

# EDUCATORS RESOURCE EXPANDS USE OF PROGRESS TO MIGRATE FROM ORACLE TO SQL

## Client



## Challenge

Educators Resource is North America's leading wholesale distributor of K-8 supplemental teaching materials, a \$500 million market. Its clients include some of the world's largest retailers.

Educators Resource became a Progress customer when it purchased Progress DataDirect connectors to connect an HP Unix-based ERP system with a legacy Oracle 8 database. However, in April, 2015, Educators Resource made the decision to move from UNIX to Windows Server 2012 with Microsoft SQL Server 2012, which meant that Colin Stewart, IT Team Leader, Educators Resource, needed to find a good SQL connector. "We were using the basic SQL client-supplied connectors, but we were having serious performance issues," he said. XP uses Microsoft Data Access Components (MDACs) to connect to databases, and these components become unusable after some time. "There's no way to recover MDACs on the XP Service Pack 3, short of reinstalling XP on your system," said Stewart.

## Solution

Educators Resource purchased DataDirect SQL Server ODBC connectors for 50 workstations and implemented them prior to the start of the 2015-16 school season. The connectors create ODBC connections between the SQL database server and the company's order management and warehouse management systems, which are used to track and maintain all inventory and purchasing data, manage and handle customer sales orders and perform accounting functions, among other business-critical tasks.

Although the team looked at alternative options, its solid business relationship with Progress was a deciding factor. "Cost was also a factor," said Stewart. "Progress provided a good per-license quote and the right technology. We also liked having direct access to a Progress engineer to help our staff tweak the solution and get things working optimally."

Stewart said implementation took only one day. "You simply install the DataDirect connector on the endpoints and create the ODBC connection," he said. "It's fast and easy."

## Results

The results of the migration have been significant, thanks to the help of the Progress DataDirect. Stewart's team has noticed an 80-90 percent increase in screen refresh speeds within one of its key applications.

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IT Team Leader, Educators Resource

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Simply upgrading the legacy ERP has increased reporting efficiency, but Progress DataDirect pushes speedups to new levels. "The new SQL database is super-fast," said Stewart. "For example, pulling shipping and tracking numbers to generate reports for a customer used to take about 45 minutes; now we can run the report in about a minute. Our main ERP is just a simple GUI that runs on the client side, but most of the work is handled on the backend over an ODBC connection—DataDirect has really sped it up," said Stewart.

Stewart said adopting the DataDirect connectors was a much faster, more economical solution than building a solution from scratch. "We probably saved at least 12 months in development time using DataDirect," he said. "In man-hours and general aggravation, I'd say we save close to \$25K per

year, considering it takes someone just 10 percent of the time to do their work.” By providing such efficiency and time savings, the image of Stewart’s team among sales reps has improved significantly.

Stewart said his team will be looking into connecting the SQL database to its SAP BI system over the next year, and will likely turn to Progress for help with that project, as well.

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## About Educators Resource

Educators Resource is the leading wholesale distributor of preK-8 learning materials and educational toys used by schools, teachers, parents and children. We provide value to our retail customers by providing "best-in-industry" stock replenishment and order fulfillment services across a broad selection of products. The value of our services is determined by the accuracy, speed, and fill rate of our order processing, excellent customer service, and supply chain and operational efficiency. For more information, please visit: <http://www.erdealer.com/>

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