

# DATABASE

## TRENDS AND APPLICATIONS

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## HiT DBMoto Accelerates Data Movement for BI

*Andrews Consulting uses real-time data integration tool in RapidDecision business intelligence application.*

Based in Cheshire, CT, Andrews Consulting was founded in the early 1980s to assist companies in migrating information from mainframe to midrange systems. The company quickly established itself as one of the leading sources of expertise on IBM's new midrange offering—then called the AS/400 and now known as System i. In the 1990s, the open systems movement introduced standards that allowed radically different computers to exchange data. Andrews Consulting responded by building practice groups that could aid clients with the most up-to-date research and methodologies. In addition to its general consulting practice, the company has a specialized practice to help clients develop web sites, an ERP practice and a BI practice.

"The company was founded on the idea of using technology to improve your business," said Joe Guerra, vice president and chief architect of RapidDecision, the company's business intelligence solution. Guerra, who in the 1980s was an accountant and IT specialist with PriceWaterhouse and had extensive experience with JD Edwards applications, felt that it was too difficult for business end-users to generate many of the reports available from their ERP systems.

### Developing a BI Solution

In 1995, Guerra joined Andrews, then subsequently began the business intelligence practice and began to install leading BI packages to access JD Edwards data. The problem, he noted, was that the JD Edwards database was not designed with reporting and analysis in mind. Consequently, Guerra's team had to continually develop its methodologies and techniques for extracting data. The services offering eventually evolved into a product offering called RapidDecision. The focus was on building non-vertical, non-ERP-based data models for the major financial and operational modules using change data capture technology. "ERP vendors are just getting into change data capture technology now," Guerra observed. "The idea of waiting until tomorrow to see my data in a data warehouse was unacceptable." He calls the process a "continuously fed" data warehouse, which he defines as providing data through

database log-reading, not through messaging or APIs.

### Using Database Logs

The problem with API and messaging-based data integration solutions is that they can be easily broken, Guerra explained, "I do not know how any data warehouse that is fed through a messaging-based system can consider itself SOX-compliant." SOX-compliance requires both accuracy and completeness of corporate financial records.

**DBMoto moves data faster, cheaper and more reliably, and requires a smaller footprint.**

Simply put, messaging systems and APIs can be bypassed. "But there is no way to get data into an RDBMS without it being logged," he said. "If there is a place that I can see every add, delete and change in a source system table that is 100 percent reliable, then I can use a tool that will read every add, delete and change and apply these downstream to my data. And that is the method that I am going to use to build my warehouse."

With those criteria in mind, the tool Guerra uses to extract data from source systems is DBMoto from HiT Software. DBMoto performs refresh and real-time data replication for all major database platforms such as IBM DB2 UDB (including System i/iSeries/AS400 and zOS), Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server, and MySQL. In Refresh mode, DBMoto reads data, applies administrator-defined mapping rules, and writes the result into the target database. In Mirroring mode, DBMoto performs a real time incremental replication based on transaction activity. In Synchronization mode, DBMoto provides a way for source and target databases to be synchronized. Unlike other data replication solutions, DBMoto offers unlimited control over data replication and transformation. "We can concentrate on building the data warehouse," Guerra said.

Guerra had used other tools to move data from the source system to the data warehouse. But, he noted, DBMoto was more efficient and much more cost-effective. "When you look at the competitors across the board, DBMoto is a very reasonably priced data movement tool. It also has the most reliable movement of the data. They move it cheaper and faster with a much smaller footprint," he said. Moreover, its installation is very simple and straightforward. "From our PC, we open DBMoto and point it to an AS/400. It does the configuration for us. It is the easiest and fastest to install," Guerra said. "DBMoto outperforms the other products by far."

### Continuously Fed Data Warehouse

In a RapidDecision implementation the first step is to install DBMoto and other software to perform complex transformations. The various RapidDecision modules are then loaded. After proving that the communication and transformations work, a full refresh of the source system is conducted and then the mirroring mode enables real-time data integration.

"DBMoto," Guerra said, "is a high speed data movement tool, either unidirectional or bi-directional, that is simple to install, simple to maintain and requires such a small development effort, it was a no-brainer for us to use as our primary vehicle for System i journal reading." HiT Software, he added, works on the principle of "What can we do for you to make your life easier with DBMoto?" Since moving to DBMoto, he added, sales have increased and no client has had a problem with the data movement process.

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