



A.O. Smith reduces SAP system refresh time by 72% using Data Sync Manager

Data Sync Manager (DSM) gives A.O. Smith a streamlined, simplified testing process



About A.O. Smith

Everybody loves a hot shower. We all appreciate the convenience of clean clothes and dishes. And what can be more enjoyable than a relaxing dip in a hot tub or whirlpool? There's nothing like hot water, and one company has been delivering the world's hot water for more than 80 years. But today's A. O. Smith is about more than hot water. The company recently entered the water treatment industry to deliver clean water to consumers in China and other developing parts of the world. It's all about water, and A. O. Smith has a singular focus on becoming a global leader in water technology.

- Employees: 16,100
- Headquarters: Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- In addition to organic growth, they have grown substantially through acquisition over the past few decades.
- SAP implementation was started in 2014.

www.aosmith.com

The Challenge: Rapidly-growing database and inefficient copy tool

A.O. Smith is an expanding company and, over the past few decades, has grown substantially through acquisitions. Their database system size is currently 2TB, and growing at a rate of 50GB per month as a result of additional systems being brought onto SAP. This rapid increase in system size started to create challenges for their SAP teams. Some of the challenges included the amount of time and level of effort required to complete full system copies and refreshes. Full system copies were taking much longer, and non-production systems were getting bigger. The system size problem was further exacerbated by systems with multiple clients.

A.O. Smith was using a well-known data copy tool to make full system copies. It was complex, unpredictable, time-consuming, and prone to errors in the post-copy steps.

- A.O. Smith is a water technology company, founded in 1874.
- When the company started, it produced metal parts, baby carriages, and bicycles, and later car frames for Cadillac, Oldsmobile, and Ford.
- The company developed an innovative process to fuse glass to the inside of steel tanks, paving the way for the residential water heater.
- In addition to residential water heaters, they also manufacture large-scale industrial products.
- They recently supplied the new Bucks stadium with the equipment it needs to deliver 140°F water at a rate of 2,000 gallon per minute.

“DSM has given us a faster, more consistent test process, and allowed us to meet ad-hoc business requests quickly. It’s also reduced our data footprint and masked our sensitive data, which is a big bonus.”

- Tom Garreis, SAP Basis & Security Manager, A.O. Smith

Key challenges for A.O. Smith while using previous data copy tool:

-  Too much downtime to refresh systems
-  Inconsistencies with ECC and SCM/TM
-  Too many manual integrations to correct
-  Time taken to complete a full system refresh copy refresh (one week), causing delays and missed delivery dates
-  Previous tool was based on a complex task list that often failed during the export and import processes
-  The need to use complex manual configurations, resulting in failure of tasks and idle time, with an impact on deadlines and production performance
-  Delays led to failures in many of the tool’s processes, requiring human intervention to restart the process
-  The previous tool crippled their production server, so they had to limit the tool’s resources for the export

These resulting issues from the tool they were using led to many problems within the testing area and caused frustration for the different teams. Preparing SAP systems for their implementation was critical to A.O. Smith for their many ongoing projects. A better process was needed to address the company’s challenges.

“After implementing Data Sync Manager, we were able to export 18 months of data over one weekend and import over the following weekend automatically, with no impact during business hours or manual intervention. This process used to take us over a week, and was constantly failing. We were thrilled with the results and the support has been awesome!”

Tom Garreis, SAP Basis & Security Manager, A.O. Smith



The Solution: Faster, automated process with Data Sync Manager

With its large system, A.O. Smith needed a streamlined, simplified, and repeatable process for testing. A.O. Smith chose EPI-USE Labs' Data Sync Manager (DSM) suite to help automate their processes. DSM gave A.O. Smith a faster, more consistent system refresh process. In turn, DSM rapidly creates new non-production systems, reduces the data footprint of non-production systems, and scrambles data for security and compliance.

Outcome and ROI

After implementing DSM, A.O. Smith has found the following benefits and Return on Investment (ROI):

- Production can be exported over a weekend and imported to the next, with no impact on projects
- The capability to create copies of clients from the same export
- Meeting deadlines without weekday downtime
- No need to rebuild system integrations after a copy
- Ease of refreshing HR data
- Minimal post-processing
- System sizes are controlled
- Smaller, manageable clients, and faster client builds
- Masking of sensitive data for safety
- The ability to accommodate ad-hoc requests with little notice
- Reduced test client sizes, controlling system sprawl due to large databases (less disk, CPU, memory)
- Consistent and repeatable process
- Fewer steps and less labor after copies

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