Southwestern Motor Transport
Relies on SEQUEL for Fast, Easy Information Analysis

Southwestern Motor Transport, or SMT, provides the eastern half of the United States with transportation services. Besides offering direct service to fourteen states, they provide additional service to Mexico, Canada, and the rest of the United States through their network of partner carriers. That translates to a lot of information that needs to be evaluated and analyzed, quickly and effectively.

Robert Bernel, Data Processing Manager at SMT explains the major role that SEQUEL™ from Help/Systems plays. "We've been using SEQUEL for about six months now, primarily with our Ayers Rock application software database. One of the main reasons we decided to go with SEQUEL was because we were looking for a fast way to summarize information in different categories. Our users need a lot of flexibility and speed to collect and reformat data for analysis."

SMT relies on SEQUEL to let users explore database information in unique ways. As Robert explains, "SEQUEL's dynamic drill-down and re-grouping capabilities are amazing. All our users need to get started is a SEQUEL view. There's no need to set up pre-defined drill paths or definitions, or to go through the lengthy process of setting up a 'datamart' or 'cube' to start analyzing key metrics. And, we can use SEQUEL directly with IBM® System i™ transaction databases, even ones containing millions of records.

"There's no setup or data preparation required to get started. The first time I ran SEQUEL I was amazed at what I could accomplish with a single SEQUEL view. Tasks that used to take 20 or more queries and a group of output files, now require a single SEQUEL view and are completed in seconds. We used to use two other data access products, and they both required multiple passes through the data to extract the same information.

For Robert, the most amazing thing about SEQUEL was the lack of prerequisite tasks. "No extracting files, no offloading data to another server. We work directly with the transaction database file. We can drill into or summarize any data fields. And, the performance has been great. We keep five years of history; millions of records and SEQUEL is amazingly fast—its speed just blew us away."

SMT also relies on SEQUEL Executive Dashboards to deliver information to their end users. Executive dashboards present key business metrics and other functions in a consolidated graphical display that can be started with a click of an icon, or displayed at the start of a desktop session.

Robert is excited about dashboards and their potential. "We've already created a large number of SEQUEL executive dashboards. Dashboards are easy to deploy and even non-technical users can design their own. They are very easy to set up and I can put several dynamic views on one dashboard. Our users pick the one they want to work with. They can start out at the company level and then see how the data breaks down by dimension and category: zip code, state, division, region, terminal, customer, time period, and so forth. They can see the data any way they want for costing, profitability, ranking, and summarization. Nothing is pre-defined—SEQUEL handles all of that for us."

"SEQUEL presents the information and we can dig deeper to spot trends. We use specific key performance indicators everyday and we also love to do trend analyses with SEQUEL charts. The charts, like everything else in SEQUEL, are easy to set up. They can go right on the dashboards, or our users can create them on the fly (dynamically)."

Robert sums up the power and appeal of SEQUEL. "When I first saw SEQUEL, I knew we needed it right away and our use has just taken off. We are very excited about what SEQUEL has given us. We started using SEQUEL straight out of the box, we were up and running quickly, and we didn't have any training. The time savings have been tremendous and SEQUEL has opened a whole new window for us."