



The Unique Database Needs of Technology Companies

By Robin Caputo

ABSTRACT:

Most technology companies, particularly high-growth firms with special competencies, are squarely focused on a core capability. This might be businesses involved in software development, providing infrastructure or a special tool suite, or else those in hardware or device manufacturing.

These organizations have special data needs, but their leaders don't necessarily want staff to take their eyes off the company's own specific technology competencies to manage their databases and they also want to keep their investments in staffing focused on their core business. That's why Datavail aids several dozen technology firms. What's unique about this industry? And how can remote database management best serve these organizations' special needs?

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DATABASE SERVICES

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of Technology Companies

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Common Needs of Technology Companies

Conventional wisdom holds if you operate a technology company, all aspects of IT are easy. After all, technology is your business. But every technology company has a special focus and, unless you're Datavail, that focus is not database management. Whether you are creating virtual reality headsets or crunching numbers in options markets, dealing with database problems is a diversion from your organization's core capabilities and focus.

In working with technology companies, we've identified a few common needs these firms have. Most often, technology companies are seeking to solve three or more pressing challenges by entering into a partnership with a managed services firm like Datavail. These challenges may include:

- decreasing the costs associated with database management.
- ensuring the firm has 24/7 coverage.
- reducing the turnover or burnout of the in-house staff.
- supporting the IT staff such that they can focus on pressing business challenges rather than attending haphazardly to routine database administration tasks.

We've also discovered each company has a unique set of remote database management needs. This is why we created flexible, custom service levels able to leverage our expertise and fulfill your unique needs. From small computer services providers to Fortune 500 firms with recognizable stock tickers, we provide meaningful solutions for technology companies' unique database management needs.

An IT team for a small computer services firm, for example, found it difficult to both manage its SQL databases and provide adequate client customer service. Datavail gave the staff the support it needed and also enabled the company to cut its overall database maintenance costs by providing a combination of on-site and remote database management. The latter staffing arrangement helped it save 50 percent of its costs. One of this company's managers responded this way to a follow-up survey:

Datavail has allowed us to stop being afraid of the burden of database management and optimization. With their help, we can focus on the special things that we create as an organization, but avoid the database specific issues we didn't know or understand well. I have come to rely on Datavail to deliver high-quality solutions to difficult problems.

Like this company, your organization can take advantage of Datavail's expertise to alleviate the pain and confusion inherent in database management when it is not your core business. It allows your staff to become productive and effective at the jobs they were hired to do. It also provides them with a reprieve from mundane tasks so they can focus on their own work and enables them to step away to either recharge or attend to matters outside work.

Let's take a look at five key factors driving technology companies to adopt managed services.

1. Lowering the Cost Associated with Maintaining Databases

Cost is a primary concern for many clients. Our customers are most often interested in obtaining both a higher level of service and lowering the costs associated with maintaining their databases. It's not easy to meet both these goals simultaneously; however, if we can successfully lower the costs associated with routine management, the client will have the funds needed to make service improvements. This is why reduced maintenance costs are the one metric all tech companies want Datavail to clearly demonstrate.

According to a recent Gartner report on legacy enterprise software systems, Gartner Fellow Andy Kyte writes, "Businesses looking to improve administration today can take advantage of lower costs, better functional fit, and process flexibility offered by blending cloud applications with on-premises applications." These same cost savings are available to those who move to a managed services contract for database management.

A computerized financial trading firm, for example, saved nearly 25 percent of its database management costs through using Datavail's remote database management services. "Datavail is reliable and we can count on them to be there when needed," its vice president of IT stated. "They have been very responsive to our needs. I believe they offer just about any service you could ask for."

Lowering its costs such that employees could focus on its core competencies was the impetus that drove a medium-sized telecommunications company to work with Datavail. It ultimately saved between 25 and 50 percent with remote Oracle database management services. "Datavail has provided us with resources that are knowledgeable and reliable, and they understand our business needs while also reducing our costs," stated one of its principals.

2. Round-the-Clock Database Support

Many companies have an excellent tech team in place. It's too bad those talented individuals can't work 24 hours a day! If you were to try to work your talent like that, they would ultimately burn out and leave. The best way to both keep your team intact and have 'round-the-clock coverage is to use Datavail's team of experts to work nights, weekends, vacations, and busy periods, and to perform backup and other basic maintenance tasks.

Writing in *The Examiner*, tech columnist David Frankk compares the remote DBA option with the alternative—hiring overnight staff. He notes, "Remote database administration is more beneficial for a company in



terms of maintaining the administrative tasks related to database and saving considerable amount of cost at the same time. Remote database administration increases the ROI of an organization."

Our team consists of experienced professionals who excel at resolving every database issue imaginable. It's not like calling Ted or Carol, your backup IT helpers who may or may not be available to work on the database at your bidding or who may not have a complete range of skills applicable to the task at hand. Our team has hundreds of skilled DBAs, each of whom has specific experience working with a mainstream database application. A specific team is assigned to your account and monitors your databases, taking proactive steps to help your database perform optimally. The team members are available around the clock, whenever you need coverage, whether it is for an hour a day or for weeks at a time.

One mid-sized computer services firm reconfigured its staff around Datavail's capabilities, greatly improving its in-house team's focus and productivity. Through using

a remote DBA, it was also able to extend coverage to weekends and holidays. "24/7 DBA coverage and monitoring of the databases has helped our development team to focus solely on development activities," stated one of the firm's managers. "This has greatly improved our overall productivity."

Another mid-sized computer services firm was able to improve both its database administration quality and its around the clock coverage. "Datavail has made it possible for us to have 24x7 access to professional DBAs, which would have been impossible for our own staff," said this company's executive. "Datavail has been able to resolve all the urgent issues that have come up."

3. Reducing DBA Burnout and Turnover

Talented IT teams are difficult to assemble. Those people with strong technology skills are in a seller's market. They earn enough so they don't necessarily have to put up with grueling 16-hour days or years without a vacation. These individuals are essential to operations. But companies tend to compensate them well and work them around the clock. Due to the long hours and the stress inherent in the job, these essential staff members are prone to break down, make mistakes, and/or leave the firm. The way to reduce burnout is to provide your database administrators with a backup team that can be counted on to cover for them, no matter what happens, regardless of the time of day or day of the year that staffing augmentation is needed.

In an interview with TechTarget, Facebook MySQL Database Administrator Rob Wultsch gives his top tips for handling massive server environments. Along with having warm servers ready on the rack, Rob recommends you get external staffing in place: "When people don't sleep because they get called every time a monitor blips, they tend to make more mistakes," he says, adding it's also, "nice to be able to call out when things go very wrong."

Executives of a medium-sized computer technology firm found its IT team was being taxed by a steady flow of service tickets for small problems day and night. Datavail took ownership of those small fixes and passed the more important, more challenging issues to the client's in-house team.

"Automated ticket creation with Datavail's ServiceNow system allows issues to be reported or worked on immediately," one manager stated. "Any ad-hoc requests are handled quickly and professionally. They offer us fast, friendly service that lowers costs and increases our productivity."

4. Database Performance Tuning and Health Checks

Another time-consuming task for an IT staff is tuning databases. To perform properly, databases need to be routinely tested, cleaned, and monitored for potential problems, and then any issues discovered with them must be promptly fixed.

An article in openPR illustrates the problems with databases that are not checked or tuned regularly. Bits of data that should be removed begin to pile up. The pile-up begins to slow system performance and response times. Without regular maintenance, "users are risking poor system performance, downtime and upgrade problems by failing to remove temporary or historical data from their databases."



This task is also bandwidth consuming. Much of this work can—and should—be done at times of day when demands on your servers are at their lowest levels. But trained staff skilled in precision database tuning are seldom around during those ideal moments of minimal load. An outside team of experts available 24/7/365 can be used to address those types of maintenance chores during slow times. Such a remote team can handle other fundamental, allied tasks such as downloading and reinstalling databases, and can also perform diagnostics and tuning while your home team is getting a good night's sleep in preparation for the next day's challenges.

A Fortune 500 computer hardware firm uses Datavail's onshore-offshore services to balance its IT load, provide around-the-clock coverage, and to perform its database assessments and tuning. "Datavail has brought reliability and consistency into our operational DBA support," said the firm's executive. "Datavail also has a good grasp of the onshore-offshore DBA model, resulting in less turnaround and optimizing use of DBA resources."

5. Not Enough Work for a Full-Time DBA

Many companies have legacy systems that need to be regularly maintained, but they do not have a sufficient amount of work to warrant employing a full-time database administrator. Datavail makes it simple for organizations to get precisely the specialized knowledge needed for such a project and for the fractional period of time needed. This type of right-sourcing is a cost-effective, quality-conscious means for organizations to meet their less-than-fulltime DBA needs.

Rick Newman at U.S. News and World Report recommends that businesses looking to prosper during tight economic times consider the benefits of using "fractional employees" to reduce costs. You pay only for the skills you need for the amount of time you need them.

One medium-sized enterprise software company to which Datavail had provided such a solution found it was a good alternative for the organization's intermittent needs. "Datavail allows us to have access to DBA resources without having to staff a full-time DBA," stated one of this firm's managers. "Specifically, if or when we have a database problem like a corrupt table, Datavail gives us the expertise needed to recover."

There are many compelling reasons technology companies might want to use remote database management services. These are a few examples drawn from our experience working with technology-centric firms. Your needs may differ and we're prepared to address those challenges, leveraging our talented pool of experienced database administrators.

What's Next?

Whatever your business, Datavail can help with a wide range of tasks designed to help your organization's databases run more effectively and efficiently. By allowing us to tackle routine database administration tasks, we free your staff to focus on high priority, high value projects.

If you would like to know more about our database administration services and how we can help with your specific challenges, please contact Datavail to discuss a solution designed for your enterprise.

Biography

Robin Caputo

Chief Marketing Officer for Datavail



Robin Caputo is the Chief Marketing Officer for Datavail, responsible for driving the company's brand and generating demand through online and offline marketing programs. As the external voice of Datavail, she articulates key messages to build brand equity among clients, prospects, partners, industry analysts, media, and other key stakeholder groups.

Robin brings 25 years of marketing and communications experience, including Vice President of Marketing and Communications at Ciber, a major systems integrator and outsourcing company, as well as various marketing and PR roles at Qwest and US West where she launched product and services and was a key spokesperson for major initiatives.

Her career also includes experience as a reporter/editor for the Associated Press, the Arizona Daily Star, the Denver Business World, and the NBC affiliate in Tucson, Arizona. She also was a technical writer for IBM and a public affairs manager for a major cable company. She holds a Bachelor's degree in communications and political science from the University of Denver, where she is also a guest lecturer.

About Datavail

Datavail Corporation is the largest pure-play provider of remote database administration (DBA) services in North America, offering database design and architecture, administration and 24x7 support. The company specializes in Oracle, Oracle E-Business Suite, Microsoft SQL Server, MySQL, MongoDB, DB2 and SharePoint, and provides flexible on-site/off-site, onshore/offshore service delivery options to meet each customer's unique business needs.

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