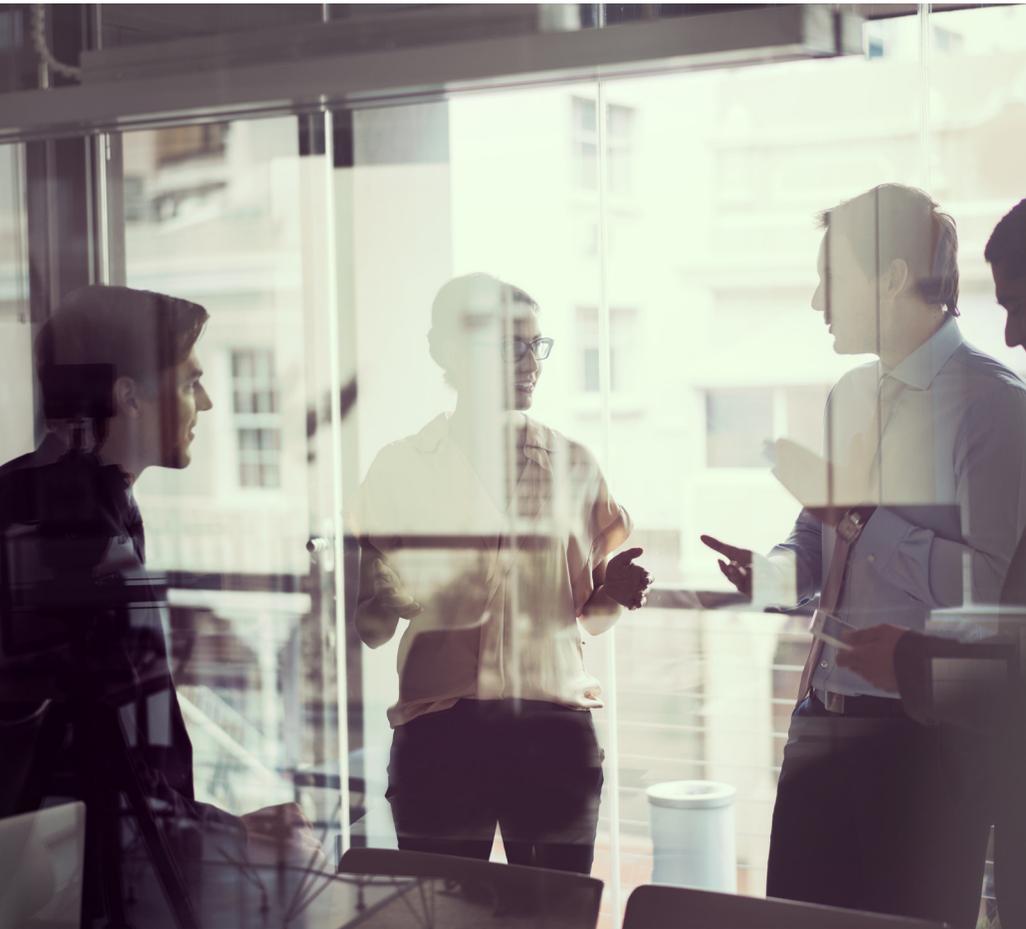# Leader in Employee Recognition Replicates and Monitors Databases Easily and Reliably

Quest®

O.C. Tanner chooses SharePlex® for replicating tables from Oracle databases to create multiple instances for immediate use throughout the organization.

BUSINESS NEED

Growing demands on O.C. Tanner's databases meant more need for maintenance operations and less tolerance for downtime, so the company turned to database replication.

SOLUTION

After trying replication tools that did not meet their needs, the company implemented SharePlex for Oracle. They can now verify the accuracy of their data, monitor and repair tables continually and rebuild databases safely if need be.

BENEFITS

- Replaced a stopgap method of copying and updating tables from SAP to other platforms

- Got O.C. Tanner's database administrators up and replicating successfully within one day

- Allowed replication to a separate reporting database, freeing up OLTP systems for production workloads

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Database management

"SharePlex® is easy to use, it's fast and it's reliable. It's priced right, and it comes with great utilities. What else could a DBA want?"

Joel Barrow, Database Administrator, O.C. Tanner

O.C. Tanner, a global leader in managing employee recognition programs, needed a better way to share data from tables in SAP with legacy applications and other platforms across the company.

O.C. Tanner's tools, awards and services are designed to engage talent, increase performance and create great workplace cultures. Using big data from programs worldwide, O.C. Tanner's social appreciation tools help clients celebrate thousands of recognition moments every day. Inside the company, several groups rely on transactional data that is generated in SAP, stored in tables in Oracle and pulled out to other platforms for analysis and decision making.

"Originally, we simply shared those tables through database links," says Joel Barrow, Oracle database administrator with O.C. Tanner. "But the performance became so poor and problematic that we had to find a better way to make the SAP data available.

HOMEGROWN TOOLS WON'T SCALE UP, SO REPLICATION BECOMES URGENT

"Next, one of our DBAs developed a trigger-based system to copy and update the tables from SAP to our other platform. That worked well for several years, but as our customers drove up the volume of transactions, it became difficult to verify that the data was the same in both places."

Even thornier was the dwindling amount of time the DBAs would have to rebuild the database if anything were ever to go wrong. In the early days of that copy-and-update method, demand dropped off at night. So, if it was necessary to take the system down and rebuild it, there was time. But as the customer base and workload grew into a 24/7 operation, the DBAs needed to reliably propagate the data, maintain it and verify that it was intact with minimal risk of downtime.

"We tried to use Oracle Streams to propagate the data," says Barrow. "But sometimes it would quit working and we wouldn't know for a while. And once we discovered the failure, we would have to go through an entire rebuild process."

That's when O.C. Tanner started to look for a true data replication product.

SHAREPLEX: "UP AND RUNNING WITHIN A DAY"

"Oracle had just purchased GoldenGate, so we examined that product," says Barrow. "Oracle had a heck of a time trying to get it to run right for us. They never really did succeed, despite bringing in their tech support and even some of their customers to try to get it to work satisfactorily. And when they gave us a final quote for the product, it was very expensive."

The DBAs at O.C. Tanner had already been using a suite of Quest® products like Toad® for Oracle and Foglight® for Oracle, and they liked how the products performed. They asked Quest about its data replication tool, then set up a proof of concept for SharePlex. They found it very appealing that SharePlex came with monitoring utilities to notify them of replication problems and a compare-and-repair feature to address those problems.

"The utilities were a big plus," says Barrow. "Quest came in, configured SharePlex and had us up and running within a day. Besides being affordable, SharePlex includes utilities that make it a strong GoldenGate competitor at a fraction of the cost. With Oracle, the utilities to monitor and repair tables were an additional cost, so it wasn't hard for us to decide."

"On top of all that, SharePlex has THE MOST impressive support group that I have EVER worked with. Sometimes I think that they are just too good to be true. They have been very responsive to our problems, providing quick turnaround on any patches or fixes we've needed. We went with SharePlex and it has worked very well for us."

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>
> *Joel Barrow, Database Administrator, O.C. Tanner*

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

SOFTWARE

SharePlex for Oracle

Quest

MAKING IT EASY TO CREATE SEVERAL INSTANCES

As part of his DBA tasks, Barrow has to add tables to some replication jobs and remove them from others. He prefers to make such changes after hours, when database activity is lighter, but he finds SharePlex convenient for adding or removing tables in a replication. It even allows him to add and remove them on the fly, without downtime.

"It's a simple process of a few steps to add tables to or remove them from replication," says Barrow. "SharePlex makes it easy for me to create several instances. For example, I replicate tables from our SAP instance to other database platforms whose users need to see that data. Then, for reporting, I can also replicate different tables to a separate database. That lets us offload reporting tasks from our OLTP systems and avoid bogging down live transactions on production instances. In both cases the replication is nearly instantaneous.

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ABOUT QUEST

At Quest, our purpose is to solve complex problems with simple solutions. We accomplish this with a philosophy focused on great products, great service and an overall goal of being simple to do business with. Our vision is to deliver technology that eliminates the need to choose between efficiency and effectiveness, which means you and your organization can spend less time on IT administration and more time on business innovation.

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