



LiteSpeed™ for SQL Server Reduces Storage Costs at Motability Operations

Motability Operations is part of the Motability Scheme, a UK-based charity, which provides disabled people with safe, reliable and affordable cars. Owned by several of the UK's largest banks, Motability Operations handles the financial aspect of the car lease agreements and offers preferential rates on a not-for-profit basis. With a desire to adopt a more commercial focus, Motability has expanded its line of business to incorporate car sales at the end of the three-year lease agreement period.

The Challenge

With more than half a million customers, and approximately 5,000 active dealers on its books, Motability had reached a point where its systems had to be available around the clock for customer enquiries, vehicle database and financial checks. Motability's SAP application was linked to these enterprise systems so any SAP downtime further impacted application availability. Anything less than 99.99 percent availability would lead to reduced productivity and to customer/supplier dissatisfaction, potentially impacting Motability's operating costs. The continual growth in size of these business-critical applications, held in a series of linked SQL Server databases, hampered the effort to maintain high availability levels. Each application typically had development and testing versions running in addition to the production system, all of which were adding to Motability's growth headache.

In early 2003, the daily backup for Motability's SAP upgrade project was taking four hours each evening, and the subsequent restore process was taking eight hours. This was not an ideal scenario as it meant that the project's SAP consultants were often unable to work efficiently. This project drove Motability's requirement for a solution that would shorten the backup and restore times as well as reduce the size of its SQL Server databases.

The Quest Solution

Motability researched the marketplace and selected LiteSpeed for SQL Server, from Quest Software. "We needed a solution quickly and we were so impressed with the astronomical power of LiteSpeed that we didn't feel it was necessary to trial any other products," said Richard Hawkins, Data Architect, Motability Operations.

LiteSpeed is a backup and recovery solution for Microsoft SQL Server. It provides integrated compression and encryption in the backup process, generating significant savings in storage costs and cutting hours off backup and restore times.

Motability initially used LiteSpeed on their SAP upgrade project to dramatically reduce the backup and restore times, as well as the file sizes. Since this was such a success, it was subsequently implemented across all of Motability's SQL Server-based enterprise applications with similar degrees of success.

Overview

"As a result of the fantastic time savings, we instantly got more value from our SAP consultants. I would say that from the time savings alone, LiteSpeed for SQL Server easily paid for itself within the first week."

- Richard Hawkins, Data Architect,
Motability Operations Services,
Motability Operations



Headquarters

London, United Kingdom

Services

Car sales and car lease financing company

Critical Needs

Solution to shorten backup and restore times and reduce the size of SQL Server databases

Solution

LiteSpeed for SQL Server

Results

- High levels of application availability through 75 percent reduction of file backup times and 62.5 percent reduction in file restore times
- Faster application testing due to 72 saved man-days per year
- Storage cost savings through reduction of file sizes to 25 percent of original size
- Immediate ROI which continues to grow exponentially
- Security assurance

The Bottom Line

The use of LiteSpeed on Motability's SAP upgrade, consisting of around 200 GB of data, reduced the backup time by 75 percent from four hours to one hour, and the restore time by 62.5 percent from eight hours to three hours.

Motability Operations saved time consistently across all of their enterprise applications. For instance, user acceptance testing is now more rapid because the testing environment can be restored in half a day, instead of two. With a team of six testers, this represents a 72 man-day saving during a typical year. Faster testing means that applications can be rolled-out more quickly.

In addition, file sizes have been dramatically reduced with LiteSpeed, for instance, a 160 GB backup file reduced to a quarter of its size. This creates significant storage savings for all SQL Server databases, and therefore reduces storage costs.

Since Motability's SAP upgrade, the size of these files has grown significantly from 200 GB to around 500 GB on one database alone, and Motability recognises the ease with which LiteSpeed handles this volume of data. "Without LiteSpeed for SQL Server, working with this amount of data would not have been possible," noted Hawkins.

As a result of the time and space savings, Motability is experiencing higher levels of application availability, which means that the risks of lost productivity and customer/supplier dissatisfaction are reduced. This is partly because overnight processing, such as financial agreement processing and crosschecks with insurance applications, can start earlier. Any problems that arise can be dealt with earlier in the night, with a reduced risk of impacting Motability's business operations the following day.

LiteSpeed provided immediate return on investment for Motability. "As a result of the fantastic time savings, we instantly got more value from our SAP consultants. I would say that from the time savings alone, LiteSpeed for SQL Server easily paid for itself within the first week," said Hawkins. The ongoing time and storage savings continue to provide Motability with exponentially increasing levels of ROI.

Motability's business now depends on using LiteSpeed. "LiteSpeed for SQL Server gives us so much value that I wouldn't consider working with SQL Server at the enterprise level without it. In fact, I would say that LiteSpeed is as essential as SQL Server itself," said Hawkins. "It's also reassuring to know that LiteSpeed works with the forthcoming release of SQL Server 2005."

Since Motability holds details of its customers' financial records, security is of paramount importance to comply with the Data Protection Act. "The Encrypted Backup feature of LiteSpeed is a bonus as it adds an extra level of security to our data," Hawkins stated. "I have been most impressed with all the people I have dealt with at Quest. They appreciate that I don't welcome the hard sell, and I am most grateful for their low-key approach."

About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software, Inc. delivers innovative products that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases and Windows infrastructure. Through a deep expertise in IT operations and a continued focus on what works best, Quest helps more than 18,000 customers worldwide meet higher expectations for enterprise IT. Quest Software can be found in offices around the globe and at www.quest.com