

## TMW EMPLOYEE

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**W**hen Josée St-Hilaire joined TMW Systems 12 years ago as a database trainer, she remembers a funny incident that demonstrated how little she knew at the time about the trucking industry. Josée recalled her first visit to a site where she was standing alongside a group of men, including the vice president of the company, who were talking shop.

According to Josée, the vice president said "Out in back I have some new pups I want to show you." Not knowing he was referring to a PUP Trailer, a short semitrailer with a single axle, Josée excitedly blurted out, "Oh puppies! I love puppies!" This outburst was met by a hushed silence from her peers followed by hearty laughter. Able to laugh at herself, she managed to recover quickly with a quip, "Well, I guess Reefer isn't exactly what I had in mind either."

Today, Josée knows considerably more about the trucking industry and serves in the role of Senior Support Analyst-DBA, with TMW Systems. She is also an IBM Certified Advanced Database Administrator specific to DB2, IBM's relational database management system. TruckMate®, a transportation management system from TMW, runs on DB2 and Josée helped implement systems for new customers during her first year with the company. In her present role, Josée and her team not only install the IBM DB2 database for customers, but also serve as trainers, counselors and problem-solvers for them. Though she rarely works directly with the front-line users of TruckMate, she does work closely with IT personnel at those customer locations.

While only a minimal number of customers do their own installation, she and her other colleagues always review that installation before going live in order to verify all configuration is properly done and that services are logging in with the account they're supposed to. From her home office in Montreal, Canada, Josée is able to connect to servers throughout North America.

For those installing on their own, Josée recommends they set up a test

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environment before going live, after which she or a colleague will review and verify it. When training customers, Josée is a stickler about teaching them to fish for themselves. She ensures that they perform general maintenance and upgrades for the database and that they are clear on backup and restore procedures.

"One important aspect of my role is to make sure that customers have the proper steps in place to recover from a crash," Josée explained. "Since we can never control disasters or accidents such as power failures, floods or fires, we must

What a long, strange trip it's been

ensure that our customers are equipped to handle restoring the system in these instances," she added.

Some of the most common problems that customers call on Josée for are general maintenance and upgrades that result in performance issues. In the latter instance, Josée monitors and analyzes data to determine if the problem is code related or not. If a customer's system crashes, she does the rebuild.

When asked to recount one of her lighter customer problem requests, Josée laughed as she spoke of one customer who was running low on disk space and apparently just took it upon himself to move one of the largest DB2 table files to another server, grinding the database and software to a halt. He called Josée to ask why things weren't working properly and she immediately ran a scan and noticed the table file was gone.

"I mentioned to him that the table file was gone and I asked 'What did you do?'" He replied that he had done nothing





though he did see that file on another server. Realizing Josée knew what had occurred, he finally admitted he moved the file in order to have more disk space. Luckily, she was able to restore everything to normal.

Because of her strong command of DB2, Josée is invited by IBM to attend their annual DB2 Conference, which draws 10,000 attendees. As a testament to her expertise, she has even been asked on several occasions to speak at the conference. TMW Systems is IBM's largest customer for DB2 on Windows because of TruckMate implementations. Josée noted that the time spent at the conferences and the professional relationships that she has developed with key IBM personnel have helped to ultimately better serve customers and colleagues at TMW.

This past September, Josée joined a couple hundred of her TMW colleagues and over 1,400 more people at the 2013 TransForum User Conference in Anaheim, C.A. The annual conference and technology exhibition designed for educating users of TMW software brings together company experts with transportation service providers from across North America who work with TMW software and scores of technology

providers whose products and services can also benefit those companies.

"I'm very pleased with what we accomplished at this year's conference," said Josée. "We offered more classes and more content than ever. This year marked the first time we held the conference out West, so our many customers across the Western part of North America found the location convenient for them to travel to." She added that the conference is a great way for her to learn as well.

"Believe it or not, I learn so much in the IT sessions at TransForum – it's always such a great dialogue and we really all end up learning from one another. For example, one customer in the forum might bring up a problem he or she was having – then, a few months later I might have another customer with the same situation and I'm able to quickly diagnose it and find the solution," she added.

Josée and her team provided training classes related to DB2, including introductory and database maintenance classes that provide tips on keeping the system at optimal performance. Typically there can be anywhere from 15 – 90 people per class.

In addition to the software classes, industry roundtables and business

speakers that make up TransForum, the TMW Resource Center is an IT lab offered throughout the duration of the conference. There, customers can speak directly to TMW software experts to discuss questions or problems, even work with team members to determine causes for any system issues they've recently experienced. If customers encounter real-time problems during the conference, these can also be resolved in the lab by Josée and her colleagues. A recurring feature at the annual user conference, the Resource Center is a popular help-desk feature that any TMW software user in attendance can benefit from, without any pre-set appointments required.

When asked what customers like about TruckMate software, Josée notes its versatility, flexibility and speed. What she humbly doesn't mention is that TruckMate works so well in part due to the backend DB2 database and those who work with it to ensure high performance and a great customer experience.

When she's not solving DB2 problems for customers, Josée enjoys interior decorating in her new home and spending time with her own PUP, Angel, who is a loving 77 pounds of Labrador, Rottweiler and Doberman Pinscher. ■