HEWLETT-PACKARD

A GLOBAL GIANT IN IT

HP is among the world's largest and most successful IT companies. Its portfolio spans printing, personal computing software, services, and IT infrastructure. HP today focuses on simplifying technology experiences for all of its customers—from individual consumers to the world's largest business enterprises.

ENTERPRISE DATA OUTLIVES ITS USE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Information Management division of HP Software wanted to expand the capabilities of the HP Database Archiving platform, which relocates older, eligible transactions contained in production databases to secondary archive databases and XML archives.

"Some 70-80 percent of a company's data that's over two years old is rarely accessed," explains Ali Elkortobi, Director of Research and Development for HP Software. "If you are a large company that does millions of transactions a day and amasses hundreds of terabytes of data, the majority of that consists of transactions that have been closed; yet all that data remains in your costly, high-availability production system, slowing access performance, requiring maintenance, lengthening backup windows, and delaying recovery of lost data in the event of accidents or disasters. Even so, you can't simply rid yourself of that data entirely."

HP Database Archiving addresses this problem by moving eligible data off the production database to archive databases or to long-term archives in non-database environments—often termed "compliance archiving." Legal regulations require certain types of company data to be available for very long periods of time, potentially driving up costs for IT organizations. HP wanted to make this more economical for customers but also ensure that information is readily available if and when needed.

"Traditionally, people had to retrieve and load tapes, where the information was linear, binary, and difficult to get access to," says Elkortobi. "It can take days, even weeks, to get such information."

Often applications from which the data originated were no longer available, having been decommissioned or upgraded to versions no longer able to read the file formats. HP Database Archiving provides a solution to make the archived records entirely independent of application, platform, database, or operating system. XML standards provide a way to have important metadata to be stored along with the data, providing true independence so that data can be identified years into the future.

CHALLENGE

Add ODBC/JDBC/.Net access capabilities to the standards-based XML data store of the HP Database Archiving platform

SOLUTION

Progress® DataDirect® OpenAccess™ SDK (software development kit)

BENEFIT

Provide customers with a standards-based approach to quickly and easily respond to audit and inquiries against long-term compliance data

PROGRESS

SAVE DEVELOPMENT TIME, REDUCE TIME-TO-MARKET

Elkortobi adds that customer feedback indicated demand for an archive database-type solution against which a company could use the same reporting tools they are accustomed to running on their current operational data.

"Most reports out there access data via SQL queries," he says. "So we wanted to provide the capability to conduct queries using SQL."

HP Software could have designed an entire solution from scratch. But they researched existing technology on the market, as well. When Progress® DataDirect® made a presentation of the Progress® DataDirect® OpenAccess™ SDK, the match was obvious.

"It was exactly what we were looking for in our project," Elkortobi recalls. "It provides a stack that enabled us to plug in a data store—whatever that data store is—and saved us the time and expense of having to rewrite the whole stack, which includes a SQL engine and all the protocols: JDBC, ODBC, whatever."

The DataDirect OpenAccess SDK enables custom drivers for any data source to be developed in a matter of weeks, making it SQL accessible from ODBC, JDBC, OLE DB, or ADO.NET compliant applications. Out of the box, OpenAccess provides a large percentage of what is needed; developers have to add a data access layer to connect their data sources to the OpenAccess platform using C, C++, Java, or .NET. It allows sophisticated solutions to be rapidly developed and brought to market in very little time.

Progress DataDirect helped HP Software in evaluating and implementing the technology.

"We looked at other, similar technology, as well" says Elkortobi. "One of the things we liked about Progress DataDirect—other than that they are the most widely recognized supplier of ODBC, JDBC, and .NET drivers—is that the technology is standards-based. We could assure our customers that the client and server part of our solution does not radically depart from what database vendors could offer."

Elkortobi also cites longstanding relationships with Progress DataDirect, both from his past experience and on the part of HP itself.

"Progress DataDirect was not a company with whom I had no prior experience," he says. "I'd worked with them in the past, and they've always been very satisfactory both from a technology point of view and from the point of view of good relationships. And many other groups inside HP that are using Progress DataDirect technology were of the same high opinion."

THE RESULTS: A UNIQUE PRODUCT OFFERING IN RECORD TIME

The access option for HP Database Archiving software that Elkortobi sought to bring to market was recently announced and has already garnered interest among HP's larger enterprise customers.

"Progress DataDirect helped us to quickly push this technology to market," he says. "We had the sales support team backing us to prove the technology, then went right to contract in order to market the embedded software."

Elkortobi describes the companies most keenly interested in archiving are those with medium to very high volumes of data and long retention periods for their records. This, he explains, typically leads to an overabundance of old, unused data that it is actually aggravating the cost of operations. HP Database Archiving software allows those companies to take all that data out of operations and store it in XML archives where, while archived, data can be easily found via standards-based access and/or selectively compiled.

"Progress DataDirect helped us to quickly push this new technology to market."

Ali Elkortobi
Director of R&D
HP Software

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"If you're running a large customer relations management (CRM) application," he says by way of example, "you track whatever takes place between you and the customers. That creates a lot of records—typically, millions. After a time those are archived. But if an issue—say, litigation with one of those customers or a governmental investigation into the company—should arise, you can search via SQL for all cases involving that particular customer, for a specific timeframe."

"Database vendors allow you to access their data via SQL-based reporting tools," he says, "but their data is stored in binary format. Here the data is stored as XML, yet the consumer sees it as a SQL-enabled relational database. Knowing they have easy access to the data will compel customers to be more aggressive in their archiving."

In every step along the way to offering this unique technology, Progress DataDirect was there to assist in any way possible.

"Here at HP, we've seen a pattern of excellent support working with Progress DataDirect," Elkortobi concludes. "They are very supportive of their customers."

ABOUT HEWLETT-PACKARD

HP creates new possibilities for technology to have a meaningful impact on people, businesses, governments and society. With the broadest technology portfolio spanning printing, personal systems, software, services and IT infrastructure, HP delivers solutions for customers' most complex challenges in every region of the world. More information about HP (NYSE: HPQ) is available at www.hp.com.

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation (NASDAQ: PRGS) is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or in the cloud, on any platform or device, to any data source, with enhanced performance, minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

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