Established in 1889, Oxfordshire is a relatively well-to-do county in southeast England. Most people know it as home to both the elite University of Oxford and former British Prime Minister David Cameron, but Oxfordshire is not just a wealthy idyll. With over 600,000 residents, the county requires the same social, health, infrastructure, and educational services as any populated area and Oxfordshire County Council is the elected government body responsible for meeting those needs.

For the most part, the Council has diligently provided its citizens with tremendous value and concerted care, often on a restricted budget. But when a recent investigation uncovered children at risk within the county, Council members knew immediately there were still challenges to address.

Without consistent and accessible data, tragedy strikes

“Above all, we’re tasked with protecting the welfare of our constituents,” says John Leggatt, Information Solutions Manager for OCC. “But when you have data coming in from more than 400 information systems, finding early warning signs is like looking for a needle in a haystack. We weren’t equipped to take early action and help children and families at risk, because critical information was inconsistent and not trusted across the entire organization. In other words—despite the very best intentions of our social workers and various responsible departments—poor information management was leading to real, tragic consequences for people. We needed a way to piece data together quickly so we could identify individuals in danger. And while we had an ETL tool, it just couldn’t unify everything in a single view.”

Why Talend?

Following research and recommendations from the Gartner Magic Quadrant, OCC decided that Talend was the right choice to solve its data integration and management woes. “Talend had a good feature set and offered flexibility at an affordable price,” says Leggatt. OCC worked with Talend Professional Services to design, implement, and train more than 100 key IT personnel on the new Talend solutions. Talend Professional Services also helped ensure the Talend solution could easily scale to accommodate a vast number of source systems.

“We’re now using Talend Data Integration and Data Quality extensively to move data between applications. For example, we recently changed our health care system vendor, and Talend helped us migrate millions of sensitive records to the new system, while protecting information and the people behind it. The design implementation also includes a sophisticated matching and clustering engine that helps align even fuzzy data with the correct records, which is hugely important when we’re trying to build a single view of children and at-risk adults,” says Leggatt. “And we’re using Talend MDM to cross-reference information from all our public services—such as education and social care—and then orchestrate the data governance to effectively match, merge and un-merge incoming records.”

Accurate data and a unified interface enables life-saving early intervention

Using Talend to migrate data between applications helps OCC save time while creating a safer world for vulnerable families and children.

INDUSTRY
• Public sector

INFORMATION
• HQ: UK
• 1001-5000 employees

USE CASE
• Health & Social Services

CHALLENGE
• Protecting over 210,000 children and their families. Without consistent and accessible data, tragedy strikes

TALEND PRODUCT USED
• Talend MDM

PARTNER
• Information Processing Limited (IPL)

RESULTS
• 400 Information Systems unified
• 10,000 records corrected
• 7x single interface accessed to help protect families every day

Our mission is to help and protect people. Talend helps us meet that goal, painting a single view of a child or family at risk.

Jon Leggatt, Information Solutions Manager, Oxfordshire County Council.
“People across departments can now quickly and easily get a single view of a child or at-risk adult—everything we know about that individual, whether or not we have reasons to be concerned—and trust that the information is accurate and without discrepancy. And we know this is working to protect children and families.”

improving data accuracy. “In fact,” notes Leggatt, “when we did the health care system migration, we corrected 10,000 records.”

Just as important as better data quality, however, is the way data now becomes quickly and consistently accessible to help protect the citizens of Oxfordshire. “Our Children’s Services division had implemented Talend MDM as a way of finally ‘joining-up’ the various departments that are responsible for the welfare of children.”

Leggatt explains: “Talend now allows us to unify information from three important health and social services systems and present that data through a single web interface to 400 staff.

That single view interface is now accessed at least 7 times a day by people from the city council, children’s social workers, and early intervention and special education teams.”

“Ultimately,” says Leggatt, “this is a story of fortitude, diligence, professionalism, and vision that is often overlooked. The everyday Information Manager is now helping to create a better, safer world for vulnerable families and children. Together, we’re sharing and leveraging data so that people can remain independent, stay out of hospitals, get the help and care they need, and have a good quality of life. The MDM world doesn’t give out medals, but if it did…the OCC and Talend would earn one.”