comScore: Building a Massive "Big Data" Data Warehouse

comScore

Executive overview

Company

Vision

Why SAP

Solution

Benefits

Company
comScore Inc.

Industry
High tech

Products and Services
Marketing intelligence and analytics

Web Site
www.comscore.com

SAP® Solutions
SAP® Sybase® IQ server

comScore Inc., a provider of data-based infrastructure services and solutions for the e-commerce marketplace, realized when it began operations that the focus of Internet marketing was shifting from visitor counts to profitability. To meet this new focus, comScore turned to technology from Sybase, an SAP company, and developed the Customer Knowledge Platform, the industry's first source of online buying activity.

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Measuring the digital world

Founded in 1999 with the goal of measuring trends in e-commerce, comScore has become a global leader in measuring the digital world. The company is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, and has offices in cities around the globe including Chicago, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto, London, Paris, and Tokyo.

The company provides syndicated and custom solutions in online audience measurement, e-commerce, advertising, search, video, and mobile and offers dedicated analysts with digital marketing and vertical-specific industry expertise.

comScore's Customer Knowledge Platform provides a 360-degree view of customer behavior and preferences as customers visit sites throughout the Internet. The service monitors surfing and buying behavior at every site visited by consumers who have opted to have their Internet behavior analyzed.

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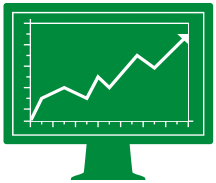
A cost-effective database that could scale quickly

When comScore was launching the Customer Knowledge Platform, the company knew that it would need a data warehouse that would allow its software to handle rapid growth smoothly. comScore also needed to make sure that it limited the cost of building a massive data warehouse as much as possible to maximize its profitability.

comScore's business plan called for a data warehouse that would ensure that the Customer Knowledge Platform would scale economically to eventually handle whatever data volumes were needed while supporting intense data queries from customers. "We knew we would be tracking over a million Web users, so we needed a database that could scale very quickly, but we also needed one that was cost-effective," says Scott Smith, vice president of data warehousing at comScore.



>1 million

Web users tracked by comScore

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The most cost-effective solution

comScore implemented the SAP® Sybase® IQ server and was immediately impressed with its scalability, performance, and data compression. "We chose SAP Sybase IQ because it met our performance requirements on the Microsoft Windows NT platform. This meant that it was the most cost-effective solution that could perform to the levels we required," explains Smith.

The company was able to successfully build a data warehouse that enabled it to economically develop and test-market its solution and then scale it to meet the information and performance needs of comScore's customers.

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Improved data mining

comScore's Web consumer information is now stored in a more than 150 TB compressed data warehouse. A survey by the Winter Corporation found this to be the largest data warehouse running on a Windows NT platform.

Because of the size of the data warehouse, the compression functionality of SAP Sybase IQ is a key benefit to comScore. "The compression ratio on some of the data is close to 40%," explains Smith. "If we were using a standard relational database management system, with up to a 10x explosion factor, we would have had a much higher storage cost. The money that we save is allowing us to be more profitable.

"We need to make sure we can economically scale to large amounts of data and support data-intense reporting while not incurring significant costs," continues Smith. "The multinode functionalities in SAP Sybase IQ make this possible and give us user-friendly manage-query, data-load, and data-mining functions."

"We're adding close to 180 GB every week, but we're confident SAP Sybase IQ will continue to handle the growing data load."

Scott Smith, Vice President, Data Warehousing, comScore Inc.

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Faster results, satisfied customers

By implementing SAP Sybase IQ, comScore has ensured that its Customer Knowledge Platform will scale economically to handle the massive volumes of data thrown at it, while supporting intense data queries from customers. The main benefits of the implementation are:

- Improves the ability to mine information, producing quicker results
- Provides a compression ratio on data of 40%
- Economically scales to large amounts of data and supports data-intense reporting while controlling costs

150 TB

Amount of data currently in the Customer Knowledge Platform

"Our customers benefit directly as well," states Smith. "The speed of SAP Sybase IQ improves our ability to mine the data and produce results for our customers much more quickly. That helps them market more effectively and generate more business."

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