

New Belgium Brewing Reduces Data Platform Troubleshooting Time with SentryOne Solutions

Fourth-largest U.S. craft brewery uses SentryOne solutions to ensure continuous delivery of business-critical data

Challenge

New Belgium's BI Specialist Erickson Winter was consumed with troubleshooting database performance, which hampered his ability to expand his BI expertise so he could focus on strategic initiatives.

Solution

SentryOne solutions helped Winter reduce time spent on routine DBA tasks: **SQL Sentry** provides critical database performance information to simplify troubleshooting, the **Environmental Health Overview** dashboard presents a real-time overview of database performance, and **V Sentry** gives a unique view of resource utilization for VMware hosts.

Results

Winter now spends less than an hour each day monitoring, diagnosing, and optimizing the data platform—a task that used to consume most of his day—and can now focus on analytics projects to drive the business forward.

“SentryOne, for me, has been a lifesaver in that I don't have to spend nearly as much time doing DBA tasks.”

*—Erickson Winter,
BI Specialist,
New Belgium
Brewing Company*



New Belgium Brewing Company, maker of Fat Tire Amber Ale, is the fourth largest craft brewery in the U.S., with facilities in Fort Collins, CO, and Asheville, NC.

SentryOne Solutions Support Business Objectives

Owned 100% by its 800 employees operating out of two core breweries in Colorado and North Carolina, New Belgium has a formalized commitment to environmental stewardship. The company has set goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption, and waste sent to landfills. One recent win: In 2016, 99.9% of the company's waste (by weight) escaped the landfill.

This commitment to sustainability requires data collection that goes beyond what a typical company might capture. And, as the company notes on the web site, "We've gotta measure what we want to manage." New Belgium gathers metrics on the amount of electricity the company produces on-site from solar and biogas sources, its greenhouse gas emissions (the company has a long-term goal toward carbon neutrality), and water use. In addition to tracking sustainability KPIs, the company collects data focused on typical business operations, such as orders, shipments, supply chain information, and sales reports.

New Belgium BI Specialist Erickson Winter is on a mission to ensure all the business-critical data flows freely from the company's three datacenters so that he can focus on his passion for expanding the use of BI within the company to solve core business problems with technology—including using some machine learning approaches to creating visualizations for sales.

But to maintain his focus on these strategic initiatives, Winter needed to streamline routine database troubleshooting. By deploying SentryOne solutions, he has reduced his time spent on monitoring, diagnosing, and optimizing New Belgium's data platform from an essentially full-time job to an hour or so each morning.

New Belgium's BI Specialist Erickson Winter deployed SentryOne solutions to reduce time spent on routine DBA tasks from eight hours a day to about one hour.



New Belgium uses **SentryOne SQL Sentry**, the **Environmental Health Overview** feature, and **V Sentry** to ensure uninterrupted delivery of business-critical data.

When his team recently encountered a problem with SQL Server jobs failing overnight, Winter expanded his set of SentryOne solutions to include **V Sentry**, which provides a unique view of resource utilization for VMware hosts. With **V Sentry** in place, his team discovered that a commercial backup solution was creating an on-the-fly VM on the host—diverting resources from production, spiking processing time, and resulting in data supply issues. After an alternative backup/restore method was in place, performance returned to normal.

With SentryOne V Sentry, New Belgium identified an on-the-fly VM host that was creating a database performance problem.

“Before we had **V Sentry**, we just didn’t have enough insight into the VM host to be able to troubleshoot,” Winter says. The incident that spurred him to look for a solution was a SQL Server job that failed overnight just before an important business sales review.

“It was just one of those perfect storms,” he says. “Sales leaders are going into a big meeting and needing the numbers. But, oh great, it failed today.”

With **V Sentry**, the team had the specific information they needed to quickly solve the problem and get the data.

Morning Database Check Is Routine with SQL Sentry

On a day-to-day basis, Winter has significantly cut his time spent on routine DBA tasks. He spends about 30 minutes to an hour with the **Environmental Health Overview** dashboard each morning going through the servers and resolving any potential database performance bottlenecks. He recently used **SQL Sentry** to help a team discover the source of a delay on one process.

“It took five minutes with **SQL Sentry** to point that out,” Winter says. “Overall, SentryOne has been a lifesaver for me in that I don’t have to spend nearly as much time doing DBA work, so I have more time for fun stuff—the career-building projects.”

About SentryOne

SentryOne is a Charlotte-based tech company whose award-winning solutions empower Microsoft data professionals to achieve breakthrough performance across physical, virtual, and cloud environments. The team shares its expertise at blogs.sentryone.com and sqlperformance.com.

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