

## REMOTE MONITORING AND SUPPORT SERVICES REDUCE ADMINISTRATION COSTS

### CLIENT OVERVIEW

The client is a US-based electrical supply company; a global leader in electrical material distribution, with over 1.4 billion dollars in revenue. With a 30+ database server environment, securely managed databases are critical. Reducing the costs associated with maintenance and operation is also a key initiative faced by the CIO.

### CHALLENGE

*How to balance the need vs. cost associated with database administration?*  
The client needed to reduce database administration costs. The client's full-time DBA required a hefty salary, but the workload was not consistent, and did not justify the cost of a full-time DBA. The company needed a solid, experienced DBA to provide continuous support without absorbing the cost of full-time employment, benefits, vacations to cover, or the risk of managing the high-turnover previously encountered with the position.

### SOLUTION

**Remote Database Administration with Proactive Monitoring**  
Aspect Consulting (ACI) was engaged to provide the company with expert database administration services, including incorporating monthly remote monitoring services. After comparing proposals, the client was impressed with Aspect's approach: a flexible approach to support, which provided robust remote daily monitoring of the entire database environments, and support services provided when needed.

The client gained continuous monitoring for peace of mind, and on-demand professional support at a more reasonable cost: less than the cost of the former full-time resource. Aspect put the following plan in place to both improve data protection *and* reduce costs.

#### ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT

To begin the engagement, Aspect conducted a detailed audit of the client's existing IT environment, assessing :

- Server configuration and usage information,
- Backup and recovery schedule and methods
- Key database activity metrics.

Aspect created a roadmap of initiatives and recommendations for further reducing costs, identifying maintenance gaps, inactive databases ready for retirement, and servers that were ready for consolidation, as well as recommending DR strategies that offered additional opportunities for consolidation.

In addition, Aspect documented the client's environment, with the goal of simplifying troubleshooting and compliance efforts.

#### INSTALL PROACTIVE MONITORING

Aspect installed its custom remote monitoring solution, **Proactive WatchDog EMS**, to monitor key information, manage and send alerts, and capture trending data across the client's environment.

The tool **monitors critical information (e.g. availability, backup frequency, disk space and file system usages, index usage, database inactivity)** across the entire database environment, regardless of platform, and sends alerts.

**Aspect's centralized monitoring framework eliminated common pitfalls** associated with other alerting methods. Administrators are no longer inundated with notifications from multiple servers, significantly reducing the risk that a critical alert is missed. And, stopped SQL agents or incomplete maintenance plans can no longer cause failed jobs or missed backups without notification. The client no longer needs to maintain scripts on each server, and can easily add and extend monitoring to new databases and servers.

#### IMPLEMENT TEAM SUPPORT COVERAGE

With proactive monitoring in place, day-to-day support needs were significantly reduced. Aspect replaced the client's single resource with an entire team of DBAs, cross-trained to respond to any critical situation, effectively removing the risk of a single point of failure. The client no longer has to worry about turnover, retraining, or covering vacations. Services are provided on demand, only as needed.

#### BENEFITS

**Cost Savings Goals Met - Data Protected.**  
With Aspect's help, the client successfully reduced their operations budget, allowed the client to realize the following benefits:

#### SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONAL COST REDUCTIONS

By contracting with Aspect Consulting, Aspect was able to **reduce the company's administration costs by 35%**, allowing the client to refocus those savings on other mission critical projects.

#### CONSOLIDATION FURTHER REDUCED COSTS

Identifying servers for consolidation led to additional savings via reduced licensing and energy costs.

#### IMPROVED DATA PROTECTION AND SUPPORTABILITY

Backup and recovery gaps uncovered during the initial assessment were closed, and monitoring ensures that any future issues are quickly detected and remediated, increasing data protection. Complete documentation further ensures that the team can quickly respond to and fix issues with efficiency.