



Top Five Reasons for Choosing Remote Database Support

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Introduction

In recent years the move to outsource IT or business processes has become commonplace. There are many reasons why an organisation may choose to work with an external partner to manage all or part of their IT infrastructure. The main driver is typically to save money; however, it is not the only reason for looking at external support.

From speaking to our customers we see a range of different reasons for engaging with an external organisation to provide database support services as part of their overall IT infrastructure planning. Cost is certainly one of those, as you'll see below, but we also found a few others.

This paper specifically focuses on DB2 support. Below are the top five reasons we see from our customers for choosing to outsource all or part of their DB2 database support function.

Top Five Reasons for Choosing Remote Database Support

These are the top five reasons why our customers have chosen a Remote Database Support Solution:

1. Cost
2. Cover
3. Proactive Vs Reactive
4. Lack of skills in-house
5. Insecure Future

Each organisation is different and their specific reasons for choosing a remote database support solution will vary but there are many common themes. The need for quality support and technical excellence is of course paramount.

1 – Cost

In a tough economic environment, IT budgets are static or reducing. People costs continue to consume an increasing proportion of the IT spend. This is especially true for highly skilled staff such as database administrators (DBAs).

It is often the case that DBA teams are overstretched and need more hands on deck but with pressure to keep headcount down there is little chance of employing an extra person.

We have also found that for some customers DB2 is a niche part of their overall IT infrastructure. Therefore they have been reluctant to invest significant amounts of budget in the skills to support DB2, relying on their existing Oracle or SQL DBAs to “manage” when necessary. This can become a real problem if any serious DB2 support issues arise.

By utilising an external support provider, organisations can benefit from additional DBA support far more cheaply than if they had to employ another permanent member of staff. This combination of in-house and external support works well for many organisations

2 – Cover

High or continuous availability (24x7) is a common requirement for today's "on demand" IT Systems and this can put pressure on small or overstretched DBA teams. Teams can have difficulty providing cover for holiday, sickness or maternity and paternity leave. Adding to this the increasing requirement for systems to be available 24x7 with DBA cover required at all times, the pressure on small DBA teams is clear.

Our customers have found that working alongside a partner who can provide 24x7 DBA cover with contracted response times down to 1 hour provides the insurance they need.

3 – Proactive Vs Reactive

Expert DBA skills are often needed on different projects and so DBAs can find themselves spending more time on non-core functions. This means that the vital monitoring and management of the database can be sidelined. Overworked DBA teams may not have time to proactively monitor the database. Instead, only reacting once a problem has occurred and business users are already feeling the effects.

It is important when taking out a remote support contract, to check whether the service provider can offer the option of proactive monitoring. This takes away the concern of problems cropping up unexpectedly and more often than not potential issues are noticed and dealt with before users are even aware of an issue.

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4 – Lack of Skills in-house

We work with organisations who do not have any DB2 skills in-house and organisations who have skills in-house but access to those skills is limited.

Some organisations may have inherited DB2 systems through expansion or acquisition and do not have the skills in-house to support it. Whilst their own IT team may be able to cope for a while, if any real issues come up, a support organisation with DB2 expertise will be needed.

We have also seen customers facing the need to replace a DBA quickly but who have struggled to find a new individual with the required level of skills. Bringing in a support organisation is a useful way to plug this gap fast with the assurance that you will be getting the highest level of DB2 skills.

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5 – Insecure Future

Sometimes organisations are unsure of their strategic IT direction, particularly the choice of database platform. Investing in permanent staff to support and maintain a database that may not be in the long term plans for the business does not make financial sense. Finding a provider who can take control of ongoing database maintenance until a final decision has been made is a good way around this problem.

About RemoteDBA from Triton Consulting

As we have seen above, organisations face many challenges in delivering a stable, efficient database infrastructure. Budget pressures, demands for higher availability and increasing workloads can all mean that pressure is building on IT Management to find a cost effective and reliable way of managing the organisations' DB2 infrastructure.

RemoteDBA provides the highest level of stability for business critical operations. Our clients receive a superior level of personalised care – day or night – from our team of highly experienced DB2 professionals.

Key Features:

- ✓ Fixed price with no hidden extras guaranteed
- ✓ Unlimited support calls
- ✓ Unlimited support hours
- ✓ Unrivalled DB2 expertise
- ✓ No performance monitoring tool costs
- ✓ Database healthcheck included

RemoteDBA v Full Time DBA

Triton understands the financial pressures that IT departments face. We recognise that IT Managers need to keep service levels high whilst keeping spending to a minimum. With RemoteDBA Office, organisations can benefit from expert DBA support for a fraction of the cost of a full-time DB2 DBA. All RemoteDBA services have a fixed cost with no hidden extras, making budgeting straightforward.

	Full Time DBA	RemoteDBA
No salary, training or other benefits to pay?	X	✓
Holiday cover provided?	X	✓
Sickness cover provided?	X	✓
Additional DB2 performance tooling included?	X	✓

Organisations can reduce their **annual DB2 support costs by up to 75%** with RemoteDBA Office compared to one full time DBA.

RemoteDBA Package Details

Features		RemoteDBA Office		RemoteDBA 24x7	
		Standard	Plus	Standard	Plus
SLA	9-5, M-F	✓	✓		
	24x7x365			✓	✓
Maximum first response time (hours)	1				✓
	2		✓	✓	
	4	✓			
Support Calls		Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Support Hours		Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Databases		2	4	4	8
Proactive Monitoring*		X	✓	✓	✓
DB2 Version		V9+	Any	Any	Any
Business critical applications		No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Monthly reports		✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to online client portal		✓	✓	✓	✓
Dedicated account manager		✓	✓	✓	✓
Free database healthcheck**		✓	✓	✓	✓
Hidden extras		None	None	None	None
Fixed price guarantee		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Minimum duration		1 year	1 year	1 year	1 year

* Proactive monitoring is not included in RemoteDBA Office

** Healthcheck will be conducted remotely prior to commencement of the RemoteDBA service.

Ensuring that you have the best possible IT infrastructure to support your ever more demanding business needs is a constant challenge. At Triton Consulting we can work with you to provide a full range of IT and data management solutions to meet the business needs of your organisation. With RemoteDBA you can be assured of a proven, stable and secure process for the cost-effective management of all components of your DB2 infrastructure.

About Triton Consulting

Triton Consulting specialises in Data Management and has been an IBM Premier Business Partner since 1998. Specialising in DB2 for both the mainframe and distributed systems, Triton provides a full range of services from consultancy through to education and 24/7 DB2 support.

For more information visit www.triton.co.uk/db2-support