

Dean Hoff Consulting Utilizes DMExpress to Improve the Analytics Capabilities of a Major Direct Marketing Agency

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The Challenge

Located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Dean Hoff Consulting helps clients develop and implement analytic strategies. This includes building business intelligence applications utilizing software and other tools, then showing clients how the analytics can interact with their current processes. While working with a major direct marketing agency, Dean Hoff ran into a problem when developing predictive models. He explains, “Part of the process required us to apply model scores to a large demographic file containing over 100 million records. We developed the models and wanted to implement them, but in order to do this, we needed to be able to score the records. We went to the company’s internal resources to determine if they had the capability to accomplish this. The size of the file was too large so they told us to outsource this. After discussing possible solutions with a third party, the costs would have been too prohibitive. I knew there had to be a way that we could do this internally.”

The Solution

After conducting extensive research, Hoff decided to test DMExpress, the high-performance data transformation product from Syncsort Incorporated. He found that DMExpress allowed him to calculate a model score as well as score the large number of records in a short amount of time. Hoff added, “We now take a historical marketing file and append the demographic information using DMExpress. Basically, we’re matching the marketing file with a large demographic file using the join functionality. Then we develop the model using the appended file, take the results of that model, and score all of the demographic records we have.” Once this is completed, the company has a breakdown of everyone in a geographical region who was contacted and if they ordered a product. The information can then be used to improve the response rate of a direct marketing campaign by reaching out to consumers who are more likely to make a purchase.

The Benefits

One of the key benefits of DMExpress for Hoff is its speed. “Instead of taking days to run the aggregations, I’m able to complete the process in minutes with DMExpress,” he says. It also provided Hoff with the functionality he needed to process data in other areas of the application as well. “I initially integrated DMExpress into the application to just handle the scoring, but because of its join capability, I was able to use it to do the data append too. With the aggregation component, I can actually do some profiling with the data. Because of this enhanced functionality, I’m using it beyond the initial intent.”

Organizational Profile

- Develops and implements analytic strategies for companies
- Specializes in the direct marketing industry

Business Needs

- Minimize the elapsed time of a business intelligence application
- Perform complex aggregations on a large amount of data

Environment

- Windows XP

Benefits

- DMExpress processed 100 million records in less than two hours
- Using the Advanced Data Management component, DMExpress completed the complex aggregations much faster than anticipated, taking minutes instead of days