

## Financial company protects databases with replication

EPX replaces GoldenGate with SharePlex database replication for 24x7 reliability, lower TCO and only 30 minutes per week spent managing the solution.



### CUSTOMER PROFILE



Company	EPX
Industry	Financial services
Country	United States
Employees	32
Website	<a href="http://www.epx.com">www.epx.com</a>

### BUSINESS NEED

To protect its customers' sensitive data and ensure 24x7 transaction processing without an outage of any kind, EPX needed a reliable bi-directional database replication solution.

### SOLUTION

The company implemented SharePlex after a monthlong proof of concept for accurate, reliable and cost-effective database replication — and can now count on high availability for business-critical databases.

### BENEFITS

- Ease of implementation
- Built-in verification features
- Streamlined management and low total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Unrivaled, award-winning support

### SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

- Disaster recovery and replication

“If you want to solve your replication issues in a timely and effective manner with a high confidence of actually succeeding in your project initiatives, SharePlex is the best solution on the market.”

*Patrick Smith, Senior Database Administrator, EPX*

EPX, a wholly owned subsidiary of North American Bancard, provides end-to-end, high-frequency electronic funds processing for debit and credit cards, prepaid credit cards, online credit and debit transactions, debit card transactions, electronic check transactions and money transfers. The company interfaces with all the major credit card organizations as well as the federal banking community and all of the international funds exchange institutions.

Offering 24x7 transaction processing, EPX helps enterprise businesses minimize the cost of large-volume transaction processing. By bundling and submitting electronic funds transfers, the company can significantly reduce the fees and costs associated with executing those transactions for its customers.

On average, EPX processes about 2 million financial transactions per day. The pressure is high. “We cannot have outages of any kind,” says Patrick Smith, senior database administrator at EPX. “Our entire business depends on the functionality of our computer systems. If they don’t function efficiently and with 100 percent reliability, we can’t provide our product to customers.”

With so much data passing through its systems every day, EPX knew that it needed to set up a bi-directional database replication solution to keep up with its ever-growing business need for constant reliability and availability.

EPX has an Oracle database environment so, at first, the company implemented GoldenGate, Oracle’s database replication solution. However, the implementation took more than two years to complete, and the solution did not leave the IT company feeling confident. Not only was the learning curve steep, but the product did not have the capability to verify the accuracy of replication. Verification in GoldenGate requires an expensive add-on product called Veridata, and the entire solution was complex enough that it required a full-time employee to manage it.

“We need a replication solution that just works, and we need our current technical personnel to be able to easily monitor and maintain it,” Smith says. On top of the challenging implementation and high costs to manage GoldenGate, on one occasion, the product failed to replicate an actual client’s data accurately. “There was no tool that would actively compare tables to evaluate whether they were in sync — since we didn’t purchase the add-on tool,” Smith says. “But there were no errors from replication, so we thought they were in sync. We transferred client data over to the GoldenGate replicated database and then immediately experienced settlement issues because things weren’t in sync.”

That error resulted in significant costs to cover erroneous chargebacks, and EPX was financially liable for settlements on mistaken debit and credit card billings. “Those kinds of mistakes don’t make you look good in this business,” Smith says.

After this incident, EPX decided to look for a different database replication solution. Since implementation had been so difficult with GoldenGate, EPX wanted to take its time and run a much more extensive proof of concept with the next replication solution before committing. The company looked at several products, but SharePlex was the only one that seemed worthy of a deeper proof of concept.

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## PRODUCTS & SERVICES

### SOFTWARE

SharePlex

Smith did his best to break it during the trial, he says. "I dropped a column from a table. I renamed columns and tables, used bar chart tools to store binary data, used logical language sets on the source and destination. All of these things, under the right circumstances broke GoldenGate, but none of them broke SharePlex," Smith says.

SharePlex passed the monthlong proof of concept with flying colors in terms of accuracy, reliability, ease of use and cost of implementation.

"If you want to solve your replication issues in a timely and effective manner with a high confidence of actually succeeding in your project initiatives, SharePlex is the best solution on the market," Smith says. "The solution provides high availability for our business-critical databases."

### **EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION**

A SharePlex technician worked on site at EPX for one week to help Smith and his team set up prior to the proof of concept. It took a senior DBA spending about 60 percent of his time for two years to get GoldenGate fully up and running. And there had been so many hiccups that the team still didn't have confidence in the reliability of the product.

After EPX decided to implement SharePlex, they were up and running with the complete solution in a matter of days. Smith's team received standard training, and Quest technicians were available to ensure that they were on their way with the new solution.

### **BUILT-IN VERIFICATION FEATURES**

EPX can now relax knowing that stable and reliable SharePlex replication is always on. Replication captures changed data in the production database and copies to the target, providing instant failover if the production database goes down.

In most cases, SharePlex detects data synchronization issues itself during the replication process and logs errors. Just in case a data synchronization issue goes undetected by SharePlex during the replication process, Smith and his team can easily find them by running the manual Compare & Repair verification tool.

Verification with GoldenGate required purchasing a pricey add-on product called Veridata, which EPX was not able to do. If EPX had decided to make this purchase and move forward, the company would also have had to dedicate a full-time employee to managing the replication process on a day-to-day basis, driving the total cost of ownership up considerably.

The SharePlex Compare module detects out-of-sync data between the source and target databases. The Repair module detects and fixes the out-of-sync data in the target database.

"All in all, this built-in feature gives us a much more stable solution than what we had with GoldenGate," Smith says.

### **TIME AND COST SAVINGS**

Smith says he went from spending about 30 hours a week monitoring GoldenGate to spending 30 minutes a week maintaining SharePlex.

In terms of business value, the savings is enormous. Without a reliable database and application environment, EPX cannot offer its services. "Accuracy and reliability is the bottom line, and anything less begins to affect our business reputation," Smith says.

SharePlex is half the total cost of ownership of Oracle GoldenGate, Smith says, with a total solution offering for database replication backed with unrivaled award-winning support.





## EFFECTIVE AND TIMELY SUPPORT

Smith says SharePlex support has been consistently responsive, and staff are knowledgeable and effective at resolving issues quickly. In addition, the solution has a 95 percent customer-satisfaction rating and has earned the Conformat ACE Award six times for customer excellence.

“We wish we had used SharePlex to start with,” Smith says. “SharePlex appears to be the solution that we want to use for logical replication of data, not just now but in the future.”

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