CASE STUDY



Cuts Development Time to Half for Large-Scale Data Migration to the Cloud

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Profile

CRC Industries provides over 1,300 chemical specialty products to worldwide customers belonging to a wide range of industries. It uses Astera Centerprise to design and execute migration flows from legacy systems to Azure as well as to ensure consistent, clean customer data for reporting.

Industry

Manufacturing and Distribution

Challenges

Manually creating migration flows for moving internal and external data assets from legacy systems to the cloud

Product Used

Astera Centerprise + Astera EDIConnect

Application

Large-scale legacy data migration to Azure cloud

Standardize customer and affiliate data for reporting through profiling and validation

Result

40 percent time savings in designing and executing data transfers from legacy system to Azure

Streamlined integration with Microsoft Azure and D3FO

Overview

CRC Industries is a global name in chemical specialty products, providing top-of-the-line solutions to business customers in automotive, aviation, electrical & utility, healthcare, oil & gas, general manufacturing, and several other industries. Offering an extensive range of over 1,300 items and specially formulized products, the company caters to customers and affiliates in Europe, USA, Australia, China, South Africa, and other regions.

CRC manufactures over 80 million cans of aerosol products in its 26 production facilities every year. All the data from each production facility, distribution center, and division across the world ties into Microsoft Dynamics 365 for Finance and Operations (D3FO).

Challenges – Moving Legacy Data to the Cloud

CRC wanted to perform a global data migration from its legacy system to the cloud. To execute this massive migration project, they lacked the resources and technical infrastructure that could help handle large amounts of data and speed up the entire process without compromising on its data security and integrity.

Although its IT team had performed data migration for companies CRC has acquired in the past, it was always a dauntingly complex, time-consuming process. The global manufacturer exchanged data between its different business units via Excel or text files, used a legacy system to analyze them, and performed data quality checks via SQL statements.

Excel was the go-to source but SQL databases and ODBC emulators to connect to AS/400 and other legacy systems were used too. However, the only way to load data in D3FO was through its built-in templates, which mainly supported the Excel format. This made it difficult to handle, import, and export data to and from D3FO.

"I have been involved in data migration projects for several acquisitions we did in the last 15 years, and I have also integrated the data of different facilities in our system from all over Europe. I had faced so many problems and pains with executing that, but this all is on another level. The legacy system is simply incomparable to Centerprise's functions and capabilities."

Business Needs – A Solution that Checks all the Boxes

CRC Industries wanted to move enterprise-wide data related to customers, internal systems, and affiliates, stored in the legacy system, to Azure cloud. This required an all-round system that could streamline data handling and migration without having to write extensive lines of code and manually transcribing PDFs into Excel and CSV formats.

CRC also required a solution that could filter data of different customers and affiliates (in disparate formats and layouts) and perform quality checks for consistency and reliability. The platform had to be able to retrieve and compare data too, profiling it to create an accurate, complete report.

Astera Solution and Results

After reviewing several solutions in the market, the chemical products manufacturer chose Astera Centerprise because of its robust data integration and migration capabilities, scalability, and user-friendly environment.

"Astera seemed a very suitable system to us from the beginning. I have been heavily involved in reorganizing and reformatting company and customer data. The task was quite complex. But I must say that I haven't faced any problem that I couldn't solve with Centerprise."

Smooth Data Movement Between Legacy System and Azure Cloud

Astera enables businesses to perform complex data movement without relying heavily on IT. This means business users can carry out operations, like data migration, using Astera's automated solutions, eliminating hand coding completely. The industrial-strength ETL engine empowers enterprises, like CRC Industries, to perform sophisticated migrations to and from virtually any target.

For meeting customer data requirements, CRC resorted to manual transfers, but sometimes also scheduled the task, depending on the situation. It moved the Astera server to Microsoft Azure, using it as a gateway for all of its other systems hosted on the cloud. This made data movement smoother and more flexible for CRC.

"On a scale of 100, I'd say that instead of 50% of our time doing the translation, we now use 10% of it only because Centerprise is so fast at changing and testing things. No doubt, I've done this kind of thing before manually, but using Astera Centerprise, it has never been easier. I call the user interface a 'playground' as it offers so many features to work my way around doing different types of tasks. It takes minutes to apply a filter and get your result. If you put it in a workflow, it goes even quicker."

CRC now enjoys **40 percent time savings in programming and performing translations** for data transfers, thanks to Centerprise's powerful functionality, flexibility, and intuitive interface.

Clean, Accurate Data for Reporting

CRC utilized Centerprise's data profiling and validation features to ensure consistency in incoming data from legacy systems. A comprehensive data quality framework with predefined business rules enables the users to work with clean, accurate data, as well as generate comprehensive error and profiling reports for continuous process improvement.

CRC uses several transformations, like Route and Join, in its daily operations, to ensure compliance with internal systems. The company sees opportunity in using the product for reconciling data during transfers and loading in Microsoft D3FO.

A Technology Match Made in Heaven

Astera Centerprise has proved to be the perfect match for CRC Industries' unique data migration and integration needs and exceeded expectations. Aside from superior performance, flexibility, and affordability, the CRC team found the product easy-to-learn and fast at executing complex jobs like sending files in formats that the customers desired, calling it "a piece of cake."

"It is a good thing to have Astera Centerprise, and while we bought it mainly for data migration, I see a lot more opportunities to use it. And that's, of course, a winning situation."

~ Patrick Van Vlierberghe, IT Manager

About Astera Centerprise

Astera Centerprise is a high-performance, scalable data integration platform that allows businesses to meet today's advanced data needs. Powered by an enterprise-grade, parallel processing engine, Centerprise offers data syncing, mapping, transformation, parsing, and extraction capabilities, all through a single platform.