

Colorado Judicial Branch

Commentary by Bob Roper, CIO, Colorado Judicial Branch
and Bob Reynolds, CEO, SE Consultants, Inc.

INDUSTRY

GOVERNMENT

BUSINESS APPLICATION

E-BUSINESS/B2B, DATA RECOVERY



With nearly 250 judges and 3,000 support staff members, the Colorado Judicial Branch (www.courts.state.co.us) is centrally administered by the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court. Innovative business techniques and new procedures are constantly being evaluated for possible introduction throughout the Branch in order to improve efficiency, improve public safety and to make the court system more accessible to the citizens of Colorado.

"With Transformation Server, Colorado Judicial Branch has ultimately become one of the few state agencies in the U.S. with a tested and proven business recovery plan."

The Problem

For years, the IBM iSeries (AS/400) production server at the Colorado Judicial Branch has contained information critical to the efficiency of the Branch. In 1997, almost 3,000 end users in more than 100 locations across the state were dependent on concurrent access to the Branch's court, probation and financial data. To accommodate the growing need for reliable data access, the Colorado Judicial Branch developed a plan to implement a real-time resiliency backup to its production database.

"We had over 10,000 files undergoing more than 250,000 changes per business day," says Bob Roper, CIO of the Colorado Judicial Branch. "In order to secure a workable, tested recovery plan to support

personnel demands and ensure the continued efficiency of our organization, we needed to find an advanced solution that would efficiently capture, transform and flow changed data in real-time to a backup iSeries server."

The Solution

In search of a solution, the Colorado Judicial Branch approached S.E. Consultants Inc., a DataMirror business partner, to assist with its business recovery planning initiative. After thorough evaluation, the department found that Transformation Server best fit the Branch's real-time data integration needs.

"Although the Colorado Judicial Branch initially required a real-time backup of its production database, it also wanted to find a solution that would meet future external vendor needs for current court information," says Bob Reynolds, CEO of S.E. Consultants. "DataMirror Transformation Server proved to be a high performance, flexible solution that could simultaneously satisfy all of the Branch's complex data movement, integration and resiliency demands."

The Colorado Judicial Branch's iSeries business recovery platform is only one part of its numerous projects. In 1998, the DataMirror solution began integrating approximately 20% of the Branch's production data to a RS/6000 running Sybase which supports other state criminal justice agencies. This database, known as the Colorado Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (CICJIS), is an integrated computer information system that links five state-wide criminal justice agencies to track offenders through the

Colorado criminal justice system. The RS/6000 holds the Branch's data warehouse for CICJIS and serves as the focal point for data transfers and queries.

"When it comes to the public safety of the citizens of Colorado, it is imperative for all involved in the criminal justice system to have timely access to relevant data," says Roper. "The ability of Transformation Server to integrate criminal data in real-time to CICJIS means that officials across the state with secure access can track offenders at any point from arrest to disposition."

In 2000, Transformation Server also became an integral part of JusticeLink (www.justicelink.com), the nation's first-ever statewide electronic filing system. Today, the DataMirror solution integrates a second subset of production data to a Microsoft Windows NT server. This provides all civil and domestic relations case data to 90% of the largest law firms in the United States as well as the nation's leading banks, insurance companies, screening and investigation firms, and media companies.

Finally, Transformation Server integrates a third subset of production data to a web-based public access vendor's iSeries, which in turn uses the tool to forward the information on a near real-time basis to a second vendor running the DataMirror solution on a DEC/Alpha system with an Oracle database. This allows the general public and other interested parties without internal access to research court cases without impacting the system resources of the Branch's iSeries or jeopardizing the security and integrity of the production data.

The Benefits

Since its inception, the Transformation Server implementation has expanded to meet the growing number of end users who

require reliable access to real-time data. Now, more than 3,300 court and probation users, 7,500 criminal justice agency related users, 13,000 attorneys as well as the general public benefit directly from the solution's ability to integrate hundreds of thousands of transactions each day.

"Besides being scalable enough to handle departmental growth, Transformation Server has also enabled us to have a business recovery system, among other projects, without impacting our production machine," says Roper. "We can now participate in the statewide CICJIS project, provide data access to the general public and enable electronic filing of court cases without causing problems on the original source server."

"With Transformation Server, the Colorado Judicial Branch has ultimately become one of the few state agencies in the U.S. with a tested business recovery plan," adds Reynolds. "It has empowered the department through its ability to off-load applications supporting secondary end users to other platforms that could have impacted service levels to primary end users."

Since its primary implementation, Transformation Server has also improved productivity by providing development staff with a complete set of production data for problem resolution and test bed loading.

"Having up-to-the-minute data access means that the Colorado Judicial Branch can now meet mandates and requirements imposed by the courts and executive branch at a minimal cost to the public in terms of time and tax dollars," says Reynolds.

Conclusions

With four major projects underway, the Colorado Judicial Branch has effectively maximized its investment in DataMirror Transformation Server. The Branch has also benefited greatly from the expertise of the DataMirror support team.

"It is easy to rely on DataMirror support to resolve any configuration or performance issues we may have," says Reynolds. "As part of the initial transaction, DataMirror sent staff on-site for training and configuration of the DB2-to-Sybase effort required for the CICJIS project. Since then, we have also taken advantage of additional assistance including DataMirror's on-line support to download service packs."

"With the large amounts of data we have and the sensitive nature of that data, it's a great feeling to be able to depend on DataMirror and Transformation Server," adds Roper. "Thanks to the combined efforts of DataMirror and S.E. Consultants, we can confidently continue sharing critical criminal justice information in real-time to empower thousands of end users across Colorado."



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