

iArchive ensures historical information remains relevant and accessible

While an upgrade of information systems typically delivers a raft of new benefits to local government and its diverse stakeholder base, behind the scenes there is a downside that IT management would love to eliminate.

Commission new software applications and the new hardware platform on which they run and IT management faces a major question: what to do with and how to access the data that then becomes historical and is not converted to the new system as part of the implementation process.

iPLATINUM CEO Mike Preedy said "Our iArchive product is delivering significant savings for a diverse range of local government IT environments. In addition to bottom line cost savings, archiving surplus historical data from current transaction systems speeds up performance for corporate queries and reports.

Some years ago North Sydney council faced this all too common dilemma when it retired redundant hardware. Upgrading from the GenaCIS applications on HP3000 hardware the IT management burden increased significantly overnight. The Council commissioned a new system but was left with the need to retain the old system to access historical data.

This was a costly and cumbersome environment because the Council was paying for and maintaining multiple sets of hardware and application systems. Also, the retired legacy hardware was expensive to maintain and skills to support it were diminishing in number.

Council's IT management therefore saw a need to put this historical information into an environment that would be easy and economical to maintain and most importantly, would support current industry standards for reporting and interrogation.

North Sydney's decision to engage iPLATINUM to build a corporate repository to meet these needs paved the way for the installation of the iPLATINUM iArchive to be installed at more than 20 councils, using either Oracle or SQLServer databases and industry standard reporting environments.

"We have now also delivered a TCS archive environment to several councils and have developed archive environments for PeopleSoft, Oracle, OzSoft and Fujitsu along with other systems as the need has arisen.

A turnkey archive solution for various environments is now available as a fixed price package.

iPLATINUM's iArchive product has been designed to address:

- The review of existing application data structures
- Creation of archived database environment
- Management of extraction, transformation and loading into archival database, including data validation, integrity checking and reconciliation.
- Sealing of archive environment
- Assistance with establishing query function using Microsoft Access or a council's tool of choice.
- Provision of documentation of archived database structure
- Provision of a generic report and query library

While a standard report library can be provided, the archive is set up to enable intuitive access should a council wish to develop its own reports.

"The archive environment has now further evolved into a warehouse environment to support all data interrogation across historical and current transaction data by incorporating iFerret," Mike Preedy said. "This provides councils with the capability to access all data across all systems through a single entry point and provide a robust and reliable foundation to performance management and business intelligence tools."

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