

DataMirror Customer Story

Fisher & Paykel Appliances Holdings Ltd.

Fisher & Paykel Appliances, based in Auckland, N.Z., designs, manufactures and markets a range of innovative household appliances. Additionally, Fisher & Paykel Appliances has two wholly owned subsidiary companies – Production Machinery Limited that builds production equipment, and Dynamic Cooking Systems Inc. in the United States that manufactures indoor and outdoor cooking products. The company employs 4,000 people worldwide and has manufacturing sites located in Auckland and Dunedin, N.Z.; Cleveland, Australia; Huntington Beach, Calif.; and, Clyde, Ohio. For more information, visit www.fisherpaykel.co.nz.

THE CHALLENGE

As an international company with offices and customers around the world and a 24/7 manufacturing cycle, Fisher & Paykel Appliances needs to ensure that its key business applications are running around the clock.

That's because if inventory, financial, enterprise resource planning (ERP) and Web applications weren't available, the warehouse couldn't check supply levels and wouldn't know where to route orders. Suppliers wouldn't receive orders, accounting couldn't keep track of shipments and payments, customers couldn't order products or check stock availability, and the assembly line could grind to a halt.

Fisher & Paykel Appliances' manufacturing process is built on a J.D. Edwards' OneWorld ERP system operating on the IBM iSeries platform. In an effort to maintain high availability of mission-critical applications that run the business, the information technology (IT) team had two objectives: guarantee high availability of the ERP system and related applications to ensure business continuity,

while at the same time find a quick way to provide access for reporting to transactional data without affecting network performance or taking the entire system offline.

"Whenever we had to do reporting, system maintenance or backups, we would have shut down the system for three or four hours in the middle of the night New Zealand time," recalls Owen Evans, Fisher & Paykel Appliances' IT Technical Manager. "Unfortunately, that would be early morning in the United States and midday in the United Kingdom and so those users would lose the system during their workday. Employees couldn't access data to make important business decisions, customers couldn't track their orders, and the distribution centres would have to wait for instructions. That just didn't make good business sense."

THE SOLUTION

Fisher & Paykel Appliances investigated several high availability solutions on the market before selecting DataMirror High Availability Suite, a comprehensive solution guaranteeing uninterrupted access to mission-critical business applications during system downtime and offering near zero latency for system backup and recovery.

When DataMirror iCluster debuted a few years later, Mr. Evans and the IT team migrated quickly and easily to the new platform to take advantage of iCluster's added functionality, including a 100-per-cent Java graphical user interface for easier administration. iCluster, the complete high availability and disaster recovery solution for business applications running in the IBM i5 (iSeries) environment, gives Fisher & Paykel Appliances continuous availability of mission-critical business applications, provides disaster avoidance and protection, and monitors, notifies and self-corrects any replication issues.

“ By conducting reporting and backups on the recovery system ... we can continue to use the ERP system to keep the business running at peak performance, ultimately increasing our bottom line and improving customer service. ”

*Owen Evans, IT Technical Manager,
Fisher & Paykel Appliances*

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- High availability of mission-critical ERP data
- Mitigate risk of data loss or corruption
- Workload balancing
- Lower cost of ownership
- Scalable to large data volumes and a high number of users

INDUSTRY

Manufacturing

BUSINESS APPLICATION

High Availability

PRODUCT

DataMirror iCluster

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DataMirror's global, world-class professional services team assisted with the HA Suite-to-iCluster migration and provided on-site training and knowledge transfer. Prior to the migration to iCluster, DataMirror conducted pre- and post implementation best practices and worked with Fisher & Paykel Appliances' IT team to review the environment, install iCluster and migrate each application over to it, complete replication for the migrated applications, back up target procedures, test the processes under iCluster, and conduct a switch test. Actual migration took just one day. DataMirror's customer support team has been available around the clock since the migration went live. DataMirror partner Classic Blue Solutions Pty Ltd. of Sydney, Australia, provided local support for the HA Suite-to-iCluster migration.

THE BENEFITS

Today, Fisher & Paykel Appliances is using iCluster to mirror critical application data and objects in real time from the primary iSeries (model 825) system at Auckland headquarters to a secondary iSeries (model 570) backup system located three kilometers away. In the event of planned or unplanned downtime, iCluster switches users to the secondary system so that operations can continue normally. The switchover occurs without disrupting the smooth operation of business-critical iSeries applications and without any impact on network performance or application response time. During active mirroring, users can use the secondary system to run read-only business applications, conduct backups or perform queries.

Using industry-leading technology called MatchMerge, any changes, adds or deletes made to the application's physical files are automatically synchronized with object transactions and then mirrored in real-time to the backup system. All daily backup requirements are conducted on the backup (recovery) box, ensuring high availability of mission-critical ERP applications for all Fisher & Paykel Appliances' locations around the world and making the company much less vulnerable to data loss or corruption. Primary and secondary systems are always in sync, ensuring data integrity and consistency.

iCluster also enables workload balancing, since all data-intensive reporting can be conducted on the secondary box rather than on the primary one. This ensures normal operation of the production applications.

"We don't have time for backup windows," says Mr. Evans. "By conducting reporting and backups on the recovery system, we gain back CPU usage on the primary box. We are giving three to four hours back to the user community because we don't have to shut down the system for backup processing. And we can continue to use the ERP system to keep the business running at peak performance, ultimately increasing our bottom line and improving customer service."

To ease administration, iCluster incorporates a centralized monitoring graphical user interface that can be either installed on an administrator's workstation or served up as a Java application on the intranet Web server. Using the GUI, administrators can monitor replication simultaneously on both the primary

and backup systems, as well as start and stop replication jobs, all within a single interface. This makes iCluster easy to manage and enables Fisher & Paykel Appliances' IT team to focus their time on other, more pressing issues.

iCluster has drastically improved Fisher & Paykel Appliances' disaster recovery efforts. Before DataMirror came on the scene, says Mr. Evans, it took six to eight hours "or a good business day" in the event of a system failure to get the ERP application running again or to recover data. But with iCluster, recovery time has been reduced to just one hour. The IT team conducts a switch test at least once a year to ensure things always run smoothly.

iCluster has also proven economical because it can grow as Fisher & Paykel Appliances does, scaling to and replicating large data volumes and switching a high number of users over to the secondary system in the event of failure.

THE FUTURE

Going forward, Fisher & Paykel Appliances plans to use its secondary system for testing purposes.

"We'll have a duplicate environment to do all kinds of neat things, like application testing, program testing, and hardware and software upgrades - all without impacting mission-critical applications and day-to-day business processes," says Mr. Evans. "Thanks to iCluster, we're doing so much more than we ever thought possible."

[About DataMirror]

DataMirror (TSX: DMC), a leading provider of real-time data integration, protection and Java database solutions, improves the integrity and reliability of information across all of the systems that create and store data. DataMirror's flexible and affordable integration solutions allow customers to easily and continuously detect, translate, and communicate all information changes throughout the enterprise. DataMirror helps customers make better decisions by providing access to the continuous, accurate information they need to take timely action and move forward faster.

Over 2,000 companies have gained tangible competitive advantage from DataMirror software. DataMirror is headquartered in Markham, Canada, and has offices around the globe. For more information, visit www.datamirror.com.

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