

LEADING AUTO GLASS COMPANY LYNX SERVICES FINDS INGRES OPEN SOURCE DATABASE UNBREAKABLE



Customer

Lynx Services, a division of PPG Industries

Industry

Insurance

Challenge

Establish high-availability, transaction-oriented database

Solution

Ingres Database

Benefits

- Stability
- Scalability
- High performance and availability
- Fast transactional processing

HIGHLIGHTS

In a business that relies on shattered glass, the one thing LYNX Services knew it needed was a database that was unbreakable. That is why LYNX Services, the market leader in auto glass claims management, migrated to the open source version of the Ingres Database to process auto glass claims for its clients. Ingres Corporation, a leading provider of open source database management software and support services, provides high availability, quick transactional processing, and an easy deployment language that helps LYNX Services manage more than 3 million claims annually.

CHALLENGE


When high winds hurtled a branch through the windshield of a Jeep, Lynx Services coordinated the repair by obtaining coverage from the owner’s insurance company, assisting the insured with identifying an auto glass installer, and administering the invoicing and payment process – all managed through a proprietary application based on an Ingres Database. All the owner had to do was make a phone call.

A wholly owned subsidiary of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based PPG Industries, Lynx Services is the market leader in auto glass claims management, managing more than 3 million claims each year. Lynx Services processes three types of claims for insurance clients – auto glass claims, first notice of loss claims, and auto physical damage claims.

Lynx Services required a high availability, transaction-processing oriented database solution that would enable it to process claims for its clients 24x7. The solution needed to be reliable, easy to use, and able to scale as the company grew.

SOLUTION

After evaluating the leading database solutions, Lynx Services selected the Ingres Database. Darren Klaum, IT manager at Lynx Services, says, “When we were looking for a database on which to build our auto glass application, the main drivers were high availability, quick transactional processing, and an easy development language. We found that with Ingres.”



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Within the last year, Lynx Services transitioned to an open source version of the Ingres Database. In moving to an open source model, Klaum explains, “We used to pay by CPU, but now we pay by the type of support we choose. Our biggest concern in moving to open source was the level of support we would receive. We wanted to make sure we wouldn’t lose the quality or access to the support that we were getting, but the support that we get from Ingres is great.”

Functionally, the difference in working with the open source database is transparent. “I haven’t noticed any difference at all in performance,” says Klaum. “The software is performing the same way as it always has and it’s a workhorse for us – it does what we need it to do.”

In addition to the Ingres Database version 2.6, Lynx Services currently uses the Ingres ABF development tool for creating and maintaining its auto glass claims applications.

RESULTS

Today, more than 6,000 auto glass retailers depend on Lynx Services for electronic data interchange (EDI) transactions that comprise scheduling and dispatching auto glass installations and repair services, and consolidated billing, auditing, and payment, including electronic invoicing and fund transfer. In addition to the Ingres-based glass application, a Web-based application built over the Ingres database enables insurance clients, agents, adjusters, and policyholders to remotely process claims.

As many as 450 LYNX customer service representatives (CSRs) leverage the Ingres Database. “Our glass application is used by our call centers for taking glass-only claims from our insurance clients’ policyholders and agents. CSRs are available 24x7 to process customer claims.” Although CSRs comprise the core end users, various internal functions – accounting, warranty, invoicing – also work with the Ingres Database applications. At any one time, Klaum notes, about 275 users may be working concurrently. With so many users, performance is very important, in addition to availability. Klaum says, “The Ingres Database does a very good job and is very efficient in a transactional mode.”

Klaum explains, “Our database application is very transaction-oriented. For example, when a policyholder calls in and they’re talking to one of our CSRs, we enter the policy information and get coverage right out of our insurance client’s system. After we get coverage, we walk through the claim and pull the pertinent information. We assist the policyholder in finding a retailer for them and we send the work assignment over to the retailer. We do all the invoicing and handling of the money between the retail company and the insurance company. We take invoices in, audit them, and create bills for our clients. When they pay us, we pay the retailer. We’re in a very electronic connected marketplace, and it all runs off the Ingres Database.”

The high availability and transaction processing capabilities of Ingres are key benefits for Lynx Services. “Ingres is a very stable database for us

and we very rarely have any issues with it,” says Klaum. “It’s efficient and very fast, and it works well for us.” Additionally, the open source model gives Lynx Services access to innovations in the Ingres community, as open source developers create enhancements that all Ingres customers can access. “We’re not going to go in and make changes to the operating system, that’s not our level of work,” says Klaum. “So for us, a benefit of open source is the people in the marketplace developing features that Ingres incorporates into the main database and then distributes back out to everybody.”

About Ingres Corporation

Ingres Corporation is a leading provider of open source database management software. Built on over 25 years of technology investment, Ingres is a leader in software and service innovation, providing the enterprise with proven reliability combined with the value and flexibility of open source. The company’s partnerships with leading open source providers further enhance the Ingres value proposition. Ingres has major development, sales, and support centers throughout the world, supporting thousands of customers in the United States and internationally.

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