

ICBC Cuts Processing Time 89% by Taking Advantage of the New Join Feature of SyncSort for z/OS

In British Columbia, Canada, there are over 2.7 million drivers who depend on the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC). ICBC provides them with universal auto insurance and is also responsible for driver licensing as well as vehicle registration and licensing. Every motorist in BC is required to buy a basic package of ICBC Autoplan insurance that covers them for third party legal liability protection, accident benefits, underinsured motorist protection, hit-and-run and uninsured motorists protection, and inverse liability. In addition to supplying this basic insurance, ICBC competes with other automobile insurance companies by offering extended third-party legal liability and other optional insurance coverage such as collision and comprehensive coverage. Processing all of the data that ICBC receives is a daunting task, but the database administration group found an innovative solution to get the job done quickly.

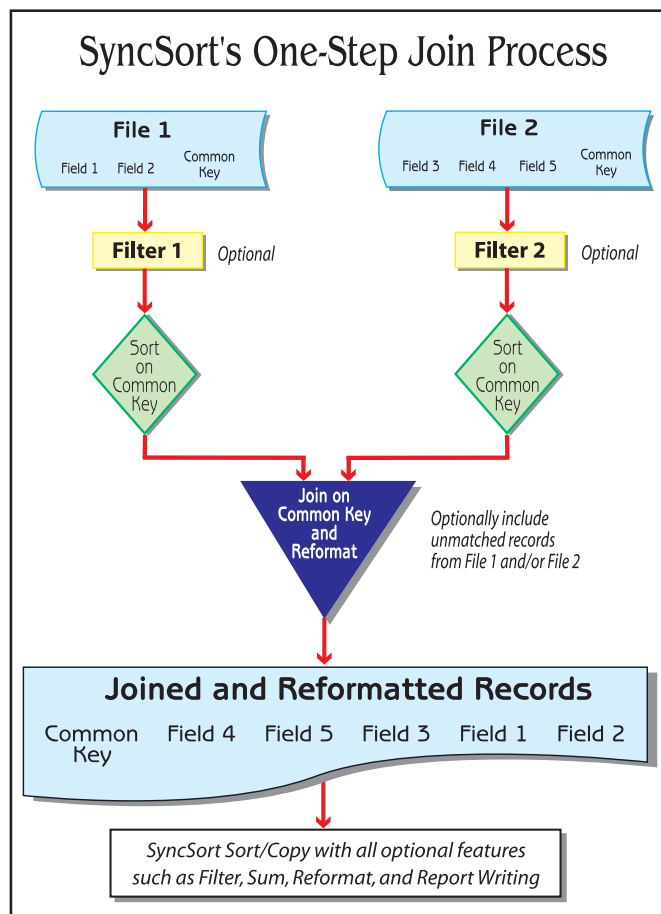
Utilizing the new join feature of SyncSort for z/OS, Release 1.2 from Syncsort Incorporated, the group reduced the elapsed time on one DB2

application by approximately 89%. ICBC Senior Technical Specialist Don Phillips explains the process, "For the test application, we previously tried to extract data from a DB2 database by using DB2 to join several tables. Once this was accomplished, we would use DB2 utilities to reload the data into another DB2 table. This application was taking around 27 hours to complete.

Once we integrated SyncSort into the application, we were able to cut that down to just three hours. We now use the database utilities to perform the unload and the reload, but utilize the join functionality of SyncSort to do all of the extracts and put together whatever records we need. The big time saving for us is in eliminating the DB2 table join in the unload and using SyncSort to merge the records instead."

ICBC Database Administrator Ed Chu adds, "The application would unload data spanning across four different tables in a DB2 database. The data consisted of organizational information. For instance, one table would be the person's name, another

would be the person's address, another table would have their birth date, and another would have the person's gender. Using a SELECT statement, we had to join four tables with some criteria and create an unload file that was roughly 16 million rows, and reload the data into another DB2 database. We improved the process by using the new SyncSort join feature to create one logical view of the data instead



ICBC Cuts Processing Time 89%... *continued*

of having it split over four different tables. Now the application involves a quick unload of the four different DB2 tables into flat files, then uses SyncSort to join and filter the records out."

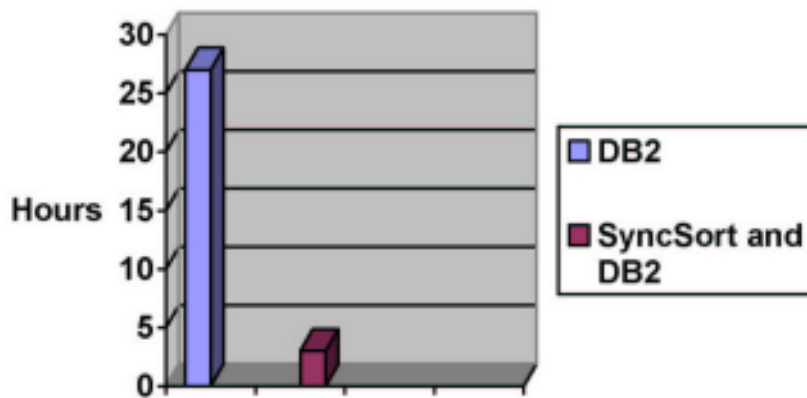
The application that the team built was meant to be a Proof of Concept to show that the necessary processing could be completed in a short period of time. By cutting the application down to just three hours, the team was able to prove that it could be run quickly and effectively. Phillips continues, "When we're dealing with databases and the size that we're looking at, we would have to use entire weekends to do an unload and reload. In fact, in some instances, we would look at splitting our database up, and doing it over two or three different weekends. We've created a situation here where we can do that much faster with SyncSort." The environment consists of two G5 mainframes. One machine is an online machine, processing 4-4.5 million IMS transactions daily. The other is a batch machine that runs constantly for the applications development group.

Another application that the database administration group worked on deals with finding policies that are expiring and sending out renewal letters to the policyholders. Chu explains, "The application also involves personal organizational data and is used to create an extract of all the people who have a certain insurance policy that they purchased. It usually comes up with about a quarter of a million

people. We were previously using a DB2 select to complete the processing, but this was taking about four to five hours to run. By using SyncSort's join facility, the application takes about a half hour. This process is going to run every two weeks."

The database administration group is confident that they'll be able to meet any new challenges that may arise. Phillips explains, "After looking at these database reloads and unloads, we literally ran into a pot of gold with SyncSort. Now, we don't have to worry about our batch windows shrinking or performing unloads over two or three week-

ends. We're able to develop ways to perform tasks and functions, which up until this time had not been contemplated due to time requirements. With the advent of SyncSort's join feature, we are proving it is possible to introduce this new functionality."



SyncSort reduces the elapsed time of a DB2 application by 89%.