

AutoDBA[®] Case Study

U.S. Cellular Corporation



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Available for
Oracle 7.3.4
and above.

Introduction

U.S. Cellular Corporation is the nation's eighth largest wireless telecommunications provider, boasting nearly 4 million customers in 26 states. Smooth Oracle database operations are critical to their business. Database outages can disrupt customer services such as roaming and Internet applications, as well as prevent detection of network problems and impair engineering efforts.

The Problem

The Oracle Database IT personnel in the Network Operations group in Knoxville, Tennessee are few in number, and are only able to devote a portion of their time to database administration. Their workload is formidable, with 17 production databases to be managed, 9 of which are considered high criticality. The strain has manifested itself with problems in database outages, after-hours calls, and increasing DBA workload and anxiety. These problems are not only annoying, but expensive – costing the company lost revenue from interrupted service and customer attrition.

The Solution

This situation led to the search for a complete Oracle database management tool. **Senware's product, AutoDBA[®], fit the bill.** After evaluating the product on four databases, Nell Walton, U.S. Cellular's senior DBA, gave the product an enthusiastic thumbs-up. "Not only do I highly recommend buying this product," wrote Ms. Walton in her internal technical report, "I don't see how we can get along without it." U.S. Cellular proceeded to purchase a 25-database license.

Together, Senware and the U.S. Cellular team were able to project a return of up to 900% on the purchase of AutoDBA. Savings were based on the cost of systems support personnel, the cost of system outages, and the significance of customer churn. Senware was able to articulate and document a compelling case for the deployment of AutoDBA, and receive buy-in at all levels – from junior DBA to Vice President.

Today, AutoDBA's automated, proactive maintenance features are allowing U.S. Cellular to proceed with acquisitions and technical upgrades that will dramatically increase their number of Oracle databases without increasing costs. Most importantly, AutoDBA's intelligent monitoring and notification has helped improve morale in the Network Operations department and has allowed U.S. Cellular's DBAs to be more efficient.

"There have been times when we have literally spent weeks trying to troubleshoot a problem," says Ms. Walton. With AutoDBA's diagnostic tools, U.S. Cellular can pinpoint problems quickly and precisely. "For example, someone shut down the power at one of U.S. Cellular's switches where some of our database servers resided. AutoDBA alerted me immediately to the problem and I was able to alert the appropriate parties." And because of AutoDBA's intuitive design and simple user interface, the staff wasn't required to learn new concepts or scripting languages. "What a timesaver," said Ms. Walton.

U.S. Cellular continues to enjoy a great working relationship with Senware. "The people at Senware are nice, honest people. That may not seem like much, but when you are dealing with a vendor, it sure helps if they are easy to get along with, reliable and responsive," commented Walton.

"Not only do I highly recommend buying this product, I don't see how we can get along without it," said Walton in her technical report.

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