> **Note:** *In this writing sample, the name of the company providing services, their product names, the name of the client company, and the names attributed to quotations have been changed to respect confidentiality.*

Speedy Delivery: Dunder Mifflin revolutionizes the mail industry by transforming their postage-processing systems

Dunder Mifflin is a global technology company serving more than 1.5 million clients in 100 countries around the world. A global leader in mailing solutions since its founding in 1920, Dunder Mifflin now powers billions of commerce transactions. Organizations in dozens of countries use Dunder Mifflin Link+ series postal meters to accurately and efficiently weigh, stamp, and prepare mail for delivery. Dunder Mifflin also offers logistical support services, including the movement of parcels and mail with their fleet of trucks.

Business need

The mail must go through—along with the data and reports that accompany it. Increasing demand from businesses and post offices using Dunder Mifflin Link+ postal meter systems was slowing data processing and reporting, delaying customers' shipments and causing dissatisfaction.

Using a private cloud and multiple databases, Dunder Mifflin tracks mailing and postage data from Link+ postal meters at customer sites around the globe. Each private business or post office customer is provided with individualized reports or manifests. With increasing demand, Dunder Mifflin's legacy platform was taking up to 40 minutes to process XML files and delaying the generation of manifests, which contain information on shipments and their destinations. This in turn impacted bulk delivery, since trucks couldn't leave the loading docks without manifests.

To improve customer satisfaction and enable business growth in new regions, Dunder Mifflin established a goal to shorten data-processing times to five minutes.

Client: Dunder Mifflin

Industry: Business Services

Business need: A new platform to process mailing data and run reports for thousands of Link+ postage meters installed around the world, ensuring timely mail delivery for customers.

Solution: IT transformation using Peripheral consulting and project management services to redesign a multi-vendor legacy data network, and Extract, Transfer, Load (ETL) applications on new Oracle® Exadata machines. Monthly support provided by Peripheral Managed Services.

Results:

- Dunder Mifflin is now processing 99.7% of files within 30 seconds – 10 times faster than the five-minute SLA requirement.

- Mailing inventory and financial reports takes as little as one second to run on average, instead of several minutes.

- 100% of data is processed in far less than the five-minute SLA.

- A monthly report, which once took three days to generate so as not to impact production traffic, now takes less than five seconds.

Challenge

With legacy systems stretched beyond capacity, Dunder Mifflin needed expert advice to:

- Uncover the source of problems
- Assess, plan, and implement a system to speed reporting
- Solve server inefficiencies that prevented customers from processing their postage efficiently

Solution

Dunder Mifflin approached several vendors to provide a proof of concept that:

- Identified the cause of performance bottlenecks
- Proposed solutions to top performance issues
- Recommended a new system to meet their current and future business needs

During the proof-of-concept stage, even before the project began, Peripheral lived up to its reputation for innovative problem solving by uncovering the root cause of a long-standing XML processing and reporting bottleneck. Peripheral was awarded the business.

> "After years of attempting to understand the cause, we had fallen into a break-fix approach to dealing with database and ETL inefficiencies. But Peripheral was able to identify both the problem, and a viable solution, within weeks," said Michael Scott, Regional Manager, Dunder Mifflin.

Following analysis, Peripheral recommended consolidating multiple Dunder Mifflin databases and scaling their system with Oracle® Exadata, proposing to replace the existing ETL for the Link+ system with a faster, more reliable, and easy-to-use solution. Additionally, Peripheral proposed consolidating multiple databases and functionality into one source. Peripheral replaced the ETL with modern centralized applications and redesigned the reporting logic using the existing Cognos business analytics solution to adapt to the new database architecture, dramatically improving report generation times.

Peripheral worked closely with Dunder Mifflin team members to meet an aggressive go-live schedule. Only 10 months after the start of the project, Dunder Mifflin and Peripheral converted Brazil's entire national postal service to the new system. Over the following five months, the postal services in 13 other countries were also migrated to the new system.

Results

The new system exceeded expectations, processing 100% of data within the required SLA of five minutes or less, and 99% of data within 30 seconds – 10 times faster than required.

Generating reports is also faster and more accurate. For example, it used to take three days to run a key report in the background so as not to impact customer performance. Now that same report takes less than five seconds to run.

The new system is more reliable, achieving 100% uptime in the first year of operation, and it's designed for growth. Indeed, tests have shown that processing twice as much data does not impact response times.

With a proven robust and scalable system, Dunder Mifflin has begun to plan market expansion into new regions, notably India. Today, the system processes 400 million pieces of mail every month. To maintain their investment as they expand to new markets, Dunder Mifflin hired Peripheral Managed Services to manage the new Exadata and ETL system.

Return on investment

- **30%** reduction in annual operating costs.
- **500%** increase in system capacity.
- Near real-time performance with a **20-fold reduction** in reporting times.
- Service availability improved from 99.9% to 99.999%, reducing annual downtime **100 times**.
- Customer satisfaction and revenue loss improved with service performance issues alleviated.

"The new Link+ system is creating considerable goodwill within our existing customer base," said Jim Halpert, Director of Business Development, Dunder Mifflin. "We're now marketing the industry-leading benefits of the system to new countries, and expect higher sales as a result of this improved offering."