

Migrating DataLoad from Forms to Database Interfaces

DataLoad is the de facto tool to load data quickly in an application's forms. However, what happens if the forms' performance no longer meets your needs? This white paper looks at how Mortenson Construction, a multi national construction company, addressed that challenge.

DataLoad is best known for enabling users to automate the entry of data and configuration in applications' forms. Loading in to forms is an ideal approach because this is the interface supported by the application's vendor and does not require any technical skills. That has enabled thousands of users worldwide to quickly build loads that save them time and their business's money. DataLoad has a suite of tools for loading in to forms. Macro loads replicate users' data entry in any application while Forms Playback delivers high performance loads in Oracle E-Business Suite's core forms. Load Control and Browser Control further improve the performance, reliability and accuracy of Macro loads.

However, applications' forms are designed primarily for data entry by users. DataLoad allows the entry of far more data than is possible by a user but this can mean users reach the limit of what is possible through the forms. This was the problem faced by MA Mortenson. Mortenson is an award winning construction company with offices across the United States that builds structures and facilities for many industry sectors. DataLoad Professional is a key part of some of their business processes but forms issues started following a Java upgrade and this limited the volume of data that could be entered.

Faced with a serious business issue we worked with Mortenson to find a solution. Taking a step back we identified that the key loads were in to Oracle Projects and that contains a comprehensive set of interfaces (APIs) that allow data to be directly entered to the database. Because these are standard Oracle APIs the data entered is fully supported by Oracle. Moving to API-based loads would not only overcome the forms issues but would also simplify the load process and deliver significant performance improvements.

DataLoad Professional V5 includes DataLoad Scripting. This is a flexible tool that may be used to develop countless DataLoad extensions, but the most useful is the ability to load data in to all popular databases. Scripting also includes extensions to simplify working with Oracle databases and Oracle E-Business Suite. Using these extensions we quickly built a script that used the Projects APIs to load budget lines. The script maintains security by requiring the user to enter a valid Oracle E-Business Suite username and password. They must also have access to a valid Projects Responsibility before then can load data. No sensitive database passwords need to be provided by the user or included in the script.

Mortenson's users can now work entirely within DataLoad, simplifying the process compared to the old forms loads. Furthermore, the loads are faster and contain improved data validation and error handling. If an error does occur the failure is reported and the load continues with the next line, something that is not possible with forms-based loads.

By using DataLoad Scripting Mortenson has improved all aspects of their loading process and has eliminated the reliance on forms reliability but still has a load that is fully supported by Oracle.

DataLoad is unique in providing a comprehensive suite of options for loading data and config to Oracle E-Business Suite & other applications. With thousands of users in almost 100 countries it is the world's favourite data loading tool.