CASE STUDY

Why a leading bank with over 1,400 databases chose to think again about Redgate Monitor

Redgate Monitor

redgate

Contents

The Customer

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Republic Bank is one of the most innovative and forward-looking banks in the US, with 42 full-service banking centers across five states and assets of $6.2 billion.

The Challenge

The third party monitoring tool in use was showing its age. The interface was difficult to use and navigate, particularly when there was an issue that had to be resolved and insights were needed fast.

The Solution

A monitoring tool that gave the DBA team the ability to see the health of the entire, large estate at a glance – and give developers access to the data they need to resolve issues faster and more collaboratively.

The Results

The DBA team are now proactive rather than reactive and have reduced the time spent troubleshooting issues, while the whole IT team can now release changes faster and increase the speed to market.

“When we can go before somebody and say that we can get the same, if not better, horsepower – and save money – it's a no-brainer.”

Chris Yates, Senior Vice President, Managing Director of Data and Architecture

The Customer

Headquartered in Louisville, Kentucky, Republic Bank is one of the most innovative and forward-looking banks in the US, with 42 full-service banking centers across five states. With assets of $6.2 billion, it was named Best Bank in Kentucky in Newsweek’s annual rankings, America’s Best Banks 2022.

Dedicated to meeting the needs of personal customers, small business owners, and large corporations alike, the bank offers a full range of competitive products and a highly personalized service. To remain at the forefront in a fast-moving sector, it also strives to be a technically advanced community bank that highly values IT and technology within the business.

To support this, Chris Yates, Senior Vice President, Managing Director, manages a team of DBAs and developers who are responsible for managing 1,400 databases – and growing – used by around 100 applications. Together with the rest of the IT department, they are akin to an in-house software company.

For the last five years and more, the team have been working to include DevOps and Agile software practices in their database development process to increase the speed of development while keeping data safe.

> “When you're wanting to get things done, the payback of the cleaner, more intuitive interface was the biggest thing that swayed us.”
>
> Jeff Rouse, Assistant Vice President, DBA Manager

The Challenge

Managing an estate of 1,400 databases while guaranteeing uptime to around 100 applications is a big task for Chris Yates and Jeff Rouse, Assistant Vice President and DBA Manager.

The estate is almost entirely on-premises, with the databases ranging from a few megabytes to the two data warehouses in use at the bank which are in the terabytes. It’s also an ever-evolving and changing estate, with a desire in the future to start moving to the cloud.

To help the four DBAs and wider development team develop and maintain the large number of databases, a selection of third-party tools have been introduced over the years to remove laborious tasks and streamline the development process.

For example, Redgate SQL Compare, the industry standard for comparing SQL Server schemas and creating deployment scripts in minutes, was adopted to replace the manual process with one that is streamlined, stable, and far more reliable.

The third party monitoring tool in use was, however, showing its age. The interface was difficult to use and navigate, particularly when there was an issue that had to be resolved by the DBA team and insights were needed fast. Reports were also only available through Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS), making them difficult to extract and share with the increasing number of developers who wanted information about the performance of the databases they were working with.

"When things go bump in the night, we want to know about it and be proactively there to give the DBA team the tools that they need to succeed."

Chris Yates, Senior Vice President, Managing Director of Data and Architecture

The Solution

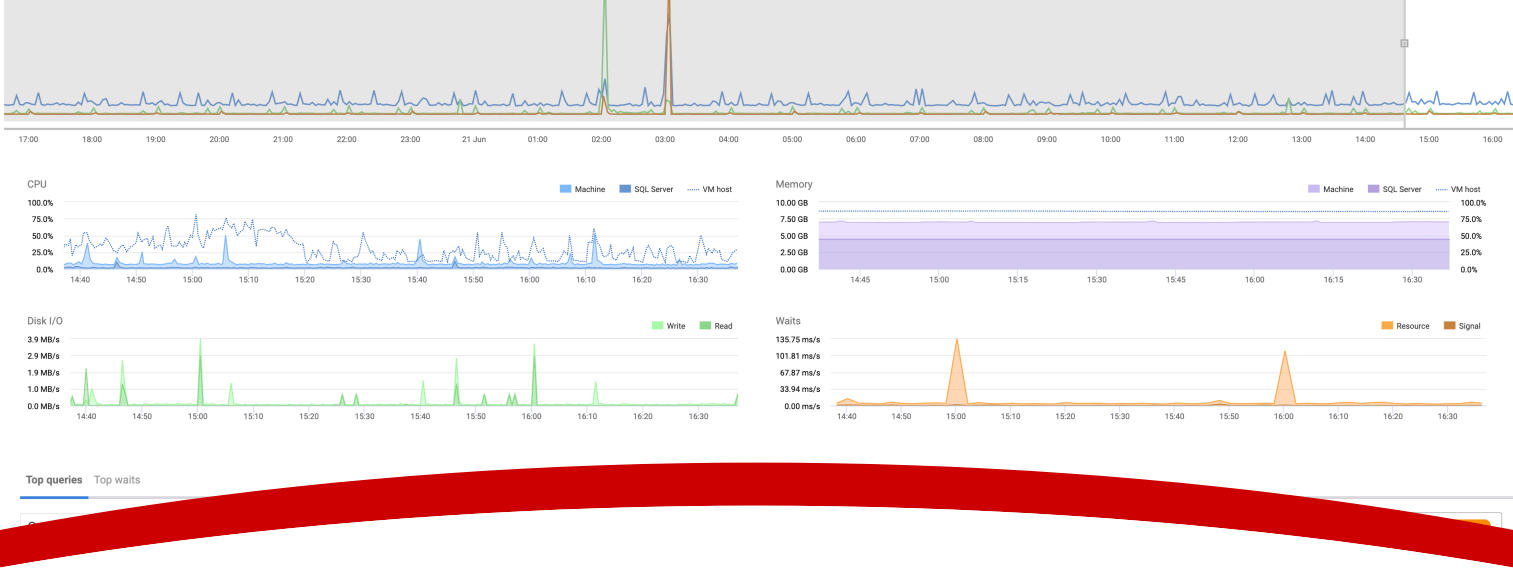
With Redgate tools already in use at the bank, Chris and Jeff naturally included Redgate Monitor in their shortlist of monitoring tools to review. When they did look at it, they were in for a surprise. Chris had considered it some years before and comments:

> **"As the years have gone by, as the product has matured, it has grown leaps and bounds."**

He particularly liked the way estates could be configured and viewed at a glance from a single pane of glass, along with the different SQL Server versions in use. He immediately realized he could quickly see and assess the health of the entire estate and get all the information he needed before meetings with other stakeholders across the business as well as auditors and regulators.

Jeff concurred and comments:

> **"For risk mitigation and auditing type information, to be able to gain and access it easily, to see the estate and where we're at, it's second to none."**



For him, though, the bigger win was how intuitive it was for everyone to use. His DBAs could employ it to actively watch the entire server estate and keep the lights on with daily monitoring. He could also respond to the frequent questions he gets asked about the estate and provide the information requested far easier than he could ever do with the previous monitoring tool.

They could both see another bonus too. Like every IT team, there are often debates about issues that come up when changes are released, with the database typically regarded as the culprit. The ease with which Redgate Monitor displays information in real time and provides reports on a wide range of metrics would enable them to give the developers access to all of the data they needed to resolve any issue faster and in a more collaborative way.

The Results

With over 600 releases a year across all of the database environments, Redgate Monitor has come into its own at Republic Bank. The intuitive interface has made the DBA team proactive rather than reactive, reduced the time spent troubleshooting issues, and enabled the whole team to release changes faster and increase the speed to market.

The shareable insights have also made the team more efficient. Errors and potential issues have been identified earlier in the development pipeline, preventing them from reaching production. Common problems and bugs have also been highlighted, enabling the team to improve their coding standards and stop them ever happening in the future.

During particularly busy periods, like tax season, it's been notably easier for the developers and development managers to use Redgate Monitor themselves to identify issues like deadlocks and drill deeper to discover where and why they occurred so that they can be resolved faster and easier.

Chris and Jeff are now encouraging members of both the DBA and application development teams to become Redgate Monitor ‘power users’ so that the insights and metrics that the tool provides can be used and shared more widely. By instantly knowing, for example, where SQL Server queries are running slowly, or which queries are running across instances and causing issues, the teams can become even more productive.

This, for Chris, is where the real ROI of Redgate Monitor can be found. As he concludes:

> **“When you have a 99.7 success rate of uptime on your servers, when you can give feedback on end of life for products, when you can give information back on where your estate is at any time of the day, that is the ROI right there.”**