Application Information Lifecycle Management for Oracle E-Business Suite

How Your IT Organization Can Better Manage Oracle E-Business Suite Data Throughout Its Entire Lifecycle
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .......................................................... 2

The Challenges: Managing Data Growth in Oracle E-Business Suite .... 3

Conventional Solutions and Their Limitations .......................... 5

- Hardware Upgrades ..................................................... 5
- Database Tuning and Partitioning ...................................... 5
- Oracle Purge Routines ................................................... 5
- Hand Coding ............................................................. 5

A Better Solution: Application Information Lifecycle Management .... 6

The Ideal Solution: Informatica Application ILM ........................ 7

- Robust Data Growth Assessment Capabilities ........................ 8
- Prebuilt Accelerators for Oracle E-Business Suite .................... 9
- Simple Customization and Extensibility ............................... 10
- Comprehensive Archiving Techniques ................................. 11
- Comprehensive Techniques for Creating and Managing Subsets .... 14
- Comprehensive Masking Techniques .................................. 16

Informatica Application ILM in Action .................................. 17

Conclusion ........................................................................ 18
Executive Summary

Oracle E-Business Suite applications are critical for most of your businesses daily operations and for processing your customers’ requests. Given the importance of your Oracle E-Business Suite applications, it’s no wonder that the volume of data within them is growing at a staggering rate.

And the problem isn’t going away. As your business grows, more transaction volumes are added to your Oracle E-Business Suite applications. Your IT organization also has to retain data for longer periods to comply with regulations—further increasing data volumes and management costs.

Data growth is exacerbated by creating multiple copies of production data in nonproduction environments. Data copied to nonproduction environments is also rarely secured. As a result, confidential data may be exposed to the risk of data breaches. Because development and testing are commonly outsourced and offshored to third parties, IT organizations need to monitor unauthorized access to sensitive data. All of these factors occur when IT is expected to do more with less.

Your IT organization needs a cost-effective, long-term solution for managing data in your Oracle E-Business Suite applications throughout its lifecycle—from development, test, production, and archive to retirement. Application information lifecycle management (ILM) solutions are the answer.

This white paper examines how application ILM solutions can help your IT organization better manage the growing data volume in your Oracle E-Business Suite applications and protect it from unauthorized access. After reading this paper, you’ll have a better understanding of:

• The challenges involved in managing explosive data growth in Oracle E-Business Suite applications
• How conventional methods of managing this data growth fall short
• Why application ILM is a superior data management solution
• Key criteria to properly evaluate an application ILM solution

The Informatica® application ILM product family provides the full range of capabilities your IT organization needs to better manage Oracle E-Business Suite application data growth. Short case studies in this paper show how companies have used Informatica application ILM products to better manage their Oracle E-Business Suite application data, resulting in:

• Lower storage costs and faster response times
• Improved application performance and availability
• Increased IT efficiency and lower staffing costs
The Challenges: Managing Data Growth in Oracle E-Business Suite

As Figure 1 shows, data volumes aren’t just growing—they’re exploding. Most large enterprises have petabytes of data stored in all data repositories across the organization — and that volume is likely to grow to exabytes in the coming years. Forrester estimates that, on average, data repositories for large critical applications grow annually at 65 percent. Most of this growth is due to an accumulation of inactive data. It’s estimated that 85 percent of production data is inactive.

![Bar Chart]

Figure 1. It’s estimated that data repositories for large business applications such as Oracle E-Business Suite are growing by more than 50 percent annually.

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The growth in your Oracle E-Business Suite data volumes stems from several factors.

- **Business growth.** As your business grows, more transaction volumes are added to your Oracle E-Business Suite applications. When your company merges with or acquires another, or expands its operations globally, the result is more data. At the same time, more and more business users are demanding access to Oracle E-Business Suite applications, adding to the load and performance requirements.

- **Expanded implementations and upgrades.** Oracle E-Business Suite deployments have expanded across multiple departments, and individual application modules are being used more. If your IT organization has upgraded to the latest versions of Oracle E-Business Suite (e.g., version 11.5.9 or higher), you’ve discovered more tables and data stored in your databases as additional information is captured about each transaction. Application upgrades have forced the data growth issue to the fore while your IT organization struggles to manage your application availability periods.

- **Proliferation of legacy applications.** The tendency to maintain unsupported legacy versions of Oracle E-Business Suite applications beyond their value only exacerbates data growth and keeps software license and infrastructure cost at unnecessarily high levels.

- **Compliance requirements.** To comply with industry and government regulations, your IT organization needs to retain inactive data in Oracle E-Business Suite and other business applications for longer periods of time—sometimes more than 10 years—further increasing data volumes and management costs.

As data volumes grow, it takes more time and effort for your end users and database administrators to perform essential tasks on production systems. Data entry responsiveness declines. Reports take longer to run. Transactions take longer to enter. Database backups are slower and can’t be done overnight. Upgrading application versions or applying software patches becomes more complicated and can’t be completed over a weekend. Maintaining application services levels while keeping cost down becomes virtually impossible.

With larger data volumes, it takes longer for your IT organization to provision nonproduction environments. Provisioning additional copies of these environments just compounds the data growth problem. On average, IT organizations create four or five copies of production data for nonproduction use. These are usually complete copies, although a subset would be more than sufficient. These full, secondary copies of the data sets consume valuable database and storage capacity.

Although at least half of the data copied to nonproduction environments may be confidential, these environments are seldom protected. About 60 percent of companies use real production data for their application development and testing. As more sensitive data are exposed to unauthorized users, there is a higher risk of data breaches, especially when development is outsourced or sent offshore.

These challenges have prompted IT organizations to look for more effective solutions to manage the growing data in their Oracle E-Business Suite applications.
Conventional Solutions and Their Limitations

If your IT organization is like most, you've used a variety of methods to manage data growth in your Oracle E-Business Suite applications. For example:

- You may have purchased additional storage and processing hardware.
- You may have tuned and partitioned the database.
- You may have used Oracle purge routines or developed in-house scripts to purge, archive, create subset copies, or mask sensitive data.

But these conventional approaches often fail to deliver a long-term solution to your Oracle E-Business Suite data management challenges. Let's explore the limitations of these typical solutions.

Hardware Upgrades

Throwing more hardware at the problem may seem like the simplest answer, but it is not a viable long-term solution—even with the downward trend of disk and processor costs. With larger and larger data volumes, input/output or network bandwidth becomes the bottleneck eventually. And more hardware just increases architectural complexity while offering limited scalability improvements.

Database Tuning and Partitioning

Database administrators commonly turn to tuning and partitioning to manage data growth within the database and improve application performance. But DBAs quickly discover that while tuning is effective the first time, successive tunings offer diminishing returns and are more time intensive.

On the other hand, partitioning doesn't do much to improve database performance because partitioning only works at the table level and only with simple partitioning keys. For applications such as Oracle E-Business Suite, which features complex relationships across tables and table spaces, table-level partitioning is insufficient.

Oracle Purge Routines

Using Oracle purge routines to remove data is inadequate and incomplete. An estimated 15 percent of Oracle modules come with purge routines, and only 50 percent of that small amount contain both purge and archive routines. The remaining modules have neither purge nor archive routines. These routines are also inflexible. They don’t provide extensible business rules or the ability to accommodate customizations. This lack of flexibility can result in an inadequate amount of data being archived—and the wrong data being archived.

In addition, a purge routine that deletes data entirely is not a viable option—companies need to retain data. And IT organizations need to continue to make historical data available to users and allow them to access it seamlessly along with production data. When IT organizations archive data using Oracle routines, end users have no way to report against the combined live and archived data.

Hand Coding

In-house code or scripts are very expensive to develop and maintain because they require deep knowledge of Oracle business entities, table schemas, relationships, and business rules. As the metadata evolves from one Oracle version to the next, these scripts need to be modified, which inflates maintenance costs. Given the complexity of Oracle E-Business Suite, in-house scripts tend to apply business rules for archiving, purging, masking, or creating subsets of data inconsistently across records, tables, and entities. It is also difficult to produce realistic, de-identified data without comprehensive masking techniques and data dictionaries, leading to poor test data quality and inefficient testing processes.
A Better Solution: Application Information Lifecycle Management

The key to managing exploding data volumes in Oracle E-Business Suite applications lies in two facts: the value of all data diminishes over time, and all data is not created equal.

Let’s examine the time issue first. Perhaps your IT organization occasionally needs to access old inventory transactions within the manufacturing application module of Oracle E-Business Suite. But once an item is removed from inventory, most of this data is no longer required for day-to-day business operations. This “historical” data is largely inactive—used infrequently for reporting and compliance purposes.

The second consideration is the fact that all data is not equally important. Not all data in production systems is needed for effective testing and development in nonproduction environments. Your IT organization may be able to conduct perfectly adequate testing with a just a portion of data—for example, the last six months of purchase order and customer transactions for selected regions within North America and Europe. Not all data needs to be copied to multiple test environments.

Confidentiality and security issues further complicate the situation. Some of the copied data may contain sensitive or private information (e.g., customer addresses or names) that needs to be de-identified. Other information, such as purchase requisition records, is less sensitive. Sensitive data copied to less-secure environments must be protected from unauthorized access.

IT organizations need a way to cost-effectively, efficiently, and securely manage different classifications of data based on their value to the business throughout the data lifecycle. Application information lifecycle management (ILM) solutions are the answer.

The Storage Networking Industry Association defines ILM as “policies, processes, practices, and tools used to align the business value of information with the most appropriate and cost-effective IT infrastructure from the time information is conceived through its final disposition.”

Application ILM solutions enable IT organizations to copy or move less valued or less frequently accessed data from production systems to second-line or third-line storage to reduce costs and improve performance—all while satisfying data retention, access, and security requirements.

Application ILM solutions help IT organizations to:

- **Cost-effectively manage data growth** by archiving inactive data from production systems.
- **Support regulatory compliance** by economically retaining data for a longer period and masking sensitive data to reduce the risk of data breaches.
- **Safely retire legacy systems and applications**, while making sure that the business has complete access to the data within them.
- **Optimize test data management** by creating leaner copies containing the most relevant data sets, while preserving the confidentiality of any sensitive data.
- **Support corporate divestitures** by untangling complex transactional systems, separating out only functionally related data that are pertinent to the divested organization.
- **Protect sensitive data** by masking nonproduction data so that it is realistic but completely disguised for use in development, testing, training, support, and demo environments.
The Ideal Solution: Informatica Application ILM

Informatica’s application ILM product family is the ideal solution for IT organizations seeking to manage growing data volumes in their Oracle E-Business Suite applications.

This family of products provides a complete application ILM solution that addresses the entire lifecycle of data in Oracle E-Business Suite applications:

• In the test and development phase, Informatica Data Subset™ and Informatica Data Masking™ help your IT organization to efficiently provision and protect data in test environments while controlling costs. The software optimizes test environments by creating nonproduction systems with smaller subsets or copies of production data and protecting sensitive data copied to the test environments.

• In the operation and production phase, Informatica Data Archive™ helps your IT organization to cost-effectively manage the explosion of data volumes in Oracle E-Business Suite. It allows IT to easily and safely archive application data and then readily access it when needed.

• In the retirement phase, Informatica Data Archive reduces costs by allowing the application and the supporting hardware and software stack to be shut down, thereby saving on license, maintenance, and administration costs.

Informatica’s application ILM product family leverages the power of the Informatica Platform, the industry’s leading data integration platform, to handle the huge data volumes typical of very large global enterprises. These products provide superior scalability and performance, delivering data to the most cost-effective storage option based on their value. They also offer unparalleled interoperability. The software is based on an open, easily extensible architecture, enabling simple integration with third-party solutions.

APPLICATION ILM SOLUTIONS FOR ORACLE E-BUSINESS SUITE DATA

What Should Your IT Organization Look For?

• Data growth assessment capabilities. Can the solution assess and target the largest and fastest growing Oracle E-Business Suite modules?

• Oracle E-Business Suite coverage. Does the solution offer comprehensive prebuilt business entities and rules for Oracle E-Business Suite?

• Customization support. Does the solution offer extensible metadata to support customization of your Oracle E-Business Suite applications?

• Completeness of archiving, subset, and masking techniques. Does the solution provide multiple archiving formats, easy accessibility, and restore options? Can the solution be used to create meaningful subsets and mask a variety of datatypes to produce realistic, de-identified information?
Informatica’s application ILM product family delivers the full range of capabilities that your IT organization needs to effectively manage data growth in Oracle E-Business Suite, including:

- Robust data growth assessment capabilities
- Prebuilt accelerators for Oracle E-Business Suite
- Simple customization and extensibility
- Comprehensive archiving techniques
- Comprehensive techniques for creating and managing subsets
- Comprehensive masking techniques

**Robust Data Growth Assessment Capabilities**

Your IT organization first needs to evaluate which Oracle E-Business Suite application modules and tables are growing most rapidly. An application ILM solution should enable you to assess data growth not just once, but on an ongoing basis to continually adjust archiving and subset creation strategies and maximize the ROI of your application ILM solution. Once the fastest growing modules and tables are identified, your IT organization can then define archiving and subsetting strategies. *Informatica Data Archive* features in-depth data growth analysis capabilities that allow you to evaluate current and future data growth rates across Oracle E-Business Suite applications in both production and nonproduction environments. As Figure 2 illustrates, the software enables your IT organization to understand which tables and modules occupy the most space. It also helps your team proactively plan for growth in data volumes by forecasting the estimated reduction in size from archiving inactive data and reducing the size of nonproduction copies (see Figure 3).

![Data Growth Analysis](image)

Figure 2. With Informatica Data Archive, your IT organization has an inventory of the most rapidly growing table spaces and modules across Oracle E-Business Suite.
Prebuilt Accelerators for Oracle E-Business Suite

To ensure your data’s integrity after archiving, creating subsets, or masking, your IT organization needs to understand how business entities are defined, how tables and entities are related, and the business rules within Oracle E-Business Suite. This information is not available in the database.

An application ILM solution should offer comprehensive prebuilt business entities and rules for Oracle E-Business Suite. These prebuilt business rules should allow data to be extracted by different parameters such as date, geography, function, entity ID, and organization. An application ILM solution that provides a full set of prepackaged business entities and rules for the various Oracle E-Business Suite modules helps to speed deployment of the solution.

All products in the Informatica application ILM product family offer broad connectivity and the most comprehensive set of prebuilt, application-aware accelerators for Oracle E-Business Suite. These accelerators provide complete, out-of-the-box support for Oracle E-Business Suite modules, including CRM, AP, PO, GL, INV, and HR.

You can use these accelerators to purge, relocate, create subsets, and mask complete business entities and quickly deploy archiving, subset, and privacy policies for Oracle E-Business Suite and custom business applications.

Figure 3. Data growth analysis enables your IT organization to understand the impact of data archiving and subsetting strategies on data growth in Oracle E-Business Suite applications.
Simple Customization and Extensibility

Because every organization configures its Oracle E-Business Suite application differently, an application ILM solution must be able to be fully customized to fit varying business needs. The solution must allow modifications and extensions to the business rules for archiving, creating subsets, and masking. Custom tables and fields may also be added in an Oracle E-Business Suite implementation, and the application ILM solution needs to be able to operate against these custom objects. This is especially true for the Order Management module in Oracle E-Business Suite.

The Informatica application ILM product family's prebuilt accelerators are fully extensible. You can modify entity models and business rules to satisfy your business requirements and build new accelerators from existing ones for custom applications.

Using a simple graphical user interface like that shown in Figure 4, you can view, edit, and customize archiving, subsetting, and masking templates (accelerators) and business rules. By mining the database and using a wizard-based interface, you can quickly extend prebuilt metadata to incorporate custom tables created in Oracle E-Business Suite and add new attributes to augment structural metadata with rich context.

Figure 4. Your IT organization can use the simple graphical user interface to easily customize and extend Oracle E-Business Suite application accelerators.

Informatica’s application ILM products also ensure that archiving, subset, and masking policies continue to function even when your IT organization applies patches or updates to an Oracle E-Business Suite module.
Comprehensive Archiving Techniques

The major drivers for application ILM solutions are usually to improve performance and reduce costs. Simply relocating inactive data from the production system to lower-cost servers and storage achieves both goals, but your business requirements are likely to be more complex. You need to consider your organization’s budget constraints and performance and access requirements when selecting an application ILM solution.

Your IT organization will probably access archived data less frequently than active data. But you may still have to periodically retrieve the combined archived and operational data directly from the Oracle E-Business Suite interface. In this case, the data should be archived to a format that facilitates relatively high query performance—such as another database instance, located on a lower-cost infrastructure.

On the other hand, if inactive data resides in older Oracle E-Business Suite versions that should be retired, you may have to access it only rarely. In this case, access from a reporting tool, rather than from the application interface, may be adequate. Slower query performance can be tolerated, and the data may be archived to a more optimal, compressed format, such as a compressed file.

Regardless of the archive format, however, archived data needs to be easily accessible either from the original Oracle E-Business Suite application interface or through standard interfaces for reporting. As data ages and access requirements change over time, your IT organization needs a way to convert and relocate the data from one archiving format and location to another, enabling multiple cost-effective storage tiers, as Figure 5 illustrates.

Figure 5. Application ILM solutions should offer a variety of archiving formats and accessibility options to enable multiple, cost-effective storage tiers.

An application ILM solution that offers multiple archiving formats and accessibility options allows IT organizations to determine the appropriate trade-offs among archive size, performance, application accessibility, and cost.

Your IT organization must also be able to restore archive data to its original location. Otherwise, there is no way to correct mistakes during archiving or to accommodate changes to access requirements. For example, purchase order transactions that are closed and reopened may need to be restored because they have become active again. The application ILM solution needs to restore archived data at different levels of granularity, such as selected transactions, business entities, or the entire archive.
Informatica Data Archive provides comprehensive archiving techniques that enable your IT organization to cost-effectively and centrally manage scalable archiving processes across multiple databases, Oracle E-Business Suite instances, and other CRM, ERP, and custom applications. Based on the initial data growth analysis, you can target the fastest growing and largest modules for archiving. Transactional data only or complete business entities, which include master and reference data, can be safely archived (see Figure 6), maintaining data integrity and ready access.

If at any time, you need to access the archived data more frequently, you can restore the entire archive, selected business entities, or an archive snapshot.

Figure 6. Archive complete business entities using Informatica Data Archive.
Inactive data can be relocated to another database instance or to a secure, highly compressed file. Informatica Data Archive lets you choose the archiving format and destination based on your organization’s cost, performance, and access requirements. Archiving to another database has the benefit of supporting seamless access from the same Oracle E-Business Suite application, as Figure 7 shows, and offers high performance.

Archiving to a compressed, optimized file format can dramatically reduce space requirements. This option supplies a powerful application-independent interface for searching and browsing archived data based on business entities. Standard ODBC/JDBC interfaces are also available for reporting, using any third-party reporting or business intelligence tool. This method can significantly reduce both storage and software license costs and is ideal for application retirement.
By reducing the size of the production instance, Informatica Data Archive makes backup, recovery, and upgrades faster and easier. By retiring legacy applications and archiving the data within them, your IT organization can save on management, software, and hardware costs.

To support regulatory compliance, Informatica Data Archive can easily integrate with third-party archiving or content management solutions, such as Symantec and EMC, to facilitate centralized management and e-Discovery of all types of archived data.

**Comprehensive Techniques for Creating and Managing Subsets**

To reduce the size of nonproduction copies requires the creation of meaningful slices of production data based on different criteria, such as geography, business function, and time. These slices also have to be aware of the complex relationships between transaction records across tables and entities in Oracle E-Business Suite, as Figure 8 shows, to create subsets that preserve data and referential integrity.

![Figure 8](image)

Figure 8. To create subsets that preserve data and its referential integrity, an application ILM solution must be aware of the complex relationships between tables in Oracle E-Business Suite.

After subsets are created for development and testing, the production application continues to be updated with new transactions. The test data may need to incorporate these new transactions or additional boundary scenarios. It is important that the application ILM solution allows the existing subset copy to be refreshed with incremental updates, without having to provision a new environment. Periodic, incremental refresh results in better test data quality and enables more efficient test data management.
Informatica Data Subset automates the process of creating smaller, targeted databases from large, complex databases. As Figure 9 illustrates, the software centrally manages subset processes across databases (e.g., Oracle, DB2, SQL Server, Sybase, and Teradata) and applications, including Oracle E-Business Suite. Informatica Data Subset helps IT organizations untangle complex transactional systems, separating out only functionally related data. With referentially intact, smaller targeted copies of Oracle E-Business Suite application production data, your IT organization can dramatically reduce the amount of time, effort, and disk space necessary to support nonproduction environments and shrink your overall storage footprint.

Figure 9. Easily automate the process of creating and managing data subsets using Informatica Data Subset's simple interface.

Simulation reports validate the targeted data and provide an estimate of how much data will be provisioned before actual execution of subset rules. With comprehensive audit logs and reports, you can track the provisioning of data effectively.
Comprehensive Masking Techniques

When sensitive data is copied to nonproduction environments, it needs to be de-identified to prevent accidental exposure to unauthorized users. To produce realistic de-identified test data requires sophisticated masking techniques, such as substitution, shuffling, and skewing, and the ability to handle special information, such as customer addresses and credit card numbers.

Informatica Data Masking defines and manages masking processes across databases and Oracle E-Business Suite applications. With Informatica Data Masking, you can prevent the unintended exposure of confidential information and minimize the risk of data breaches by masking test and development environments created from production data.

Using the software’s simple interface, you can quickly define and reuse data masking rules to consistently adhere to privacy policies in your organization (see Figure 10). Sophisticated algorithms—such as shuffling, substitution, sequential, encryption, randomization, nullification, and skewing—produce de-identified data that preserves the original format and information characteristics. Credit card numbers from different issuing companies, for example, have specific structural rules, which are retained after masking.

Informatica Data Masking provides prepackaged dictionaries and supports user-defined data sets for masking special types of data, such as addresses, names, and Social Security numbers. The consistency and integrity of data in complex Oracle E-Business Suite applications are maintained by synchronizing data values within and across related rows, tables, and entities. Through simulation reports, you can preview the result of masking rules prior to execution, to validate privacy policies.

![Figure 10](image)

Figure 10. Quickly define consistent masking policies using Informatica Data Masking.
Informatica Application ILM in Action

Hundreds of companies worldwide have relied on Informatica application ILM products to manage data growth in their Oracle E-Business Suite applications. These case studies demonstrate how these products have helped three companies:

- Reduce storage cost and improve response time
- Improve application performance and availability
- Increase IT efficiency and avoid staffing costs

Reduce Storage Cost and Improve Response Time

The increasing demand for IKON Office Solutions document management products and services has fuelled data growth in the company’s transaction-intensive Oracle modules, such as Order Management, Field Service, and Purchase Order.

These transaction-intensive modules were growing at up to 2 terabytes per year. Taking into account copies of the production databases, the total database size was projected to soon reach 80 terabytes—a size beyond the company’s current storage infrastructure.

IKON deployed Informatica Data Subset and Informatica Data Archive to:

- Reduce costs by $1.5 million annually
- Realize a full ROI in only six months
- Save 14 TB of storage capacity in nonproduction systems by creating data subsets and 4.8 TB in production systems by archiving inactive data
- Decrease the time it takes to perform a backup from eight hours to six hours

Increase IT Efficiency and Avoid Staffing Costs

AT&T’s wireless division was experiencing greater transaction processing demand in both its Oracle E-Business Suite supply chain and financials applications. The system has a regular load of about 6,000 to 7,000 concurrent users who require a very high level of service. The system also supports an additional 100 to 200 auditors who require 100-percent system availability. The data growth in AT&T’s production system caused backup windows to last four days and unacceptable completion times for data loading and provisioning.

With Informatica’s application ILM products, AT&T’s wireless division was able to:

- Archive 1.2 TB out of 10.2 TB from the Oracle E-Business Suite production system
- Improve database performance by 30 percent
- Save 10 hours per month in data loading by avoiding performance and data growth issues
- Save 40 hours per month by reducing backup window from four days to merely hours
- Increase application availability by trimming batch run time from 6.5 to 3.5 hours
Conclusion

Your IT organizations can no longer ignore the escalating costs associated with managing the growing data volumes in your Oracle E-Business Suite applications. Traditional methods of managing data growth address only the symptoms—not the root cause of the problem. The key to capping your IT organization’s data management costs and risks is to relocate dormant data to lower-cost infrastructure and start provisioning “lean” masked copies of production data for your development, testing, and training environments. This is what application ILM solutions can do for you.

Informatica’s application ILM product family delivers the full range of capabilities that your IT organization needs to effectively manage data growth in Oracle E-Business Suite across the complete lifecycle of the data—from development, test, production, and archive to retirement. When your IT organization implements a comprehensive, scalable, and flexible application ILM solution such as the one available from Informatica, you’ll reduce the total cost of ownership of your Oracle E-Business Suite applications by:

• Improving application performance
• Retiring legacy applications safely
• Optimizing development, testing, and training environments
• Reducing the risk of data breaches
• Improving the quality of development, testing, and training activities
• Supporting compliance with internal, industry, and governmental data privacy mandates and regulations

Together, Informatica and your IT organization can align the business value of data with the most appropriate and cost-effective IT infrastructure to manage it.
Learn More

Learn more about Informatica application ILM solutions.
Visit us at www.informatica.com/solutions/application_ilm or call 1.800.653.3871.

About Informatica

Informatica Corporation (NASDAQ: INFA) is the world’s number one independent leader in data integration software. The Informatica Platform provides organizations with a comprehensive, unified, open, and economical approach to lower IT costs and gain competitive advantage from their information assets. More than 3,600 enterprises worldwide rely on Informatica to access, integrate, and trust their information assets held in the traditional enterprise and in the Internet cloud.