> "I love the Send Mail Task Plus and it works flawlessly."
>
> Nathan Sundararajan, Rooms to Go BI Developer

Customer: Rooms to Go
Website: www.roomstogo.com
Country or Region: United States
Industry: Furniture Stores
Partner: COZYROC

Customer Profile

Rooms to Go opened its first set of doors in 1991. Since then, they have grown into America's #1 independent furniture company with the nation's largest furniture inventory. Rooms To Go is known as the company that introduced the concept of displaying and packaging furniture in complete room settings.

"They love it! The quality guy--he is so happy with what we can do."

"To make it work, you guys have great documentation and the video is good."

Nathan Sundararajan

Business Needs

Rooms to Go is an American furniture store chain based in Seffner, Florida. It has 225 furniture vendors around the world and more than 220 stores in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. They deal with a lot of data related to their vendors and their stores.

Rooms to Go uses analytics software from a third-party vendor to analyze the quality and performance of their vendors. Their Quality Assurance department works with these numbers and shares them with the vendors themselves. This information needs to be customized for each vendor so they can see how they are performing relative to expectations.

Nathan Sundararajan, a BI developer with the company, tried using the standard SSIS Send Mail Task to send the QA department's email to vendors, with limited success. The IT team wanted to be able to use HTML for the email body and to customize the content of the HTML body, the attachments, and the reply-to address, depending on which vendor the email was being sent to.

Another headache for the IT team stemmed from the need to import data from CSV files into a SQL Server table. The CSV files were populated with data from the stores. Sometimes, new columns were added to the CSV files and this required the IT team to update and redeploy the SSIS packages that reference that data. They wanted a way to design packages that required minimal maintenance when columns were added or changed.

Solution

Nathan had recently discovered COZYROC's SSIS+ Suite at a SQL Saturday event in Atlanta. He was impressed by the capabilities of COZYROC's Data Flow Task Plus and decided to take a closer look at it. He saw it as a solution for importing data from CSV files into SQL Server Tables. Shortly after learning about it, he downloaded the COZYROC SSIS+ Suite and started testing Data Flow Task Plus.

Then, a higher priority need came along. Because of a recent new Federal law, Rooms to Go had an urgent need to send an email

related to this law out to their vendors. In some cases, shipments from vendors were already on their way to the United States. Foreign vendors needed to be aware that certifications related to the shipments were required before Rooms to Go could accept these shipments in the United States.

The requirement to send out this email came just before a weekend. Nathan had noticed that COZYROC's SSIS+ Suite provided a task called "Send Mail Task Plus," which improved on the functionality of the standard Send Mail Task. He worked with COZYROC support over the weekend and had the email package ready to go by the end of the weekend.

After using Send Mail Task Plus for this package, Nathan realized that the task would provide the flexibility they wanted for the emails that are sent by the Quality Assurance department on a monthly basis. He had a few email exchanges with COZYROC support to determine just how flexible the task is. With a little testing, he confirmed that the COZYROC task could easily handle HTML as the body with perfect formatting and that variables and expressions could be used to specify all of the header parameters that he wanted to customize. Plus, he could send multiple attachments.

COZYROC's Data Flow Task Plus was the driving force behind purchasing the SSIS+ Suite, even though it was not the first task used in production. Nathan needed to understand how the loading of data would be handled in situations where there was a mismatch in data length between the CSV file and the SQL Server table.

He consulted with COZYROC support and learned that the table destination column length would determine the length of the flat file source columns. Therefore, if there are more characters in the source column than the defined length in the SQL Server table, there will be truncation at the source. He also learned that this doesn't have to cause the package to fail. He can either configure the source to ignore errors or send them to an error output file, thus avoiding package failures. He wanted all records to be copied over without the package failing and didn't care about the truncation of data, so this met his needs.

Benefits

Nathan and his team love the idea of automating functions and designing them to be used for multiple purposes. They feel that they have achieved this goal with their package that sends emails using Send Mail Task Plus and Excel Source Plus.

They have designed the package so that options such as the HTML content, attachments and header parameters for the email can be controlled via information in an Excel file. During execution, the package checks the Excel file using COZYROC's Excel Source Plus component to determine how to customize each email.

Currently, this package is used to deliver information on behalf of the Quality Assurance department. However, based on the design, any department can use the controls in the Excel file to send customized emails to any group of recipients. Nathan envisions this capability being used well into the future.

For More Information

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