

# Sybase and Sistema 4B Information Centre

“The true measure of success is the level of customer satisfaction you achieve. As a customer of Sybase IQ, all our requirements were satisfied and our expectations surpassed”.

Fernando Ramírez, Dirección de Planificación, Sistema 4B

## KEY BENEFITS

- Reduced storage requirement
- Ability to store greater volumes of data
- Increased speed of data analysis
- Compatibility with existing heterogeneous environment

## SYBASE TECHNOLOGY

- Sybase IQ

## INDUSTRY

- Financial Services

Sistema 4B Information Centre wanted to update their existing reporting infrastructure. Sistema 4B implemented a solution based on Sybase® IQ as the reporting engine, which has drastically accelerated the speed of reporting and business analytics.

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

Founded in 1974 by the Banco Central Hispano Americano, Banco Español de Crédito and Banco Santander, Sistema 4B, S.A. provides state-of-the-art outsourced services to its member institutions, enabling them to make electronic payments and transfer funds. Sistema 4B provides a 24/7 service and its systems are linked directly with those of the financial institutions it serves, as well as with national and international payment organisations.

Sistema 4B routes transactions from 6.7 million debit cards and more than 9 million credit cards made through 12,578 automatic teller machines (the Telebanco Network) and more than 322,469 sales outlets (the Telepagos Network). In 2004, Sistema 4B's turnover was over 43,754 million Euros, an increase of 5.6% compared to 2003.

## BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Sistema 4B's key objective was to implement a reporting and business analytics solution that would allow it to store and analyze massive amounts of historical and operational data quickly and efficiently.

## SOLUTION

Sybase IQ, the high performance analytic server, was installed as the data server for the Sistema 4B Information Centre.

## RESULTS

Sybase IQ has allowed an increase in the volume of data that can be stored and the speed at which it can be analysed. Sistema 4B now stores 2 years of analytical data, instead of 6 months as previously stored, but using the same hard-disk space. Quick and easy integration was key to the project. Sybase IQ was simple to install and compatible with the existing heterogeneous environment at Sistema 4B, integrating with applications such as Business Objects and Brio Reports. They needed to retain more than 20 Business Objects universes and 200 pre-established reports and Sistema 4B now obtains the whole business analytic package in 4 days, a 60% reduction in time using Sybase IQ.

The new reporting system means a dramatic reduction of reaction time in a business based in real time transactions.

## WHY SYBASE?

As an established, award-winning analytics engine, with over 1,700 customers worldwide, Sybase IQ consistently offers technological excellence and cost savings not available from any other vendor. It enabled the project to be implemented in record time without compromising performance during development and installation. In addition, Sybase IQ delivered dramatically faster results for querying and reporting.

“The Sybase IQ system continues to grow in terms of volume and functions and has maintained and improved the required levels of flexibility, usability, performance and scalability. Data from our critical service core has been added to the solution and we are currently looking into generating revenue by supplying information to third parties, which is now possible thanks to the Sybase IQ solution.”

— Fernando Ramírez,  
Dirección de Planificación  
Sistema 4B

## THE CHALLENGE

The Sistema 4B Information Centre already had a reporting infrastructure in place but suffered from poor performance. A number of Business Object Universes had been set up, based on the extraction and analysis of raw operational data. These enabled the analysis of data from sales outlets, automatic teller machines and point of sale terminals, as well as analysing card activity, fraud, and network management and commission activities.

Reports were based on an aggregate data ‘view’ created by the analytical processing software and incorporating daily and monthly data updates from the Sistema 4B member institutions. However, the volume of data and the need for fast reporting meant that, over time, adjustments had to be made which restricted the number of ad hoc queries that could be made in order to maintain minimal performance levels.

## PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

The project had to meet several basic requirements: firstly, the new system had to be easily integrated with the established reporting infrastructure, avoiding the need to make significant changes thus reducing the costs of implementing the new solution; secondly, to drastically reduce the time needed to process data and run queries; additionally it had to offer scalability to cope with the growing volume of data without exponentially increasing the maintenance, administration and storage costs; and finally, it had to provide the necessary flexibility to develop into an enterprise data warehouse.

## MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

The implementation of Sybase IQ met the requirements by offering a simple and transparent reporting infrastructure using Sistema 4B’s existing processes and technology:

- Extract, transform and load (ETL) processes to move data from the operational database using Sybase’s Direct Connect.
- Transparent access to Business Objects and other analytical tools to report on the data from the data warehouse.
- Access using native SQL and standard drivers (JDBC and ODBC) from previously developed sub-systems, without the need for substantial modifications.
- Improved performance delivered by Sybase IQ reducing the need to run the pre-processing software that was previously required to cut query times. It is now possible to run ad-hoc queries. Reports taking 35 hours to obtain in the past, now run in 15 minutes.

The new system uses 2 CPU HP machines with a UX 11.x operating system (64 bit), and the initial storage requirements were reduced from 120 Gb to 40 Gb.

Working with Sybase, Evendor Engineering cut the time needed for Sistema 4B to obtain business management information from 10 days to 4 days, a 60% reduction. Queries that took 35 hours to run, now do so in 15 minutes. This huge reduction includes the time required for pre-processing. Eventually pre-processing can be eliminated— thanks to the effectiveness of the Sybase IQ server—and then all reporting requirements will be met in less than 2 days.

## THE FUTURE

Thanks to Sybase IQ, Sistema 4B can now consider implementing a standardised enterprise data warehouse, which will enable internal and external ad hoc queries as well as open up a wide range of possibilities for advanced information analysis.