



| Hospital Logistics Case Study

from one hour to ten minutes only

logistics partner Hospital Logistics processes a total of over 5,000 picking lines for its biggest customer, UZ Gasthuisberg Hospital. Because of performance problems in the SQL server, this was resulting in a blockage each time for certain processes in Microsoft Dynamics NAV, which could last up to an hour. The delay that this caused in the operating processes was initially circumvented by workarounds. But this was a labour-intensive solution and placed a great deal of pressure on the IT department. Various attempts to solve the problem delivered little in the way of satisfying results. But by archiving and compressing data, SQL Perform succeeded in reducing the batch processing time from an hour to ten minutes, without any inconvenience to staff.

hospital logistics

was established in 1996 as a spin-off of UZ Gasthuisberg Hospital. It provides hospitals and retirement homes with an integrated package of logistics services, ranging from food and office equipment to consumables. “Each department orders its goods electronically,” says Mark Gijbels, IT Manager at Hospital Logistics. “We assemble the list for each department on a trolley and then deliver it to the department. In addition, we also have a team of project managers. They guide and supervise the start-up processes and then assist customers in implementing improvements.” Today, Hospital Logistics has a staff of approximately 150 and generated a turnover in excess of € 55 million in 2011. In addition to the head office in Aarschot (Belgium), the company has a further four locations in the Netherlands, where it has experienced significant growth since 2007.

Performance problems from the start.

At the end of 2006, Hospital Logistics automated all of its processes (accounting, order processing, warehouse) with Microsoft Dynamics NAV. At the time, a large amount of customisation was also required and this was one of the causes of the performance problems.

“99% of our orders come in electronically straight into Microsoft Dynamics NAV,” continues Mr Gijbels. “For Belgium alone there are 4 batches a day, each with over 1,000 picking lines. We also work with batch numbers and expiry dates, which really loads up the system. As a result, each batch causes a system blockage that can last up to an hour for some



operations. So it’s a major handicap. A new server helped to some extent, but because we continued to grow, we were soon back at square one.”

” SQL Perform delivers a solution that really works. Batch processing has been reduced from one hour to 10 minutes. It was a small investment for an amazing ROI!

| Mark Gijbels, IT Manager, Hospital Logistics

In a subsequent attempt, Hospital Logistics had the IT partner remove part of the customisation. A number of processes were placed in a queue during the batch, so that staff were able to keep working in the meantime. But unfortunately this was not effective enough for the long term and as time went by, some processes were back to performing badly.

SQL Perform produces a lifeline.

Working with the IT partner, Hospital Logistics went looking for external solutions, which is how Mark Gijbels called in help from SQL Perform. SQL Perform provides specific applications for improving the performance and optimising Microsoft Dynamics NAV with SQL Server. Company founder Ludo van den Ende was previously a product specialist at Microsoft and so knows this package like the back of his hand.

In September 2011, SQL Perform spent a week gathering the data traffic from Hospital Logistics. This was followed by a report setting out the problems.

“On the one hand it brought some less ideal SQL Server queries to light, while on the other the Microsoft Dynamics NAV retrieval process was a sluggish one,” recalls Mr Gijbels. “This latter problem could be resolved by installing specific indexes in the database. It’s like the classification in a library. Ludo spent one day making improvements and by the time he left, the delays had been halved. And this was achieved without any inconvenience at all.”

Powerful archiving and compression tool

But even half an hour was still too long for Hospital Logistics and continued growth meant that after a few months, 30 minutes was back up to 45. In November, SQL Perform announced the launch of a new archiving and compression product. Because Hospital Logistics had such large volumes data and had experienced major issues in the past, it made the ideal test case for the new tool.

Mark Gijbels “SQL Perform emptied some of the tables out of the server and archived them in a different database. The whole operation only took two half-days and the result is amazing: instead of 45 minutes, the processing for each run now only takes 10 minutes. The next phase involves SQL Perform installing a tool here for the automatic periodic archiving of our database. Then we will finally have seen the back of the problem.”

85%

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ARCHIVING -TOOLS // BENEFITS FOR HOSPITAL LOGISTICS



- | Took away a great deal of pressure of the IT department
- | Caused no inconvenience at all to any staff
- | Archiving and compression reduced batch processing time from one hour to ten minutes
- | Improves performance of the Dynamics NAV processes with 85%
- | Proves to be an effective solution for the long term

a small investment with a really big ROI!

Amazing result.

“Thanks to SQL Perform, the way Microsoft Dynamics NAV performs on some processes has improved by 85%. Earlier attempts to resolve the problem had not always produced the desired result, creating additional problems subsequently. SQL Perform has delivered a solution that really works and you don’t have to keep calling them back afterwards. What also pleased me enormously was the

way SQL Perform and our IT partner worked together. Everything ran very smoothly and produced no problems during the process. Our end-users were not told about the work and didn’t experience any inconvenience. On the contrary, they now have a system that responds far faster to the slightest click. It was a small investment with a really big ROI,” concludes Mark Gijbels.