



Customer Interview: IT DBA Team Lead

by Eric Russo

Your database administrators are highly specialized and knowledgeable employees – so why are they spending their time on menial, repetitive activities when they could be optimizing your IT environment?

Below, you'll find the transcript of a conversation I recently had with Sunshine Haupt, an IT team leader at a large manufacturing company. During our conversation, we discussed how Datavail's team of experts has helped the company's DBAs to focus on important tasks and get the support they need to focus on strategic, long-term projects.

Eric Russo: What prompted you to reach out to Datavail?

Sunshine Haupt: We have a lot of systems and a lot of support, but very few people. That's why the Datavail managed service is really critical to my team. We need to have someone to whom we can delegate repeatable tasks.

The partnership began a couple of years before I took over the team. The director at the time recognized that we had two DBAs for the entire company, and the work wasn't sustainable.

There was no way that they could keep up with all the requests, especially as the developers were doing more things and bringing on more systems: cloning, making sure everything's in alignment, troubleshooting, executing scripts on behalf of the developers, evaluating and tuning performance. They were just getting crushed by that work, and we needed someone that could do the work on their behalf.

ER: How does the partnership with Datavail work for your organization?

SH: The Datavail technical account manager works with one of the DBAs on my team to manage the partnership. They have a 30-minute phone call each week to set the direction, the expectations, how work will be completed, what work can be completed, what work should not be completed, how to handle different situations and day-to-day work.

Then, the rest of the Datavail team is available to execute what's been defined, which works really well for our environment. I know there are many, many different ways to use the service, but that's the one we found worked best for us.

ER: What are some examples of the tasks that Datavail takes on for your team?

SH: Datavail does our support and maintenance tasks: cloning, raising service requests with Oracle, occasional performance tuning, running queries, running scripts. Pretty much any work that is repeatable and able to be documented is delegated.

Now, the DBAs on my team can manage the work instead of having to execute it 100 times. They can focus on tasks like designing and developing new environments. They work on the overall picture and making sure that our documentation is good, current, and easy for people to read.

My team will also consult with the lead DBA from Datavail's team to ask questions like "Should we automate this?" or "Can you fill in the technical details for this outline?" This lead DBA helps represent the team, coordinate efforts, and make things happen.

ER: What are some things that you think your team does exceptionally well?

SH: One of the things I've been very proud of with my team is how they've partnered with Datavail and used that to their advantage. **When we brought in a managed service, they wanted it and it was never viewed as a threat or a concern or a replacement for their work.** We made sure they knew it was their service and a way to support them.

The DBAs on my team are very technical. They are exceptional in their roles and I'm very, very lucky. It's how we can get by with such a small team. They embraced the new responsibility of overseeing a managed service. They've done a wonderful job creating a partnership to really maximize the opportunity.

ER: What advice would you give to someone trying to make their IT organization run more smoothly?

SH: I think the biggest advice I would give is to remember that you need to shape a managed service. You can't just think that it'll magically work by itself. It may, but if you actually invest a little bit of time to shape it into a true partner and make it work for you, it can be so much more.

Be willing to listen as well. We'll periodically ask the Datavail team questions like, "What do you see other companies do? What are your thoughts on this? How would you approach it?" By doing this, **we've been able to take the partnership to a new level in the past year.**

As evidenced in this interview, when you join forces with a managed services provider such as Datavail, you can take tedious support and maintenance tasks out of the hands of your DBAs, which will save you valuable time, money, and effort. Interested in seeing how Datavail can support your DBA team?

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