precisely

Case Study:
British Telecom Optimizes Databases with Precisely Optimize DB2 and Optimize IDMS

Problem

Any down time can be too much down time in a world accustomed to instant connectivity. That's especially true if you're running one of the world's largest OLTP operations, as it depends so crucially on the health and efficiency of its database management systems (DBMS).

Such was the case for British Telecom when it went in search of bigger leaps in DBMS performance improvements for both its DB2 and CA IDMS operations. But the priority focus was on CA IDMS improvement because it was, and is, the foundation of BT's flagship Customer Services System (CSS).

Solution

Fortunately, BT had a longstanding relationship with Cogito Ltd., a UK based database consultancy. At BT's behest, the Cogito team developed a number of innovative point solutions, all geared to the primary goal of nonstop (24x7) processing. Now dubbed Precisely Optimize IDMS, those solutions include:

- An online database reorganization module that allows databases to be reorganized with minimal interruption to update processing.
- A "soft quiesce" module that allows database backups to be taken with no interruption to online processing.
- A "synchro" module that allows BT to split operations of the CSS application across multiple CA IDMS central versions with full buffer coherency.
- A "megabuffer sequential" module used to accelerate batch processing including many CA IDMS utilities.
- A database image module used for development/testing and training.

These, and several related tools, have since been made generally available to the CA IDMS community at large. BT is also a major user of Precisely's Optimize DB2, which includes the industry's most powerful DB2 automated index-design tool. Another component is a highly prized SQL tracer tool that provides detailed analyses of SQL and entire workloads in DB2. "I've not seen any other tool," said Mike Holmans, a senior DB2 database administrator at BT, "which gives such a detailed report of the actual cost to your system of each SQL statement in the application."

Results

Using Optimize IDMS and Optimize DB2 together with an ongoing jointdevelopment relationship with Precisely, BT's database operations and the demanding services they support have achieved industry leadership status for reliability and 24x7 up time.

Optimize DB2/IDMS