



Virtual DBA CASE STUDY

Brisbane Catholic Education maximises their SQL Server ROI with help from WARDY IT Solutions

About Brisbane Catholic

- Established in 1845
- 11,000 employees
- 75,000 students
- Education
- www.bne.catholic.edu.au



Since its foundation in 1845, Brisbane Catholic Education has adapted to the rapid changes in education guidelines, ensuring the balance between the spiritual and learning needs of their student body is met. The organisation is committed to ensuring the best educational outcomes for their pupils and have shown leadership in developing new programs and innovating the ways they use technology. This preeminence has seen many of their programs emulated nationally and helped to transform how catholic education services are delivered. BCE consistently sets the performance benchmark when compared with providers of state and private schooling.

Executive Summary

Brisbane Catholic Education's IT administrators found that managing multiple complex database systems was consuming inordinate amounts of their time. The minutiae of overseeing and maintaining system operations demanded constant attention. Staff were kept too busy keeping their applications at peak performance and lacked the time to glean insights from the data and present it in a meaningful way to teachers and school management. They partnered with WARDY IT Solutions to help them manage their systems and maintain optimal performance on the SQL Server database that powers the second largest SharePoint implementation in the southern hemisphere. The IT departments time is now spent adding value to the business by analysing and transforming the data in ways that helps deliver better student outcomes.

- Virtual DBA has increased the uptime of vital database systems, improving overall productivity
- Low level SQL Server tasks compromised the team's ability to deliver strategic business goals
- Data can now be analysed in greater depth, helping stakeholders to modify school processes and syllabus to improve student performance
- High level expertise that was previously unavailable because of staffing and budget constraints is now on call around the clock
- Student records are securely backed up and replicated automatically, minimising the risk of data loss
- SQL Server powered applications SharePoint and Dynamics AX operate at consistent and predictable performance levels

Brisbane Catholic Education

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The 24x7 monitoring that WARDY IT Solutions put in place gives us coverage around the clock that we just couldn't afford to do ourselves

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Jeff Peters
Manager Information Systems
Brisbane Catholic Education

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WARDY IT Solutions have helped us integrating SQL server solutions from international vendors. They are known and respected globally for their abilities.

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Jeff Peters
Manager Information Systems
Brisbane Catholic Education

Client Challenge

Support services for educators must be delivered around the clock to support the work patterns of teaching staff. Student records are updated from the classroom or the teacher's home and must be available when required by staff. This posed a challenge for BCE's IT administrators because much of their time was consumed performing low level tasks to keep hardware and applications operational. This reduced the team's ability to add more value to service delivery and proactively support the stakeholders. The option to employ a specialist Database Administrator (DBA) was out of the question because of expense and staffing limitations. Trusted partner WARDY IT Solutions was contracted to provide a viable alternative.

Solution

Collaborating closely with the BCE administrators, WARDY IT Solutions' analysts reviewed the organisation's environment to learn how improvements to uptime, processes, analytics and reporting would deliver a better return on their Business Intelligence investment. Tighter integration with BCE's legacy infrastructure was also needed to incorporate the different services more seamlessly. WARDY IT Solutions' flagship Virtual DBA service was chosen because it would meet the demands of the business and could quickly fix the performance and service level challenges administrator's faced. To maintain the Service Level Agreements, WARDY IT Solutions' DBMonitor offered around the clock monitoring and incident management. This ensured that any issues were rapidly investigated and resolved without requiring BCE staff intervention.

Implementation

WARDY IT Solutions' engineers are considered trusted advisers and team members. They offered extensive skills and experience in optimising BCE's complex Microsoft platform to deliver maximum performance. The database provides the SQL Server engine for BCE's Dynamics AX and one of the world's largest SharePoint implementations. Because of WARDY IT's global reputation they often collaborate on pre-release features and have helped BCE with enhancements to their Virtual environment and application integration with VMWare. WARDY IT Solutions' consultants also spend a day a week consulting, troubleshooting incidents and fine tuning SharePoint integration. WARDY IT Solutions' role also encompassed staff mentoring, as well as enhancing BI dashboards and visualisations to meet BCE's exacting requirements.

Outcome

BCE's IT administrators have been released from an arduous and time consuming burden with WARDY IT Solutions assuming responsibility for providing 24x7 SQL Server support. A WARDY IT Solutions engineer spends a day each week on-site to review and remediate any incidents, and to exchange knowledge with BCE staffers. WARDY IT Solutions' DBMonitor service provides uptime and performance statistics in real-time to BCE administrative staff. Because of the rich analytical tools that SQL Server Analysis Services provides, outcomes can be benchmarked and compared, and datasets modelled to gauge how student and teacher performance compares with local and international criterion.

About WARDY IT Solutions

- Established in 2005
- 65 employees
- Information Technology
- Australia & USA
- www.wardyit.com

WARDY IT Solutions are Australia's leading SQL Server and Business Intelligence specialists. The company creates solutions that enable businesses to maximise returns on their investment in knowledge management. Through the extensive use of Business Intelligence, WARDY IT Solutions help their clients to realise the best possible dividend from their data assets.

WARDY IT Solutions have received numerous industry accolades, most notably the prestigious Microsoft Global Data Platform Partner of the Year in 2013. The organisation is recognised internationally for their innovative solutions, training skills and unwavering commitment to education and furthering the interests of the broader Microsoft SQL Server community. WARDY IT Solutions deliver:

- Project Delivery based on time and resources
- Consultation and Gap analysis
- SQL Server database design and programming
- Support services
- Managed Services and Business Intelligence Solutions
- Business Intelligence Consulting, including strategy, review, design and implementation of Business Intelligence Solutions

The project has been so successful that BCE are piloting a program that will see the team eventually manage the Business Intelligence requirements for an additional 500 Victorian schools in addition to the Brisbane and Cairns schools they already oversee. This demonstrates how indispensable the Virtual DBA service has become. Staff now apply their skills to areas of technology and service delivery that add real value to the education services their organisations provide. The lack of resources to tackle complex SQL issues was a serious limitation for the IT department and they were keen to resolve this skills deficiency. WARDY IT Solutions filled that knowledge gap, helping the technology professionals transform how they deliver services to their clients. The success of the partnership with WARDY IT Solutions has proven that traditional service delivery models can realise productivity increases and reduce overheads that leads to a more agile organisation.

- Business Intelligence is transforming the way IT Services are delivered and how they advantage stakeholders, teaching staff and pupils
- The Business Intelligence needs for 173 schools under current care will soon be augmented at the completion of a pilot program with nearly 500 more from Victoria
- 24x7x365 on call availability at all skill levels which was previously unaffordable using the DIY model
- The project's success has bolstered stakeholder support for the transformation from a service delivery model to one of value adding and process improvement
- BCE now realise greater insights that enables more focussed knowledge management with Power BI analytics and reporting tools

Products and Services

- WARDY IT Solutions Virtual DBA
- DBMonitor
- Azure SQL Server Integration and Migration
- SQL Server Business Analytics
- SharePoint Integration and Visualisation Services
- Power BI

