



Business challenge

In the knowledge economy, speed to insight is a key differentiator. Destiny Corporation needed a solution to help its clients quickly identify and respond appropriately to new competitive pressures.

Transformation

Many companies struggle to master the analytics technologies that can help them stay ahead of their competitors. US-based consulting company Destiny Corporation deployed IBM® Netezza® Performance Server to accelerate analysis and reporting, helping clients in the banking, insurance and retail industries analyze their data faster and smarter.

Results

500x faster

analytics performance delivers near real-time insight

Accelerates processing

making it feasible to tackle large data sets

Empowers knowledge workers

and speeds analysis with a business-driven solution

Destiny Corporation

Helping clients cut analytics run-times from hours to minutes

Destiny Corporation is a consulting firm that specializes in understanding each client's business requirements and designing complete solutions to meet them. For topics such as business process optimization, analytics and data warehousing, Destiny is the trusted, objective advisor for its clients. The company has offices in the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada.

"With IBM Netezza Performance Server, one banking customer accelerated a key reporting job from 45 hours to 12 seconds."

— Dana Rafiee, Global Director of Strategic Consulting, IBM Business Partner Destiny Corporation

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Scaling up to new challenges

Having access to relevant, timely information can make the difference between beating your competitor to the punch or coming in second place. However, many companies are still relying on older and more labor-intensive approaches, such as spreadsheets, for their analysis and reporting. Even where organizations have adopted data warehouses and enterprise analytics tools, heavy reliance on IT specialists leaves business users frustrated at the lack of flexibility and speed in getting answers to critical business questions.

Dana Rafiee, Global Director of Strategic Consulting at Destiny, comments: “We work with Fortune 500 companies across financial services, banking, insurance and retail. Even at large and sophisticated companies, it is surprising to see that the approach to managing and querying large sets of data often has not moved with the times.

“Many of the clients who engage with us are struggling to identify and respond appropriately to new competitive pressures because it takes them too long to gain a clear insight into opportunities and issues. They are accustomed to queries that take 20 or more hours to run or to analyze smaller samples of data due to the need for immediate answers to business questions.”

Business-driven analytics

Destiny, an IBM Business Partner, has helped numerous clients deploy IBM Netezza Performance Server for IBM Cloud Pak® for Data. Cloud Pak for Data offers businesses an extensible, cloud-native data and AI platform that runs on any cloud and modernizes the collection, organization and analysis of data while implementing AI throughout the organization. The solution allows businesses to provision and deploy data services flexibly and rapidly, and is tailored to power deeper and faster queries on large and complex data sets. Customers can take advantage of the powerful Cloud Pak for Data AI capabilities such as IBM InfoSphere® DataStage®, IBM Cognos® Analytics and IBM Streams for real-time analytics.

“When we tell these clients that they can get answers to their business questions in minutes, their initial response is disbelief,” says Rafiee. “We show them how easy it is with IBM Netezza Performance Server, a proven industry standard for almost two decades.”

Beyond the outright performance benefits the solution offers, Destiny favors Netezza for its intuitive management capabilities and its straightforward use, even for non-technical business personnel. “It’s very easy for business users to create results sets inside the system,”

comments Rafiee. Users can create tables with result sets on the fly inside Netezza without any help or validation from IT personnel, often after just a couple of days of training.

Enterprises now also have access to data virtualization, which involves querying data across many systems without having to copy and replicate data. Data virtualization can help reduce costs and can also simplify analytics while improving accuracy and relevance.

As part of the deployment process, Destiny offers training workshops to get business users up to speed with Netezza Performance Server.

According to Rafiee, this is a vital step for getting the most performance out of the solution, because the seamless integration and operation can leave users unaware of its full capabilities.

“Business users are accustomed to extracting data from source systems and databases to analyze it elsewhere. Netezza can fit into any existing ODBC-capable analytics architecture to make applications execute queries faster. However, the real power of the solution is when clients run the analytics inside the system. We recently redesigned one banking client’s predictive analytics processes to run on their existing Netezza system. They saw critical reporting jobs go from 45 hours to 12 seconds.”

Faster analyses, deeper insight

Across the board, Destiny’s clients typically achieve at least 500 times faster performance for analytics queries and reports, which ultimately helps them to identify opportunities and make informed decisions faster. For a health insurance company that needed to analyze large sets of claims data, deploying Netezza Performance Server cut many critical Oracle and Teradata jobs from 22 hours to just two minutes—without requiring any changes to the query logic.

Rafiee offers another example: “A banking client runs a very heavy analysis job as part of the Federal CCAR [Comprehensive Capital Analysis and Review] stress-testing, and was previously using various tools to pull data into an application. With Netezza Performance Server, they cut the process time down from days to minutes.”

In addition to providing greater speed in analytics, Netezza enables deeper and more complex analysis within the same timeframes for full sets of data rather than samples. By looking at more dimensions, companies gain a better understanding of their business performance, health and new opportunities, which helps drive smarter decisions.

"Our clients can look at their full data in all its richness, getting fast answers to complex queries," says Rafiee. "What's more, users do not need to wait for support from their IT colleagues to be able to ask the next big question—that is something that VPs of Analytics really love about this solution."

Companies have accumulated and analyzed data in IBM PureData® System for Analytics for years, realizing the value of data-driven business decisions. With Netezza Performance Server and Cloud Pak for Data, users benefit from a hyperconverged, containerized, microservices 'cloud in a box' architecture that brings the scalability and economics of the cloud to their own data centers. Users can enjoy flexibility with even faster and more straightforward way to manage analytics capabilities, a key component to every customer's journey to AI. Plus, it's very easy for companies to migrate their data from an existing Netezza implementation to the latest version. "What clients

really like is the fact that they can take their existing Netezza appliance information and data, and simply migrate it through a single command to this new hyperconverged environment," says Rafiee. "It's a very easy migration."

Now, with Netezza Performance Server on Cloud, users can deploy Netezza Performance Server on public clouds, such as IBM Cloud®, Amazon Web Services (AWS) or Microsoft Azure.

"Our clients can look at their full data in all its richness, getting fast answers to complex queries. They can also ask more and different questions that were never possible prior to Netezza within the same timeframes as before."

—Dana Rafiee, Global Director of Strategic Consulting, IBM Business Partner Destiny Corporation

Solution component

- IBM® Netezza® Performance Server for IBM Cloud Pak for Data

Take the next step

To learn more about the IBM solution featured in this story, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

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