

Case Study: United Rentals

Critical Issue

For years, United Rentals struggled to maintain dual replication from the source IBM i system to two Teradata environments. They leveraged a CDC/data replication technology to stream data continuously to both systems, but if there was a network communication issue (no matter how brief) the replication process would crash. This replication failure would result in their production data warehouse process to not build at night and as a result fail to send out critical scorecards to the executive team and branches. It would take hours to understand the failure point, restart the replication, get the data back in synch and perform necessary validations. They also would identify "gaps" in the data where the starting point was set incorrectly and as a result they were missing data.

Business challenge

Because of the ongoing replication interruptions, the business to lose confidence with the data and processes. There were numerous occasions when replication would fail just before midnight and as a result key metrics and critical scorecards would not get distributed. The other issue they encountered was with the data itself. When recovering from a replication outage there were times when the restart point was slightly off and caused data issues. As a result they had gaps in the data, which the business would find and report back to on and as a result they started questioning the overall validity of the data.

One of the requirements was that the technology architecture NOT change. Their business processes were in place and tested and as long as the real-time data was correct, the architecture was exactly as they wanted.

Client profile

United Rentals

- Stamford, CT
- Equipment Rental
- Founded: 1997



Solution

After researching different products they selected Precisely's data integration solution Connect to solve the replication reliability problems. The product addressed the biggest concern, which was the ability to recover from a network outage without human interaction and keep data integrity with no dropped records.

Results

The product performed 100% as advertised. Even when they experienced unrelated hardware issues, Connect came back online and started replicating from the correct position when the systems were restored. No human intervention was needed. United Rentals runs validation checks and the data always proves out. They also do not need to stay up past midnight during source system promotions. All the mapping changes could be performed during working business hours and not at 1:00 AM.

The impact to their company has been tremendous since switching replication over to Connect.

- 100% more reliable data
- 75% reduction in resource overhead
- Tens of thousands of dollars saved annually
- 10% increase in corporate productivity

Technology used

- Connect (CDC)
- Teradata Business Decision Platform
- IBM i Servers

“Integrating the Connect solution with our Teradata environment was by far the best IT investment for United Rentals in many years.”

– Jim Malin & Eric Carpenter,
United Rentals