

Customer Success



BEZProphet Provides Structure, Focus and Savings for Global Shipping and Logistics Company

A global leader in shipping and logistics uses BEZProphet for Oracle to see how new applications will perform, start a dialogue with other IT groups, properly size a new Oracle based environment to replicate large mainframe legacy applications and save a significant amount of money along the way.

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Jason Fichtl
Senior DBA

About the Business

The company is a leading independent global provider of outbound vehicle logistics services providing innovative solutions that bring flexibility, reliability and efficiency to finished vehicle manufacturers. They offer a comprehensive range of services, including supply chain management, ocean services, inland transportation and technical services tailored to the specific business requirements of their customers.

With over 6000 employees, and offices throughout the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania, the company combines global reach with expertise in local market requirements.

Within a month of installing BEZProphet for Oracle, the company was able to:

- Clearly see the resource consumption, response time, and throughput of their Oracle based applications for the first time
- Use BEZProphet’s powerful predictive capabilities to properly size a new server and reclaim spare capacity on another
- Use BEZProphet’s advanced workload and server analytics to start a meaningful dialog with operations, development and other IT stakeholders
- Save a significant amount of money by quantifying future hardware requirements, helping them avoid over-provisioning based on little more than a ‘best guess’

According to Senior DBA Jason Fichtl, “We have a lot of in-house developed applications, which basically do all our bookings and documentation for customs. In the last two years, we’ve had a massive surge in the growth of EDI processing on the database side.” As the company moves more toward handling logistics in addition to shipping, there is increased focus on delivering fast, very low-margin contracts that deliver solutions quickly.

Quantifying Workload Resource Consumption

Jason went on to describe a recent situation where he had new projects being delivered pretty regularly, not knowing how his servers were going to perform. He knew he could build a more constructive environment if he could improve the dialogue between his group, operations, the development teams and the project teams delivering the new applications, but at the time there were a lot of unknowns.

“What BEZProphet has allowed us to do quite dramatically is actually see our workloads, define our workloads, and come back to the teams, both in beta and production, and get a grip on what’s happening”, said Jason. On one of their larger servers, they reduced consumption from 90% to around the 40% to 50% mark by analyzing queries that were running most frequently and applying appropriate indexes. It was a simple application of BEZProphet capabilities that include definable dashboards and advanced “push technology” that greatly shortens the learning curve and delivers sought after information directly to the BEZProphet management console.

Jason was able to get a solid overview of 'who was using what', and then drill-down to see if the appropriate indexes would alleviate problems. "We've had remarkable success there in firefighting in the production environment, which has translated into good throughput for all the users, which translates also into a reduced need to buy new servers 'willy-nilly'", according to Jason. "The cost savings are significant when there's a million dollar investment in those servers to be considered."

Short Term Predictions for Long Term Savings

Once BEZProphet provided an overview of what was actually happening in their Oracle environment in terms of growth and resource consumption, they decided to apply some BEZProphet analytics and predictions on the new logistics side of the company. The company recently bought a vehicle processing business in the U.S. that currently handles the logistics for 50,000 to 100,000 units a year. They expect to ramp this up rapidly to 2 to 3 million a year. The principal application is running on a mainframe today, but Jason took a sample from one of the systems running with a small data load, and extrapolated that out using the scenario planning feature in BEZProphet. According to Jason, "BEZProphet told us, basically, that we'll be able to run this application on X number of CPUs, and last week, when other staff members did a performance test, the BEZProphet predictions were, in fact, completely accurate."

Prior to using BEZProphet to analyze and predict what would happen when the new application was introduced, they were considering buying a very large new server to run the new workload. As it's turned out, because of the detailed analysis provided by BEZProphet, they're running it on a partition of an existing server. "I guess, when we start talking about return on investment for the cost to buy BEZProphet, just in terms of savings in this one case, it's quite dramatic", said Jason.

As a result, BEZProphet has become the de facto method of analyzing projects. Jason is impressed with the ease of visibility on complex data that BEZProphet provides. Being able to show the workloads and see what they are doing. And then most importantly, give them a detailed breakdown of what SQL's running the most allows him to make informed decisions on whether to tune the SQL or consider a more expensive alternative. "Trying to do all of that without facts to back you up, you do come across as a grumpy old DBA", said Jason. "Having the facts and figures from BEZProphet backing me up takes the subjectivity out of it and allows for a much better decision-making dialogue with other groups in the organization."

Sharing Information is Easy

BEZProphet licensing allowed the company to easily give access to the development and operations teams. They can see for themselves what's happening, rather than getting bogged down through many different management approval layers to acquire their own system tools. They can see

what's happening, and they immediately develop an actionable appreciation of what's happening.

"This is a fantastic breakthrough for us, and it's taking us to the next level", said Jason. "Just backing up the view that we're moving from a very reactive organization to one that's proactive and actually sees what needs to be done. I can't speak highly enough of BEZProphet; it's been quite fantastic for us."

Demanding More from Capacity on Demand

As On Demand processing becomes more popular and widespread, its users are starting to realize that just because you can have capacity on demand, it doesn't necessarily mean you should. You can frequently end up paying a premium to have unused processors just in case you need them. Flexibility costs money.

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"I think capacity on demand is certainly an alluring concept, but it doesn't eliminate the need for planning", said Jason. "I think it's better to know as much as you can about what you're going to be doing." The company is relying on BEZProphet to help organize all of their server partitions for a better balance of workloads across the servers. When additional processing power is needed, BEZProphet can help determine the best course of action, whether it's activating on demand processors or converting them to permanent processors.

ROI from both Hardware and Software Savings

Last year, the company was preparing to replicate some legacy mainframe applications on an Oracle based server. They believed the database was going to be huge so they decided to install a new server for these applications at an estimated cost of one million dollars.

Shortly after acquiring BEZProphet, the company used it to analyze their current Oracle environment and immediately saw some startling results. They found that one of their servers, with four Oracle licenses, was only doing a very small fraction of actual Oracle processing. The company realized that they could move that database to one of their shared Oracle servers and see significant savings by

eliminating the four now unused Oracle licenses. According to Jason, "So, for a modest investment in BEZProphet, we were able to see some very real savings." "Just in this case alone, the product easily paid for itself a few times over."

Furthermore, BEZProphet was instrumental in reevaluating and choosing the properly sized hardware infrastructure for the upcoming replicated applications. The company used BEZProphet to determine the size and number of processors required for the applications and found that they could save nearly one million dollars by purchasing what they needed instead of over-provisioning based on last year's best guess. According to Jason, "If we had this product a year ago when we were going through a similar exercise, it probably would have saved us the best part of half a million dollars. It's really opened our eyes to what we can and should be doing."

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About BEZ Systems

Since 1993, BEZ Systems has been offering innovative solutions that provide a line-of-business workload view of application performance, resource and data utilization for today and tomorrow. These solutions include performance tuning, database performance optimization and capacity recommendations allowing DB Managers to accurately compare 'change and growth' alternatives and forecast future requirements. Future performance predictions are an invaluable component of justifying specific actions assuring that business objectives and performance goals can be met, thereby minimizing any shortfalls in service.

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