

Johnson Matthey Precious Metals Division uses UniVerse to manage its disaster-recovery policy by creating “cross replication” between multiple facilities.



Johnson Matthey

Johnson Matthey is a specialty chemicals company and a world leader in advanced materials technology. The company's Precious Metal Products Division's activities comprise the marketing, distribution, refining and

recycling of platinum group metals (pgms), fabrication of products using precious metals and related materials, pgm and base metal catalysts and pgm chemicals, and the refining of gold and silver.

Situation

Johnson Matthey was founded in London in 1817 and in 1852 was named Official Assayer & Refiner to the Bank of England. Today the company is traded on the London Stock Exchange, is a member of the FTSE 100 and employs more than 8000 people around the world. Like many global companies, Johnson Matthey recognises the importance of keeping its data as accurate - and as safe - as possible. In 2009 the organisation created a corporate mandate to develop an in-house system to create data redundancy to protect valuable information in the event of a technical malfunction or natural disaster. At the core of this initiative was the concept of “cross replication” to make sure that identical data was stored in several of the company's locations.

Implementation

“Our group has operations in Salt Lake City, Utah and Brampton, Ontario, and we needed to make sure that all of our information was in sync in real time and that all of our locations were redundant, says Dennis Smith, the financial and administrative controller for the catalyst, chemicals and refining unit in North America. “There are a lot of complexities in the precious-metals refining arena, and our custom-built system - built on Pick - had been running in conjunction with our accounting software for more than 25 years. Three years ago we switched to a new accounting system, which ultimately led to our decision to update our data-management software. We needed a database solution that was robust enough to meet the corporate initiative for data security, and UniVerse offered the functionality we needed.”

Smith's team turned to Toronto-based Asynchron Systems Inc., which specialises in the development of custom software solutions in the multivalued environment, to implement a solution that would meet Johnson Matthey's corporate mandate to cross-replicate data in multiple sites. Asynchron founder Seth Blumenstein says, “This was a perfect opportunity to deploy UniVerse because we were looking at a huge amount of data that not only had to be kept up-to-date in real time, but also needed to be kept in multiple locations.

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- Reduces manpower requirement
- Meets corporate standard for data redundancy
- Allows real-time analysis of all data
- Forecasting ability is significantly enhanced
- Facilitates analytical reports

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Dennis Smith, Johnson Matthey



Benefits

"We needed to take our system to another level, and UniVerse really delivered for us," Smith says. "Not only does it work from a technical standpoint of managing and updating our data, but it has also allowed us to generate some significant labour reductions because many of the functions we used to do manually are now automated.

"Just to provide one example, we were able to pull out 10 hours a week from one manager, freeing that person up to do other work as opposed to managing the flow of data. When you look at that across our entire organisation, that's a pretty significant benefit. In fact, it looks like we'll be able to realize a 20 percent reduction in manpower for our data management applications."

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