

## Top Notch Distributors, Inc. Case Study

# SQDR Creates Real-time Capability Delivering a Substantial Increase in Ecommerce Sales

Top Notch sells a wide selection of Residential and Commercial Electronic Access Control products, parts and accessories. Their inventory consists of over half a million products, parts, and accessories from over 60 manufacturers. Products are available for same-day shipping from one of four warehouses throughout the US.

Although it was possible for distributors and customers to view their account and purchase history from Top Notch's e-store, they rarely did so, as the site was not always able to display accurate inventory levels. Therefore, an excessive amount of time was spent checking inventory levels. The company has a SQL-based e-commerce site, with sales, inventory and business data residing on an iSeries with ERP software, InFor.



**Top Notch Distributors, Inc.**  
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### RESULTS

**Site traffic doubled and ecommerce sales from their online store increased dramatically**

**The IT team reduced time spent on reporting and data issues by 10-20%**

**With Thin-Server™ processing, data access is instantaneous, improving customer service and saving time checking inventory levels to process orders**



## Need

All departmental reports were run nightly with SSIS packages pulling data from the iSeries, but the reporting data was always a day removed from business activities. Top Notch needed a way to make real-time reporting available via their e-commerce store without relying on iSeries resources. As Jon Fehringer, IT Manager explains, "Ultimately, if we could bring data on the iSeries in real-time to SQL, we could power our website and not put any additional load on our iSeries."

## Solution

After a successful initial trial in a test environment, Top Notch now uses StarQuest's **SQDR** to move data in real-time from the iSeries ERP program into SQL reporting tools to populate a dynamic e-store with up-to-the-second inventory. **SQDR's** bi-directional replication means that Top Notch now has the ability to send order data from the SQL website to the iSeries, accessing the latest inventory counts.

Building reports on an iSeries requires specialized knowledge requiring scarce IT resources. However, with **SQDR**, data now moves seamlessly into SQL reporting tools so all departments have access to the information they most need without calling on IT. Top Notch employees can run the reports in SQL, giving them much more information and insight at any given time. "I'm a SQL guy, not an AS400 guy. Other vendors we checked into were not able to easily upload data into the AS400 like StarQuest can. Now, changes are implemented in minutes, without a load on the AS400," Fehringer explains.

## Benefits

**Business has increased dramatically.** Since implementing a dynamic online store, Top Notch has seen tremendous e-commerce growth. "Site traffic has doubled since launching our new site. Also, customers now have the ability see their account information, orders and invoices. **SQDR** – it's as real-time as it gets."

**Real-time replication means data you can trust.** With **SQDR**, Top Notch now has the capability to refresh SQL reports in real time, giving employees an accurate view of current business from all sides. "If you want a map on the screen showing where the orders are coming from, we can use that data from the iSeries in SQL instantly as opposed to pulling data from the iSeries nightly and being a day behind."

**Small footprint.** Typical iSeries reporting tools can be complicated and deplete iSeries processing power, but because **SQDR** employs existing data logs to report changes, the process does not compete for resources on the iSeries. With Thin-Server™ processing and lightning fast data transfer, the IT department does not have to worry about taking up space or processing power on the iSeries.

**StarQuest** has been a leading provider of database connectivity products since 1994. StarQuest products use open standards to maximize compatibility and interoperability within an enterprise network. StarQuest is an active member of The Open Group software industry consortium, which was responsible for the adoption of DRDA as an industry standard for database interoperability. The StarQuest technology takes full advantage of open-standards such as DRDA, SQL, ODBC, and JDBC.

For more information and for pricing information please visit <http://www.starquest.com> or call +1 415-669-9619

