

## DataMirror solution provides Imperial Tobacco with valuable business intelligence insight

Commentary by Paul Maynes  
UK Systems Manager

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### INDUSTRY

FOOD, BEVERAGE AND TOBACCO

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### BUSINESS APPLICATION

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE



Imperial Tobacco Limited (ITL), a member of Imperial Tobacco Group PLC ([www.imperial-tobacco.com](http://www.imperial-tobacco.com)), is a major manufacturer, marketer and distributor of cigarettes, cigars, hand-rolling and pipe tobaccos throughout the United Kingdom. The Company's cigarette brands include Regal, Embassy, John Player, Lambert and Butler and Superkings, with manufacturing centred in a state-of-the-art cigarette factory in Nottingham, England. Golden Virginia, manufactured in Nottingham, remains the leading hand-rolling tobacco. Cigars are produced under the Castella, Classic and Panama names at a new cigar factory in Bristol, England. In 2000, ITL's yearly earnings were £560m.

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*"The real-time capture, transform and flow solution provided by DataMirror Transformation Server allowed us to break the bottle neck of transferring large volumes of business data from our backup iSeries system to our data warehouse within a limited overnight batch window."*

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### The Problem

Imperial Tobacco Limited determined a need to flow transactional data entered on their sales and marketing iSeries (AS/400) system into the data model of its iSeries-based data warehouse. The need became even more apparent as ITL discovered that queries running on the transactional system

used to drive the business were negatively impacting transaction processing. ITL wanted to keep the data warehouse environment synchronized in real-time with the production environment. They also needed a fast, reliable and easy-to-use solution for integrating data between the two databases that would require low transaction processing overhead.

"We required critical customer information and transactional data to be captured, transformed and flowed into the data warehouse data model", says Paul Maynes, UK Systems Manager for ITL. "The solution had to be capable of transferring large amounts of data in real-time to get around the limited batch window problem we faced due to the size of the database and the large number of daily transactions."

### The Solution

Cap Gemini, one of the largest management and IT consulting firms in the world, recommended DataMirror Transformation Server to ITL. To successfully transfer transactions to the database, ITL selected Transformation Server to capture data from the backup store and flow it in real-time to a data warehousing store on the same machine.

DataMirror Transformation Server transforms the experience of doing business by delivering real-time data flows to the people who need it. It lets users capture, transform and flow their data in real-time between DB2 UDB, Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle and Sybase across UNIX, Linux, Microsoft Window NT/2000, OS/400 and OS/390. Because Transformation Server is easy to implement and requires no

programming changes to applications and databases, customers can realize a rapid return on their software investment. Transformation Server's out-of-the-box support for leading databases make it ideal for a range of applications including EAI, e-Business, business intelligence, CRM and a host of other distributed data applications.

By implementing DataMirror Transformation Server, ITL was able to quickly implement a solution for active data warehousing and real-time analytics.

"DataMirror has been one of the most efficient and reliable software tools in our systems environment," says Maynes. "The real-time integration and powerful data transformations enabled by Transformation Server support virtually all of ITL's key systems and have allowed rapid and tremendous growth."

## The Benefits

Since January 1998, DataMirror has provided ITL with a fast and efficient means of integrating operational data into their data warehouse environment. "The DataMirror Transformation Server solution enables ITL to achieve powerful commercial insight by flowing this information to a non-operational business intelligence environment where internal business analysts are free to slice and dice the data without impacting performance," adds Maynes. "By implementing Transformation Server, the benefits were aimed mainly at an internal business analyst community who now benefit from having their own business intelligence environment."

Since implementing DataMirror Transformation Server, ITL has been mirroring approximately 300,000 transactions every night to support its business intelligence and reporting initiatives. Users can now process and

distribute information as often as required and utilize presentation tools to enhance the display and distribution of information to decision makers throughout the organization.

## The Conclusion

ITL implemented DataMirror Transformation Server as part of a real-time data warehouse solution to flow data from its iSeries backup system to a data warehouse environment residing on the same iSeries server.

Although ITL has not yet conducted a thorough ROI study of the solution, industry analysts expect the average enterprise to achieve ROI of 300 to 400 percent over three years, simply because its users can make more informed decisions about how to drive the business. While most data warehouses contain an end-of-day, end-of-week or end-of-month snapshot of operational data, many companies are realizing that corporate data is a highly perishable commodity. Like ITL, they are implementing active data warehouses in which data is replenished in real-time to eliminate batch window over-runs and provide up-to-the-second information for business intelligence.

The flexible Transformation Server solution has enabled ITL to achieve the clear advantages of business intelligence without suffering many of the most common pitfalls.



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