IBM

DB2. Information Management Software

Amica sharpens productivity with DB2 information management tools from IBM.

Overview

■ **Application**
   Comprehensive suite of tools for DB2 to support enterprise-wide solution

■ **Business Benefits**
   Reduced staff training time; enhanced database administrator (DBA) productivity; increased ability to respond to workforce's need for high-performance business applications; ability for IT team to institute proactive database maintenance; migration completed three months ahead of schedule

■ **Software**
   IBM DB2® Universal Database™ for z/OS® and OS/390®; IBM DB2 Administration Tool for z/OS; IBM DB2 Automation Tool for z/OS; IBM DB2 Bind Manager for z/OS; IBM DB2 High Performance Unload; IBM DB2 Log Analysis Tool for z/OS; IBM DB2 Object Comparison Tool for z/OS; IBM DB2 Object Restore for z/OS; IBM DB2 Path Checker for z/OS; IBM DB2 Performance Monitor for z/OS; IBM DB2 Query Monitor for OS/390; IBM DB2 SQL Performance Analyzer for z/OS; IBM DB2 Table Editor

■ **Hardware**
   IBM @server zSeries®

Customers respect Amica's dedication to providing outstanding service, which has enabled the insurer to maintain one of the industry's highest retention rates.

Since the year 2000, J.D. Power and Associates has ranked one company as the "Highest in Customer Satisfaction Among National Auto Insurers."[1] The insurer, Rhode Island-based Amica Mutual Insurance Co. (Amica), was founded in 1907 and is one of the nation's oldest providers of automobile, home, life and marine insurance. With more than US$2.8 billion in assets, Amica employs 3,700 people who serve more than 1.1 million policy holders.

"We chose a comprehensive suite of database administration tools. And with the breadth of IBM's product portfolio, we were able to create an end-to-end solution that was tailored to our unique business needs — providing the power we wanted at an attractive price."

– Rick Buckley, Database Section Manager, Amica Mutual Insurance Company

DB2 Tools have increased Amica's database administration efficiency, allowing its DBAs to focus on increasingly productive tasks.

Amica's proven commitment to customer service was extended even further when the insurer realized the need to increase the efficiency of its IT operations. Rick Buckley, database section manager at Amica, explains, "We rely on IBM DB2 Universal Database for z/OS and OS/390 as the platform to support our customer service and other mission-critical applications. In the past, we used third-party tools to manage this environment, but wanted to upgrade our solution to enhance our IT operations. And we realized that reducing the total cost of ownership of our database platform would help us maintain our competitive edge."

To achieve this goal, the insurer turned to trusted vendor IBM, which provided a suite of database management tools to help Amica enhance its database environment. Replacing the existing database tools, the new suite of IBM tools has helped Amica to improve its database administration efforts and respond to its employees' needs for quick and reliable access to information.

"Using DB2 Automation Tool, our DBAs are able to move on to more productive tasks. Without IBM DB2 Tools, we would need to significantly increase the size of our DBA staff."

–Rick Buckley

"We chose a comprehensive suite of database administration tools," says Buckley. "And with the breadth of IBM's product portfolio, we were able to create an end-to-end solution that was tailored to our unique business needs—providing the power we wanted at an attractive price."

Ensuring a robust database infrastructure
Amica maintains three production instances of DB2 Universal Database for z/OS and OS/390, Version 7, which reside on an IBM @server zSeries system. The database supports a variety of homegrown applications, the Amica Web site, and PeopleSoft Human Resources and Financials modules. These databases store more than 260 gigabytes of customer, policy and pricing information, which supports Amica's 3,500 users. "We began using DB2 18 years ago to help us develop decision-support systems for our employees," says Bob Dickson, senior database administrator at Amica. "We became very comfortable with DB2 over the years and integrated it into our applications."

According to Dickson, Amica started buying database maintenance tools from a third-party vendor to relieve DBAs of repetitive, mundane tasks. Although Amica's staff of seven DBAs had used administration tools for quite some time, it found that it needed a more robust implementation to manage its evolving database. "We saved time over the years using tools to manage our database; however, as our environment continued to grow, it became clear that it was time for a change. And we sought a lower-cost alternative to our existing tools," states Dickson.

A recipe for success

In selecting the new DB2 tools, Amica developed a list of important features necessary for maintaining its information management platform, such as functionality and performance. When Amica compared its list to the features of leading database tool products, it found that suites from both IBM and other vendors met the requirements. However, after two months of reviewing the product functionality and performance data, Amica was certain that IBM DB2 Tools were the right choice. "We learned about the benefits of using IBM DB2 Tools from our IBM representative and ultimately chose them on the basis of price and performance," remarks Dickson.

Amica selected a comprehensive suite of DB2 Tools to help it reduce database administration costs,

Amica relies on IBM technology to provide a cost-effective foundation for its business-critical and customer service applications.

thereby achieving a quick return on investment. Amica is using:

- *IBM DB2 Administration Tool for z/OS to manage its DB2 environment and enhance DBA productivity*
- *IBM DB2 Automation Tool for z/OS to automate maintenance tasks and reduce the need for manual intervention, enabling DBAs to focus their resources on system optimization*
- *IBM DB2 Bind Manager for z/OS to help programmers safely bypass the DB2 bind process for code changes*
- *IBM DB2 High Performance Unload to quickly extract data from DB2*
- *IBM DB2 Log Analysis Tool for z/OS to monitor data changes by automatically building reports to help ensure control over data integrity*
- *IBM DB2 Object Comparison Tool for z/OS to synchronize production and test databases running in parallel to help maximize system availability*

- *IBM DB2 Object Restore for z/OS to quickly recover dropped objects, such as tables and indexes, while minimizing downtime*
- *IBM DB2 Path Checker for z/OS to identify the potential effects of performing a bind to one or more programs*
- *IBM DB2 Performance Monitor for z/OS to analyze and optimize database performance*
- *IBM DB2 Query Monitor for OS/390 to provide current and historical views of database query activity to identify potential problems, enabling quick resolution*
- *IBM DB2 SQL Performance Analyzer for z/OS to analyze structured query language and tune the queries for maximum performance*
- *IBM DB2 Table Editor to quickly access, update and delete data for easy database maintenance.*

Once the tools were selected, Amica's team managed installation, testing and deployment, relying on IBM for assistance as needed. IBM assigned a DB2 tools advocate to work with the insurer to assist with the project and to act as a single point of contact to resolve issues. In addition, the integration among the DB2 tools enabled Amica to convert its entire schedule of batch maintenance processes from the old product set to the new one—saving time, money and resources. "We budgeted a year for the conversion process," remarks Dickson. "Leveraging IBM technology and resources, we were able to devote just three people to the tools migration process. Everything went so quickly that we finished three months ahead of schedule."

Realizing stellar results

It's been more than a year, and Amica has utilized the autonomic, self-managing capabilities of the tools suite to help maximize the application availability and reliability of its DB2 environment—sustaining 24x7 availability, excluding scheduled downtime. In addition, the insurer has reduced labor costs using adaptive tools such as DB2 Automation Tool to automate previously manual system monitoring operations. By streamlining many time-consuming maintenance processes through automation, Amica is saving server processing time and minimizing the batch window.

According to Buckley, since Amica has automated the environment for nightly database maintenance, the insurer has saved a significant amount of time and money. "Using DB2 Automation Tool, our DBAs are able to move on to more productive tasks. Without IBM DB2 Tools, we would need to significantly increase the size of our DBA staff," Buckley says.

To keep the new environment running smoothly, Amica and IBM created a comprehensive training program using IBM trainers. "IBM empowered our staff to maintain our new database environment. Core groups of Amica staff members attended IBM-led training sessions, so we now have our own in-house experts for each tool," notes Buckley.

In the future, Amica's DB2 Tools will also support Siebel *e*Business Applications, which the insurer is currently implementing enterprise wide. For this project, Buckley noted that leveraging the capabilities of the tools is an integral part of the planning process. "With IBM DB2 Tools, we gain the ability to be proactive rather than reactive in managing our environment, which helps us to stay ahead of problems."