

SnowMirror | Sky UK Case Study

IT Challenge

SnowMirror was recommended by a ServiceNow technical support representative as an alternative to using ODBC based queries. At the time (March 2015), it was the only available alternative to ODBC that we found.

The Solution: SnowMirror

The simplicity and low technical resource demands make it significantly better than ODBC, which needed significant, skilled technical resource and time to build and maintain.

We use 2 SnowMirror installations at Sky. This document only covers the corporate installation. We have 3 target SQL Server instances:

- Production consists of databases on a SQL Server 2012 physical 2-node cluster.
- Non-Production consists of databases on a SQL server 2012 Virtual standalone host.
- A third instance can be started up as needed for testing purposes, but is completely hosted on a powerful PC.

We have 3 application servers running SnowMirror. Both Production and Non-Production are Virtual Servers running Windows 2012. The third is a powerful PC running Windows 7. For a SnowMirror major version upgrade we initially install it on the PC to demonstrate the installation process and check any corruption of configuration or data. For SnowMirror minor versions, or configuration changes with a high degree of confidence, we implement directly to the non-production instance.

Changes are run in non-production for a period following installation. Issues are noted and discussed with SnowMirror support.

When we are confident that both the implementation method and operation of the new version or configuration changes will not adversely impact our production data warehouse, we plan and implement the change to Production alongside appropriate communications with the business users.

Mostly Valued Features

- 1) The SnowMirror dashboard allows us to rapidly assess the current status of synchronisations.
- 2) Email notifications alert us when attention is needed. This allows SnowMirror to become a background support consideration rather than demanding focused attention.
- 3) Setting up new table synchronisations is quick and easy. Highlighting the need for indexes is also highly beneficial.
- 4) Diagnostic message logs are easy to access and understand (usually).
- 5) Advanced settings can make SnowMirror highly configurable.

Benefits Of SnowMirror

- Level of support: SnowMirror support has been good. Emails usually receive a quick response. Skype messaging or phone calls can be used in urgent cases (which are rare).
- Release of new versions - completed in a controlled way, and usually includes fixes to problems identified within a short time period.
- SnowMirror support is understanding of the constraints of our operational and business needs. They make all reasonable adjustments to take these factors into account.

It is relatively simple, low maintenance and reliable solution, using little technical and human resource to manage high volume data replication from Cloud based ServiceNow platforms to on-site databases.

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