

Tiffany & Co. reaps multiple benefits with DataMirror EAI solution

Commentary by Ed Pfeil,
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INDUSTRY

RETAIL

BUSINESS APPLICATION

ENTERPRISE APPLICATION INTEGRATION
e-BUSINESS
DATA WAREHOUSING



Headquartered in New York City, Tiffany & Co. is one of the world's most respected and prestigious jewelry retailers. Established in 1837 as a stationary and fancy-goods shop, Tiffany's has since become a landmark on Fifth Avenue as well as an international symbol of design. Over the years, Tiffany's customers have ranged from U.S. President Abraham Lincoln to Princess Diana. With more than 5,000 employees worldwide, Tiffany & Co. is a public company traded on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE: TIF). Tiffany's e-commerce site can be found at www.tiffany.com.

and development applications as well as their intranet and Internet sites.

In 1996, the Company determined a need for a real-time solution that would replicate financial, sales, product, inventory and customer information into its data warehouse environment. The plan was twofold. First, Tiffany's needed to transfer and transform data from its AS/400 OLTP environment to its numerous AS/400 OLAP data stores and its data warehouse. At the same time, the Company also wanted to provide database transparency to its Microsoft Windows NT/2000 application development community.

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"Essentially, our first attempt with a transformation and replication tool failed," says Ed Pfeil, System Management Group Manager of Tiffany & Co. "We were using a solution to replicate our AS/400 data but support was limited and many times it just didn't work. It also couldn't be used directly with our Microsoft SQL Server databases on NT/2000."

The Problem

Tiffany's primary computing environment is comprised of approximately 12 AS/400 (iSeries) servers for transaction operational business processes and batch analytical processes and 42 NT servers that run production

The Solution

The challenge for Tiffany was in sharing its AS/400 information in real-time across the enterprise as well as transforming and integrating its AS/400 and SQL Server business data. To determine the right solution for the job, the Company conducted thorough

evaluations of five products. Through marketing information, product demonstrations and pilot testing, Tiffany's finally selected DataMirror Transformation Server.

"Transformation Server fit the bill because it was a high quality, well supported solution that was already structured for both our real-time and periodic net change data distribution and integration needs," says Pfeil. "We also found the DataMirror technical staff very knowledgeable and professional. Their ability to understand our data integration needs made us feel confident in our decision to go with them."

Today, Transformation Server captures, transforms and flows DB2 based sales, financial, product, inventory and customer data in real-time into Tiffany's data warehouse to support sales analysis, financial planning, product category management, merchandise planning and end-user reporting. Transformation Server also makes data available to the NT SQL Server environment so order processing information may be integrated to support IT development on the Tiffany intranet and Internet e-commerce environment as well as for point-of-sale projects.

The Benefits

Tiffany & Co. has experienced several business benefits following the implementation of Transformation Server for its e-commerce initiatives. The ability to work with heterogeneous data became particularly apparent during the busy Christmas season

when the Company was able to easily and seamlessly replicate data bi-directionally between its AS/400 and Microsoft Windows NT/2000 environments.

"Our productivity improved a great deal as soon as our target sources were defined," says Pfeil. "Especially during the holiday season, Transformation Server was able to simplify the process of making our company's legacy databases transparent to the Microsoft NT/2000 based e-commerce solution. As well, because it can be used out-of-the-box and requires no programming changes, it was the easiest solution for our IT application groups to utilize. Transformation Server essentially offered an automatic and consistent means of executing the data capture, transform and flow (CTF) process across our heterogeneous computing environments."

Tiffany's also realized a rapid return of investment.

"The fact that Transformation Server was so easy to implement and utilize meant that we could save time and human resources that would have traditionally been wasted writing independent instructions to move, replenish and maintain the data," says Pfeil.

Today, the DataMirror solution benefits thousands of users accessing the Tiffany web site. "The success of Transformation Server can be measured simply by the fact that so many people inside and outside of the company are now taking data

availability for granted," says Pfeil. "That's saying a lot for a product implemented in a high-risk, multi-tiered, high volume environment. Transformation Server ensures that data is consistently updated in real-time, and provides employees and customers alike with accurate product and purchasing information."

Conclusion

Transformation Server's capabilities do not stop here for Tiffany's. Future plans for the DataMirror solution include implementing iDeliver, a breakthrough B2B software solution that complements Transformation Server by allowing business associates to select, transform and integrate corporate data directly into business/desktop applications or databases on their own systems. Tiffany's hopes to use iDeliver to provide IT administrative support for personalized data marts that will use NT SQL Server databases under Microsoft Office/2000 Access.

"Combined with Transformation Server, we expect iDeliver to further enhance our existing systems so users can empower themselves with relevant corporate data across the enterprise," says Pfeil.

"In essence, DataMirror has helped facilitate Tiffany's key growth strategies for international expansion and enhanced customer awareness," he adds. "By better understanding the inner workings of the company and the needs of consumers, we can continue our tradition of providing quality products and services to the world."



DataMirror software is available
on-line at datamirror.com or call
1-800-362-5955

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