



Alaska Fisheries Information Network



Type: System Integrator/Oracle
Technology Specialist
Founded: 1982
Locations: West Des Moines, IA;
Minneapolis, MN;
Portland, OR
Public/Private: Privately held
Geography: North America
URL: www.zirous.com

Zirous is a privately held company specializing in Oracle sales, development, implementation and integration. Zirous has extensive experience with private companies and public organizations throughout the country.

Technology

Stack:
Oracle Database 10g
Oracle Warehouse Builder 10.2
Oracle Application Server
Oracle Discoverer 10.1.2
Oracle Workflow 2.6.4

"The Alaska Fisheries Information Network has the distinct duty to consolidate, manage, and dispense information related to Alaska's commercial fisheries. Zirous and Oracle Business Intelligence have given us a more secure and reliable data warehousing environment, and the foundation that Zirous has provided with Oracle technology will allow us to meet our customer's demands in a timelier manner."

- Robert Ryznar, Program Manager,
Alaska Fisheries Information Network

Partner Solution for Alaska Fisheries Information Network

The Alaska Fisheries Information Network (AKFIN) was established under the direction of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) to consolidate, manage and dispense information related to Alaska's commercial fisheries.

Zirous and AKFIN partnered together to implement a data warehousing solution that took AKFIN's existing data warehouse (a combination of PL/SQL code and batch scripts), modified its design, and loaded it into Oracle Warehouse Builder 10g Release 2. Now, all of AKFIN's business intelligence needs have been placed in one central location making for improved performance, data reliability, and management. The introduction of Oracle Discoverer has made reporting simpler and more effective and, thanks to Oracle Application Server, all one needs to view the reports is a computer and an Internet connection.

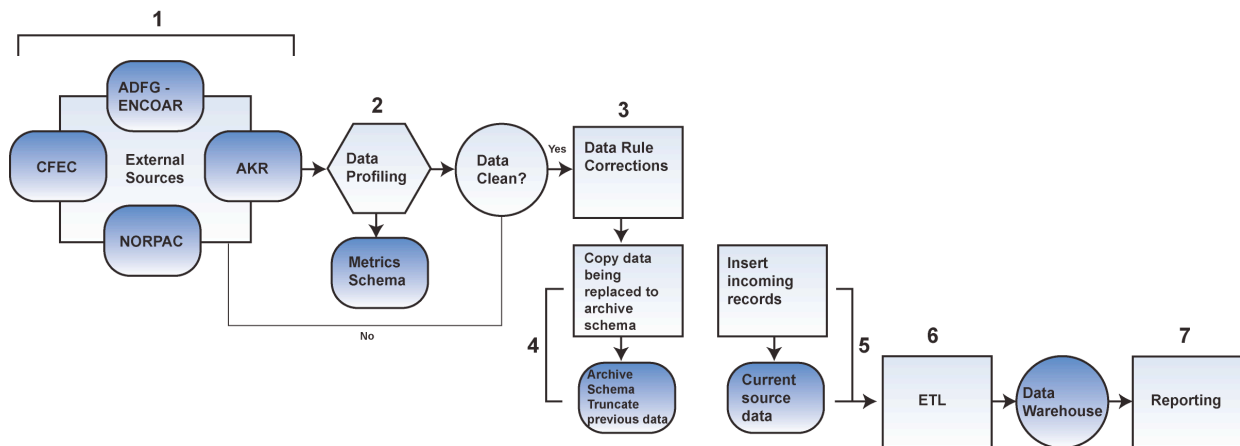
The project took less than four months to complete with a majority of the time focusing on redefining the current data warehouse model. Currently, two of AKFIN's partnering agencies have supplied data to the warehouse which now holds millions of fact records. More agencies will be added as time progresses.

Solution Details

AKFIN previously used a manual process to populate and report off of their data warehouse. This led to problems in four major areas: performance, reliability, ease of maintenance, and reporting. Performance was an issue because the PL/SQL code in place did not take full advantage of the Oracle Database's latest features (including parallel processing and MERGE statements). Reliability was an issue because the PL/SQL code in place had been pieced together from at least three different programmers over the course of many years. Ease of maintenance was an issue because the PL/SQL code and batch scripts were being stored on several different databases and file systems. And finally, reporting was an issue because AKFIN's small staff was having a difficult time keeping up with report requests (a process that involved intense man hours).

Oracle’s Business Intelligence Suite (which includes Oracle Warehouse Builder and Oracle Discoverer) has solved all of these problems. Performance is no longer an issue as the code generated by the newest release of Warehouse Builder (10.2) takes full advantage of all of the latest Oracle Database features. Reliability has been substantially improved due to Warehouse Builder’s mapping utility (a graphical representation of a process flow and the PL/SQL behind it) making it easy for any programmer to see and understand what previous programmers intended. Not to mention the ease at which the warehouse is now maintained due to all of the sources, ETL, and targets being placed in one central location. And finally, report requests are no longer weighing down AKFIN’s small, highly technical staff, because Oracle Discoverer has allowed users (with varying ranges of SQL experience) from all fisheries to access information specific to itself without making any requests at all.

AKFIN’s new and improved data warehousing solution works as follows:



1. The process begins by extracting data from the various fisheries databases and file systems.
2. The data from the external sources is then profiled to determine if it is clean (the metrics are stored in the metrics schema).
3. Once the data is clean, data rules are run against any minor defects in the data (defects in the data that have known solutions) for correction.
4. The data currently in the archive schema is truncated and replaced with the current source schema’s data.
5. The data in the current source schema is truncated/deleted and replaced with the incoming data.
6. Further ETL is performed on the current source schema data before being placed in the data warehouse.
7. Finally, up-to-date reporting is performed by the various commercial fisheries themselves with a few reports still being processed by the AKFIN staff.



"Zirous has partnered with Oracle Corporation since 1992 to help clients solve business problems. When AKFIN approached us with their problem, it was clear that Oracle’s Business Intelligence Suite would not only solve their problem, but would provide AKFIN with an excellent foundation for the future."

Mike McDermott
Chief Executive Officer
Zirous