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- Robert Meunier, Founder and President, Maestro Technologies

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About Maestro

For nearly 30 years, Maestro Technologies has helped construction companies manage their business through their proprietary software solution. As the business has grown to serve over 500 customers across Canada and the USA, so has the product: Maestro offers a complete ERP system with modules for anything a construction company may need, including accounting and payroll, project management, operations, estimating, dispatch resources, preventative equipment maintenance, and more.

BTR2SQL helps Maestro Technologies build new opportunities with new integrations

Any business that has been operating for multiple decades knows this struggle: how can you take the technology that your business was built on since day one, and evolve it to keep pace with the fast-changing technology landscape? This was the case for Robert Meunier, Founder and President of Maestro Technologies. Since getting started in 1989, Maestro relied on a Btrieve database behind their application.

The need for a new database

Although Btrieve generally worked well as a database, over time Robert and the Maestro team began noticing some business challenges associated with the product. First, there was the lack of integrations available for a Btrieve database, since most modern tools connect to SQL instead.

Then there was the bigger problem: a matter of being viewed as technologically outdated. While Maestro was investing heavily into R&D in areas across the product line and especially into mobility applications, the fact that the core legacy application was non-SQL made these advancements much more difficult. As Robert explains, "the market is changing and there's a trend. If you aren't part of that trend then you're considered to be an older technology. The trend now is Microsoft SQL, and if you don't have it then you need to get there quickly."

Robert knew it was time to make the move, but it was going to be a challenge, given the size of Maestro's application:

"Converting everything to Microsoft SQL would be a tremendous investment. Not impossible, but it was going to take a very long time to get to market, and meanwhile the team wouldn't be working on the more important improvements and new functionalities that were already planned, since they would be focused only on re-doing what was there."

Feeling short on database migration options, the Maestro team established a goal to start doing some SQL development using Btrieve and over a period of a few years, slowly start converting calls to SQL. Eventually, most of the app would be converted to SQL and they could officially make the switch from Btrieve.

"It wasn't the best strategy. It would have taken a few years, but at the time, that was the only option we thought we had," Robert points out.

A database change without a rewrite

With a rewrite looming as a long-term and expensive project, the team held several discussions trying to identify any other strategies for moving their application to Microsoft SQL. They hoped to come up with a solution that would have less impact on their development plans.

Ultimately, an online search led Maestro to Mertech and BTR2SQL as the way to go when moving to their new database.

"Getting started was not difficult because all we had to do was replace the Btrieve call with an SQL call. The challenge was identifying all the functionality we were using in Btrieve after almost 30 years, because we were using most of the functionality that we could find," Robert explains.

"In testing, if something wasn't working correctly, the size of the application made it hard to identify the problem. But anytime we asked the Mertech development team about a modification or improvement, they were very responsive and provided a solution within a few days. This allowed us to continue our testing and we were quite happy with the results."

A future filled with new opportunities

Since rolling out their new SQL database, the Maestro team has made great strides in growth and technological advancements:

"The gain for us was to move to new technology and be able to use it to improve things where we couldn't previously. This is the magic of BTR2SQL and the most important thing we wanted to achieve."

As Robert explains, "in converting to Microsoft SQL, our goal was to not be limited to the Btrieve environment. We wanted to start integrating newer technology in all of our development, and then integrate tools like Power BI and SSRS (SQL Server Reporting Services), and this is what we've achieved. On the business development side, it has made a huge difference – our existing customers are happy that we're making the move and our new sales and pipeline are both growing rapidly."

Robert continues, "We saved a lot of money and time using BTR2SQL. Converting the full application to SQL would have taken years but we were able to do it within a year and a half and with a lot less investment than a rewrite. And now that we're using a SQL database, it has opened the door and we're part of the trend because we can integrate with a slew of other products on the market."

The future also holds other new opportunities for Maestro's software, such as connecting their Microsoft SQL database to their customers' unique tools. "We're actually working with one of our customers that has his own development on this side, and he can access our database, which wasn't possible before," says Robert.

Recommending BTR2SQL

"I don't know any other product that allows you to convert from Btrieve to SQL, and for me this conversion was key for the growth of my business. You either want to stagnate as a business for the next 5-10 years, or you want to grow your business over that time. If converting to SQL is strategic to your growth, then BTR2SQL allows you to make that growth happen."

About Mertech
Since 1997, Mertech has been the leading provider of products and services that help companies modernize their databases and software to work in the connected world.

About BTR2SQL
BTR2SQL seamlessly connects your Btrieve application with the latest versions of industry-standard SQL databases (Microsoft SQL Server, PostgreSQL, Oracle, and MySQL). With a plug-in architecture and GUI migration tool, BTR2SQL makes it easy for you to move to a new database without rewriting your application.

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