

# An Iconic Approach to Information Lifecycle Management

## IKON Office Solutions Achieves Six Month Return on ILM Investment Associated with Oracle E-Business Suite Implementation

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It's not often that the people in IT are referred to as 'heroes'. But that's exactly what's happened to our team at IKON Office Solutions, Inc., a Ricoh company (IKON). As director of Oracle operations and support for this leading document management systems and services provider, I led a team which cracked the conundrum of spiralling data growth.

Migration to a new Oracle E-Business Suite platform further impacted data growth rates, and when it became clear that our total database size could soon reach 80 terabytes, action needed to be taken before the company's storage infrastructure was overwhelmed. That action involved an innovative application Information Lifecycle Management (ILM) solution which saved a total of 18.8 terabytes of capacity, reduced the backup window by 25 percent, and helped avoid future costs by eliminating spending on additional capacity. It also led to a return on the ILM investment in only six months.

To understand how the company achieved these savings, it's necessary to scroll back a couple of years. IKON was facing a crisis similar to so many other organizations: the need to combat the never-ending, exponential growth in data throughout the data life cycle. For us, data growth was emanating most apparently from the migration to a new Oracle platform: the Oracle Applications E-Business Suite 11.5.9. Approximately every six months, each of the geographic regions IKON operates in was being migrated to this latest version of the E-Business Suite. When the program was completed, the system provided up to 13,000 concurrent users with access to the latest enterprise resource planning (ERP) functionality, ranging from account payables, receivables, and advanced supply chain planning to service contracts, order management, and purchasing.

An increase in demand for the firm's copiers, printers, and document management software and systems has played a part in this data growth, influencing the expansion of transaction-intensive Oracle modules, such as order management, field service, and purchase order. Another area also brought the problem of growing data volumes into sharp relief:

the creation of copies of the Oracle production environment. For IKON, comprehensive test data management, based on representative real-world test data sets, is an essential ingredient of effective development, testing, training, and deployment. However, despite the test copies demanding significant storage capacity, only a small subset of the data was typically necessary to complete these activities.

### Data Growth Overwhelming the Storage and Database Infrastructure

It was apparent to my colleagues and I that the footprint for these transaction-intensive modules would grow at up to two terabytes per year. Once copies of the production databases were taken into account, the total database size might soon reach 80 terabytes—accelerated data growth that would quickly overwhelm the company's storage infrastructure. There would be a serious impact on performance and user response times. Moreover, the exponential data growth would increase system maintenance, lead to higher infrastructure costs, and impact the backup and cloning times.

It was abundantly apparent that these issues would potentially affect our day-to-day, customer-facing operations. Our capacity



planning forecasts showed that the Oracle transactions might rise as much as 10 times. Because of this, call retention time—which is the time our customers have to wait on the phone—might rise by a considerable amount. Equally, we forecasted that order entry time would rise from the preferred 15 seconds to as much as one minute. We were therefore quite concerned over how these changes would impact our customers.

We examined several alternative ILM solutions to tackle the problem. In almost every area we looked at as part of the evaluation process, Informatica scored significantly higher. From functional capabilities, like module coverage, impact on the batch window, and the ability to handle changing archive policies, to cost and ease of implementation, Informatica displayed vision and breadth of knowledge.

→ **“The effective life-cycle management of our application data lowers IKON’s storage and database costs, improves performance, and ensures we meet the needs of the business. Thanks to Informatica, we’re an anonymous hero here in IT.”**

— Anil Roy, director of Oracle operations and support, IKON Office Solutions, Inc.

## Effectively Managing Key Phases of the Application Data Life Cycle

IKON deployed Informatica Data Subset and Informatica Data Archive to effectively manage the various phases of the company's application data life cycle—from testing to archiving. Informatica Data Subset is a flexible enterprise software solution that automates the process of creating smaller, targeted databases from large, complex data stores. With referentially intact, 'lean' copies of production data, IT organizations can dramatically reduce the amount of time, effort, and disk space required to support non-production environments.

In development, testing, and training environments, IT teams use Informatica Data Subset to quickly replicate and refresh production data with only the most relevant, realistic, high-quality application data instead of having to create a full system or database copy. In divestiture or corporate reorganization scenarios, IT organizations use Informatica Data Subset to untangle complex transactional systems, separating out only functionally-related data.

Informatica Data Archive, meanwhile, is used by IT organizations to cost-effectively manage the explosion of data volumes in a wide variety of enterprise business applications, especially the Oracle Applications E-Business Suite. The software enables IT teams like ours to easily and safely archive application data—including master, reference, and transactional data—and then readily access it when needed. Using Data Archive, IT organizations can identify and move inactive data to another online database or to a secure, compressed file. Application-specific business rules enable IT teams to maintain data integrity after it has been archived. By reducing the size of the production instance, Informatica Data Archive makes backup, recovery, and upgrades faster and easier. It also improves application performance and minimizes management and infrastructure upgrade costs.

### A Total Saving of 14 Terabytes

Using Informatica Data Subset, our team is able to replicate user-selected application data quickly and easily from IKON's production systems into lean, non-production systems such as development, test, and training environments. This has enabled the company to dramatically reduce the time and disk space required when compared with creating a full system/database copy. Based on a current production database of seven terabytes, IKON has

**The Informatica data archiving solution allows IT organizations to cost-effectively manage the explosion of data volumes in a wide variety of enterprise business applications, especially the Oracle Applications E-Business Suite. You can easily and safely archive application data (including master, reference, and transactional data) and then readily access it when needed.**

downsized the copy using Informatica Data Subset to 3.5 terabytes. The company has four test instances (including development, test, and training), making a total saving of 14 terabytes.

Informatica is saving IKON significant dollars over the lease term, enabling us to achieve a full return on our investment in only six months. The Data Subset solution reduces our costs by shrinking the footprint of non-production environments; it automates the creation of smaller databases; and helps avoid future costs by eliminating future spending by IKON on additional capacity. Moreover, it speeds delivery cycles by decreasing our test and development cycle time and enabling more cycles within existing timeframes.

Instead of having to hand-code individual business objects and processes—which is expensive, resource intensive, and time consuming—Informatica also allows us to reuse data objects for data selection and updating processes, which further reduces our overall total cost of ownership.

Following this success, IKON has more recently introduced Informatica Data Archive to identify and move inactive Oracle data to another database instance for longer retention. Retention policies for the transaction-intensive Oracle E-Business Suite modules have been agreed with the business users. Then, we use Informatica Data Archive to archive modules in the production instances with the largest volume of transactional data created on a daily basis.

## BENEFITS

- Significantly reduced costs, equivalent to an ROI in only six months
- Saved 14 TB of capacity using subsets of data and 4.8 TB by archiving
- Reduced backup window from up to eight hours to six hours—a 25 percent savings
- Helped avoid future costs by eliminating spending on additional capacity
- Ensured performance SLAs are met
- Managed the various phases of the company's application data life cycle
- Replicated user-selected application data readily from production systems into lean, non-production systems
- Reduced the time and disk space required when compared with creating a full system/database copy
- Accelerated delivery cycles by decreasing test and development cycle time
- Moved inactive Oracle data to an on-line or off-line format for longer retention
- Helped the IT team understand value of regimented cloning procedures

### Informatica Data Archive Saves 4.8 TB of Capacity

Informatica Data Archive has transformed the size of our production environment, lowering application total cost of ownership, improving performance, mitigating risk, and ensuring regulatory compliance. For example, the production environment is currently seven terabytes, and the size of the history is 800 gigabytes. We have six full-size instances, so the total space saved using Informatica Data Archive is 4.8 terabytes.

Besides the cost savings and smaller database size, other benefits abound. By reducing the size of the production environment, the backup window has been reduced from eight hours to six hours—a 25 percent savings. Dividing data into subsets has also helped the IT team understand more clearly the value of regimented cloning procedures. And database performance is now well within the levels agreed with the business, thereby ensuring customer response times and order entry processes take place as quickly as they should.

The effective life-cycle management of our application data lowers storage and database costs, improves performance, and ensures confidentiality. Thanks to Informatica, we're an anonymous hero here in IT. ■

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**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES:** www.informatica.com; www.ikon.com

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