



Industry Construction
Region Southland
Solution Oracle DBA Support
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Executive Summary

To ensure the ongoing stability and performance of its primary concrete plant application, HW Richardson Group Ltd engaged SQL Services to carry out consulting work on its Oracle environment – the platform supporting the business-critical application. The HW Richardson Group continues to receive 24 x 7 support for its Oracle platform through a managed services contract with SQL Services.

Client Situation

One of the primary functions of the HW Richardson Group’s business is the supply of ready-mixed concrete. “Command Concrete” runs on the Oracle platform and is the main concrete plant application used by the HW Richardson Group for loading orders, tracking jobs and scheduling. Accessed by approximately 100 staff members, the application is critical to the smooth running of the concrete supply business.

The HW Richardson Group found itself in a situation where the Oracle server was running out of space and becoming unstable. However, the business lacked the expertise to deal with these immediate issues as well as carry out the necessary on-going maintenance.

“It is crucial to our business that the concrete application is robust and available more of the time. To achieve this we need 24 x 7, proactive maintenance of our Oracle database. We had no capability in-house to achieve this so we decided to call in the experts and engage SQL Services,” said Grant Harrington, ICT Manager, HW Richardson Group.

SQL Services' Solution

In order to address the initial problems associated with instability of the Oracle server, SQL Services carried out an “Oracle Health Check” on the HW Richardson Group’s Oracle databases. This work identified the issues with the databases and transformed the unstable, poorly-performing platform into a reliable application that performed well.

Following the Health Check, the HW Richardson Group engaged SQL Services to continue this high level of service and support via a managed services agreement. The set-up phase involved installing the remote database support template which is used for proactive monitoring and management of the server. Many recommendations for improving the databases were made and acted upon during this process.

Under the managed services agreement SQL Services provides 24 x 7 support of the Oracle environment and operates in an audit, escalation, support and mentoring and risk management role, while delegating a range of tasks to the HW Richardson Group team. Also included is a regular monthly audit and reporting cycle of the Oracle environment, ensuring that the HW Richardson Group has priority access to Oracle expertise should problems arise.

SQL Services also carried out the following consulting work for the HW Richardson Group:

- ▲ Mentoring the HW Richardson Group staff in how to troubleshoot Oracle issues
- ▲ Application and database performance tuning
- ▲ Implemented automated online backups and update statistics
- ▲ Performed a recovery of tables from backups
- ▲ Performed out-of-hours Oracle point upgrades and patching



“SQL Services delivers as it promises; they fit in with us, are available when there are issues and will work after hours if that is what is required.”

Grant Harrington
ICT Manager
HW Richardson Group

Business Benefits

Mr Harrington is more than happy with the Oracle support being provided by SQL Services and says that it has solved all the problems with stability and performance that the HW Richardson Group was experiencing prior to its implementation:

“SQL Services provide us with support 24 hours a day, seven days a week and, when issues arise, they contact us so that we can act upon them before they become problems and impact our day-to-day operations.”

“The monthly reporting provided under our contract gives us statistics on the status of our databases including figures like the growth of data over that period. Based on that report, SQL Services provides us with recommendations about work that is required in order to keep things working at an optimum level. We work through these with SQL Services and the work is either delegated to us or carried out by SQL Services as required.”

Mr Harrington says that “SQL Services delivers as it promises,” commenting that “they fit in with us, are available when there are issues and will work after hours if that is what is required.”

“We didn’t have the capability to do the Oracle work before SQL Services stepped in and couldn’t justify having our own in-house database administrator. Now that SQL Services is providing us with Oracle support, my staff are free to focus on other activities. The managed services support has certainly made our job easier – we don’t have to try to figure out what the problems are but hand over to SQL Services instead and, having the resource on tap, means they are available when needed. It’s the ideal arrangement,” concluded Mr Harrington.

Due to the success of the Oracle managed services, the HW Richardson Group has engaged SQL Services to provide support for its SQL Server environment.

Client Overview

The H W Richardson Group is a family owned business based in Southland, New Zealand. The original foundations of the company were based within the building industry but over the years have grown to include ready mixed concrete, transport, fuel distribution, road construction and maintenance as well as sand, aggregates and lime. The group employs over 1,200 staff.