A man in a blue polo shirt is leaning over a desk in a server room, looking intently at a laptop. The background shows rows of server racks with various colored cables (yellow, blue) plugged into them. The room is brightly lit with overhead lights.

AAPT: Creating a Robust Report Engine for a Unified View of Customers



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Telecommunications

Products and Services

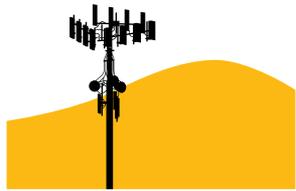
Broadband Internet, data, voice, cloud, network and carrier solutions

Web Site

www.aapt.com.au

SAP® Solutions

SAP® IQ software, SAP Data Services software, SAP PowerDesigner® software



Corporate growth and mergers required AAPT to manage many disparate applications including customer billing, service management, and sales. The challenge involved developing a reporting solution integrated with a new billing platform that could quickly generate reports. AAPT found the answer in SAP® IQ software, which works with SAP Data Services software to **quickly generate key performance indicator reports across multiple billing systems** and create a single view of each customer.

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Leader in the Australian telecommunications industry

Based in Sydney, Australia, with more than 600 employees, AAPT was formed in 1991 and is now one of Australia's leading telecommunications infrastructure companies. The company is 100% owned by Telecom New Zealand (TEL) and is one of only three Australian telecommunications firms to own and operate a national voice and data network.

AAPT offers Internet, data, cloud, and voice services to businesses, government, and wholesale customers via an extensive national fiber network. The company also has one of Australia's most extensive and highest-quality IP networks. As a business telecommunications infrastructure company, AAPT strives to deliver extreme performance across every level of the organization. Its dedicated focus includes creating business customer partnerships that are unmatched by competitors.

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Advanced reporting required to create a single view of customers

Following a number of corporate mergers and acquisitions, AAPT found itself needing to manage multiple key business applications, particularly in the areas of customer billing, service management, and sales. In an effort to rationalize the application portfolio, AAPT first decided to move all of its billing onto one platform.

A key component of the project involved developing a reporting solution integrated with the new billing platform that could quickly generate ad hoc and recurring reports. In addition to uploading billing information into the reporting solution, AAPT also wanted to connect its customer relationship management (CRM) applications to the reporting solution so senior management could gain a single view of each customer.

AAPT had already determined it would continue using SAP Data Services for front-end reporting, because end users were accustomed to the software. The reporting solution had also proven its value in generating easy-to-interpret reports.

The key decision facing the IT team was thus determining which back-end report-generation engine to pair with SAP Data Services.



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SAP IQ proves most effective and cost-efficient

Benchmark testing proved that SAP IQ would meet the needs of AAPT when it came to running baseline queries quickly as well as keeping down the amount of time required to execute the daily load processes to transfer large sets of information from source systems. Having these capabilities was critical since AAPT wanted to make information in the data warehouse available within 24 hours. Another key factor in choosing SAP IQ was the total cost of ownership. Other software solutions required the purchase of an appliance, which was limited in the amount of data it

could store. With the amount of data AAPT handles, the company most likely would have needed more than one appliance, which would have further increased the total cost of ownership.

Conversely, SAP IQ allows AAPT to connect to the data warehouse (running on low-cost x86 chipsets) directly to storage area network (SAN) storage systems. This architecture allows AAPT to expand storage capacity at a much lower cost compared to solutions that require appliance add-ons.

“SAP IQ clearly provides the most cost-efficient reporting platform that’s scalable and gives us confidence in its ability to perform reliably.”

David Yuile, CEO, AAPT



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Increased reporting speed and agility

For the new data warehouse solution, AAPT deployed SAP IQ on an x86 blade server with four core Intel CPUs running on an Oracle Solaris 10 operating system. SAP IQ provides data to SAP Data Services, where reports are generated. Since the initial deployment, the SAP IQ database has grown to 1,200 GB — with significant growth expected to continue during the next two years.

When AAPT migrated to the new billing system, the company faced the risk of losing or dropping call detail records. But with the help of a professional services team and SAP IQ technology, the AAPT Revenue Assurance team was able to easily analyze the new billing system. This capability helped AAPT to ensure no records were lost during the migration process. Management can also now identify any errors in the billing process on an ongoing basis.

“By migrating to SAP IQ, we achieved throughput speeds of 7.5 million rows per minute. This capability kept the migration window and business outage to a minimum.”

David Yuile, CEO, AAPT



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New reporting solution helps identify lost records

For data modeling in the new reporting solution from SAP, AAPT relies on SAP PowerDesigner® software. Data modeling is critical for data warehouse efficiency with data coming from multiple source systems, and SAP PowerDesigner provides a simple-to-use tool that adapts well to all source systems.

To optimize system performance, the professional services team performed a health check on the environment once it was in production. This helped ensure AAPT made the most of its investments by tuning the solution for compatibility within the data center infrastructure.

Approximately 80 AAPT employees utilize the system regularly, with as many as 20 simultaneous users over the course of each day. Running queries against

the billing system used to take as long as three hours, but the same queries now typically take less than a minute.

AAPT collects call detail records (CDRs) from the switches via microbatches every 3 minutes, and users can pull reports within 15 minutes of a CDR closing. This allows operations to see customer traffic and possible fraudulent activity in near-real time.

In addition to the new billing system reporting capabilities, AAPT also benefits from the ability to generate reports from its CRM systems as well as a traffic diagnostic system, from which data feeds come into SAP IQ via Siemens and Genband switches. To monitor ongoing activity, AAPT now has live dashboards in the network operations center.



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Query and database administration time reduced significantly

The data warehouse for SAP IQ has given AAPT the ability to generate reports across multiple billing systems, and the accompanying repository now provides a single view of each customer with data from billing, sales, and customer service. Management can easily generate reports to view a range of customer data, such as service usage, bill charges, payments, and revenue per customer.

The reporting function integrated with SAP IQ allows ad hoc queries to be created easily, which is important because business needs change regularly. AAPT created indexes for all stored information, and with SAP IQ accessing the index, ad hoc queries receive fast results. The reporting system also enabled IT to transition support from an outsourcing support model back to an internal model, since it requires only one half-day per month for database administration.

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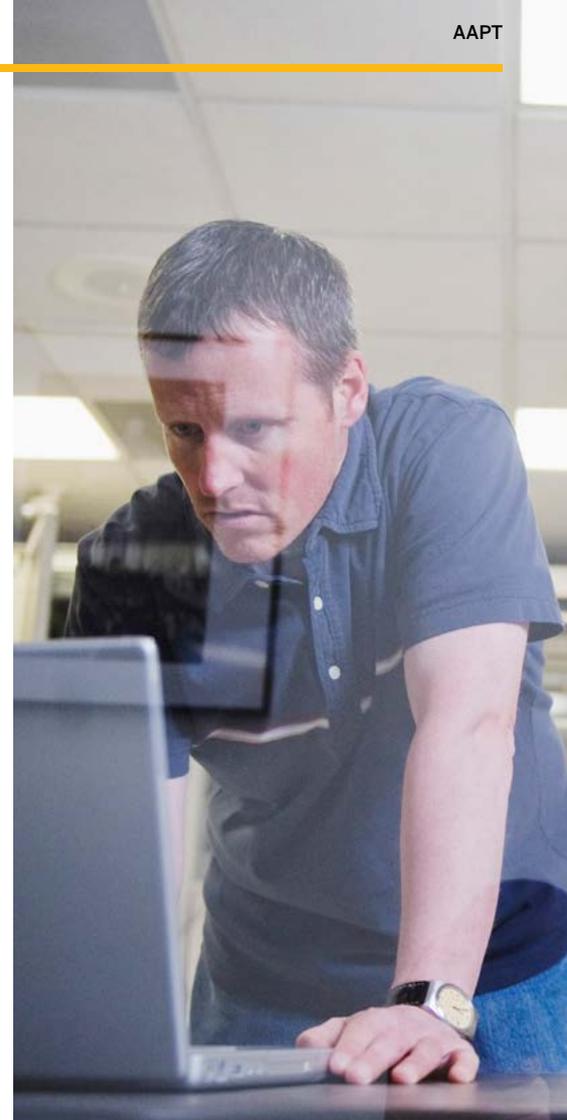
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Future savings for business analysts

From a business perspective, SAP IQ combined with SAP Data Services has helped AAPT adapt to and understand its new billing system at an in-depth level. This is particularly helpful for the revenue assurance department, which can run ad hoc reports for data monitoring analysis without any delays in query performance.

SAP IQ has also facilitated the building of product hierarchies, making it easier to generate reports on specific products that AAPT offers. The system saves significant manual time for business analysts who no longer have to look up product IDs on tables before running reports.



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