oracle databases from a variety of applications. Reputation of the company as a leading provider of data connectivity technology. Product worked seamlessly during evaluations.

Business benefits: Fast and reliable access to business information enables Progress Energy to better service its customers and roll with the swift changes in technology, regulations, and demand that characterize this industry.

Technical benefits: Reliability and conformance to the latest database versions and ODBC specification. Simplifies configuration of applications on thousands of desktops.

“DataDirect Connect for ODBC provides us with fast and reliable data connectivity to our Oracle databases. ... The product’s biggest strength is its reliability. It’s so reliable, you wouldn’t even know it’s installed. I can’t remember ever having to contact DataDirect support staff for reliability or operability issues.”

Keith Cooke
Manager of Nuclear IT Services,
Progress Energy

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

For more information on Progress Energy,
go to: <http://www.progress-energy.com/>

Standard Access to Oracle Simplifies Operations, Speeds Access to Data

Energy companies nowadays do it all, and Progress Energy is no exception. Progress Energy provides electricity, natural gas, energy services and broadband capacity to more than 2.8 million customers across the Southeast United States. And demand for its services is growing. With such a large customer base needing services on a 24x7 basis, Progress Energy must be constantly in tune with its daily operations.

No one knows this better than Keith Cooke, manager of nuclear IT services for Progress Energy, who is responsible for all of the infrastructure, architecture and business systems of the nuclear plant division of Progress Energy. “We are a leading provider of energy in the Southeast, and our customers are accustomed to the convenience of electricity and gas whenever they need it. Our business depends on keeping rigorous track of our daily operations. We’ve got to be aware of every mechanical problem, power outage, or other operational malfunction that could hinder our ability to service our customers.”

An essential part of that service is fast and reliable access to up-to-the-minute information about its business. Cooke’s IT department services 4,000 employees, with over 3,000 Windows desktops, running a variety of 16-bit and 32-bit applications—across four remote locations. More than 40 of those applications require access to Oracle databases, ranging from home-grown systems developed in Visual Basic to commercial analysis and reporting tools and packaged accounting systems. 90 percent of those applications are developed in-house. To simplify the complexity of configuring and maintaining those applications on each desktop, Progress Energy chose to implement DataDirect Connect for ODBC drivers for Oracle. As a result, end users can input and access information from a variety of applications using a single driver.

Explained Cooke, “For example, we use Connect for ODBC with BusinessObjects to access financial information in Oracle and run reports. We also use the driver with our maintenance rule application to help us input and track information about daily failures associated with equipment such as pumps, valves, and electrical motors. And we use Connect for ODBC with our scheduler application to manage and oversee all activities associated with the daily operations of the nuclear plant.”

Why They Chose DataDirect

Said Cooke, “DataDirect Connect for ODBC provides us with fast and reliable data connectivity to our Oracle databases. As a result, we can input and access information from a variety of applications. We selected DataDirect based on its reputation as a leading provider of data connectivity technology, and because its product worked seamlessly during evaluations. The product’s biggest strength is its reliability. It’s so reliable, you wouldn’t even know it’s installed. I can’t remember ever having to contact DataDirect support staff for reliability or operability issues.”

Another advantage of the technology for Progress Energy is that it always conforms to the latest and greatest database versions and ODBC

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specifications. "As we upgrade our databases and applications, DataDirect technology is right there with us providing support for the latest features and functionality," explained Cooke.

Added Cooke, "We've been using DataDirect technology for more than six years, and the company has always provided top notch support. The few times we've called their technical support team over the years, they have always responded instantly with intelligent answers to our questions. And the documentation for Connect *for* ODBC is so easy to follow that we didn't even have to call the support team to get the product up and running."

DataDirect technology is a key component in enabling fast and reliable access to business-critical data for Progress Energy. Having a simplified, solid infrastructure in place allows them to roll with the swift changes in technology, regulations and demand that have "energized" this industry. In fact, Progress Energy sees an increased need to access and manage data more efficiently in the future as they roll-out strategic e-commerce projects.