

# SEQUEL HELPS STEWART & STEVENSON KEEP MOVING FORWARD >>>



It is a dark and stormy night. Gusts of wind and rain fight against your windshield wipers, making visibility impossible except during the flashes of lightning. As your semi-trailer plows through the rising water level, travel becomes slower and slower along the highway. At this rate, keeping to your delivery schedule seems unlikely. Suddenly, you hear a loud clunk from under the hood. Before the truck stalls, you manage to pull over safely to the side of the road. Now what do you do? Well, if your engine is from Stewart & Stevenson, don't despair...help is on its way! Stewart & Stevenson, a leading manufacturer of diesel-powered equipment, has been providing 24/7 service, including emergency repair, along with its quality products for over a century. With more than 750 certified service technicians, support is provided for every piece of equipment sold.

Originally founded in Houston, Texas in 1902, Stewart & Stevenson has continually introduced new products and enhanced existing products to improve performance. They now offer a diversified range of diesel-powered equipment including engines, air compressors, oil drilling rigs, transmissions, and torque converters. More than 3,600 employees worldwide work to ensure product reliability and to provide support when it's needed. This perpetuates Stewart & Stevenson's reputation of service, innovation, fair dealing, and integrity.

Much like the 24/7 support it provides to customers, Stewart & Stevenson has found around-the-clock service for data access and analysis with SEQUEL,™ Help/Systems' business intelligence solution for the IBM® System i.™ Jack Crouch, Chief Technology Officer at Stewart & Stevenson, describes their system environment. "We've been using SEQUEL since 1991. We run OneWorld software from J.D. Edwards on a model 840. This System i is a server model that has minimal 5250 interactive capacity. Our users have mostly worked with OneWorld through Windows clients. With SEQUEL ViewPoint [Windows-based interface], about 50 people are able to write their own views without impacting our limited interactive processing."

According to Jack, SEQUEL helps support operations by reading and converting different types of data. "SEQUEL's ability to work with J.D. Edwards data dictionary files has really worked well for us. It captures the decimal positions in our numeric fields and finds user-defined code descriptions from the dictionary files. SEQUEL also converts date fields from the Julian format used in J.D. Edwards to any format we need. This is all done automatically and is transparent to the user.

"In addition to the Windows clients, we currently have around 250 people who run SEQUEL scripts, views, and reports through a browser. We added this capability when we



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**– JACK CROUCH,  
CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER**



purchased the SEQUEL Web Interface,<sup>™</sup> and put a URL on a JDE menu and on our intranet. In many instances, we have a SEQUEL script that prompts the user for a date range and then automatically e-mails the results as an Excel file. That kind of thing is very easy to set up with SEQUEL.”

Stewart & Stevenson also uses SEQUEL run-time prompting for its users. Adds Jack, “One of the most useful features for us is the ViewPoint variable DBLIST, which shows values from the database if an integrity test is supplied. This can retrieve values from a database file or from a non-prompted SEQUEL view. For instance, if we prompt a user for a particular customer, ViewPoint automatically builds a list of all customers. And the list can be dynamic. If we add a customer, the list is updated automatically the next time the user runs the SEQUEL view. This feature is very powerful.”

With its large inventory of products, Stewart & Stevenson requires a consistent way to summarize, format, and correct problems with all of its data. The large volume of data can sometimes be an issue. Jack explains, “We extract a lot of System i data to Excel with SEQUEL. Some of our System i files are quite large. One has 38,000,000 records. It grows by 2,000,000 records every month. With SEQUEL, we are able to summarize all this data so that our file extracts usually fit into Excel. When we have too many records for Excel, even after summarizing, we’ll use SEQUEL to create the file in other PC file formats.”

SEQUEL also helps them identify potential problems with the data. Jack says, “Among the most useful things we’ve done with SEQUEL is a series of exception reports that highlight possible data integrity issues. Some of these reports are run daily; some are run monthly. For example, we have a report that totals the general ledger dollar amounts for inventory and matches them with the inventory detail. This report flags any problems for us so we can take the next step.” Once the problem is identified, Stewart & Stevenson can use SEQUEL to further explore the nature and reason for the discrepancy before taking corrective action.

“SEQUEL has also been great for sales analysis. Whenever we create an invoice, we write a record to our own sales history file. We have many SEQUEL sales reports and extracts written over this sales file. SEQUEL lets us avoid a canned approach to sales analysis and gives us real flexibility to look at the data.”

Service and support—Stewart & Stevenson understands how significant these are to delivering a complete quality package. Clients continue to have confidence in Stewart & Stevenson products, because they know if something does need repair, help is available anytime. Similarly, Help/Systems’ SEQUEL provides a service for working with System i data that Jack describes as invaluable. “I’ve worked with a number of products, and SEQUEL is the most satisfying software product that I’ve ever used.”