



Time Machine[®] Reduces Hardware and Administration Costs

Quote

“Without Time Machine, the process was inefficient, required the involvement of multiple teams, took much too long to administer a simple date and time change and we were limited to 2 or 3 databases per system. Now we run more databases on the same number of servers with more testing cycles and the entire process is easier to administer, freeing up everyone’s time.”

Mat Hollingshead,
Network Administrator

About Envision Utility Software Corporation

With offices in Austin, Texas, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, Envision's mission remains unchanged. Their staff is dedicated to helping utilities achieve control of their data by providing comprehensive, flexible CIS/billing applications for the industry. As their name implies, Envision continually strives for a clear vision of the future in the ever changing utility industry.

Envision's Challenge

Envision Utility Software Corporation (Envision) develops, tests and sells billing software for the Utility Industry. The testing of past, present and future billing cycles is very important to ensure that the performance and functionality of the software is maintained. Envision was faced with escalating hardware and administrative costs with a corresponding rise in complexity for its test environment. Much of the software testing is time and date sensitive and the Quality Assurance team needs to continually change the date and time of their data bases (each database is its own test environment). Because of this need for unique environments, Envision was limited by the number of databases that they could have and effectively test on a single system.

Prior to Time Machine, each user had to make a request to the Database Administrators to make a date/time change to any specific database. Next a member of the Administrators Team would change the system clock on the server. This process proved to be a major stumbling stone with the migration to Windows 2000, where Kerberos is a key factor for authentication. Since the date and time change to the system affected all databases and users on the system, as well as the system itself, changes causing the server to be out of time-sync with the domain rendered the machine inaccessible from the network.

Time Machine Solution

Envision set up the database services to run as unique users running a session of Time Machine. This configuration causes the database to run in a solitary “time bubble”, isolating it from the other databases and the operating system. In turn, Envision could allow an individual to change a date or time - by making a change to the user account - from across the network, of a single or multiple databases. The change made does not affect the other databases or users. The use of Time Machine has reduced the number of necessary servers, by three fold, for the test

About Solution-Soft

Solution-Soft is the leading provider of Intelligent Data Optimization (IDO) solutions, which address the urgent need for management of business-critical applications and data.

The flag-ship Time Machine product is a proven solution for enterprises to ensure mission critical applications are delivered on time and within budget. Solution-Soft works closely with consultant and strategic partners around the world in all industries to achieve clients' business objectives with ultimate ROI.

Founded in 1993, Solution-Soft is privately held and based in Silicon Valley, CA, USA.

Contact

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environment. Time Machine has increased the number of databases that can be run, per server, from 2-3 to as many as 12. Time Machine provides more flexibility for the QA Team in the test environment, has reduced administrative processes and responsibility, and now allows the individuals doing the testing to make their own date and time changes to the databases as needed.

Environment

The Envision test environment has permanent Time Machine licenses running on (8) Windows 2000 Servers, with Active Directory and multiple versions of Oracle databases. Each database is its own test environment. Since Envision has an Active Directory environment, the Kerberos (Network Authentication Protocol) requires that all the systems need to be synchronized to within seconds of each other which dictates the need for Time Machine software.