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In Brief

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Solix Technologies Test Data Management

The company

Solix Technologies is a software vendor that specialises in Enterprise Information Management. It was founded in 2002, is headquartered in Santa Clara, CA, and has more than 200 employees across the US, Europe, Australia, India and Dubai.

Its mission is *"to organize the world's enterprise information with optimized infrastructure, data security and analytics"*. Most recently, this has manifested in products designed to enable and empower the data-driven enterprise.

What is it?

Solix has two solution suites: Solix Common Data Platform (Solix CDP, formerly the Big Data Suite) and Solix Enterprise Data Management Suite (Solix EDMS). Both can be deployed in-cloud, on-prem, or as part of a hybrid solution.
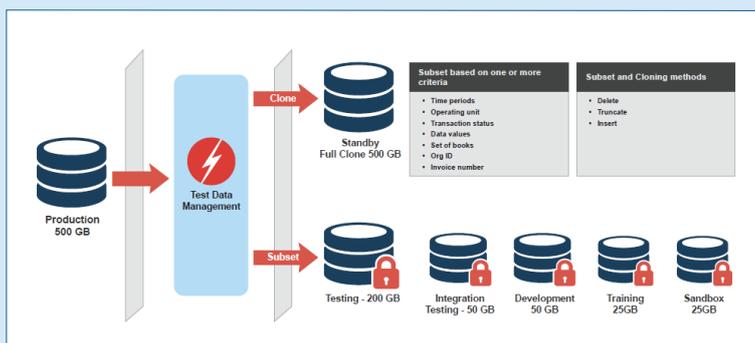

Figure 1 – Data Subsetting in Solix

Solix EDMS contains the company's offerings for test data management, data masking, and database archiving. The product's test data management capability includes data subsetting, sensitive data discovery, and synthetic data generation, forming a comprehensive solution when dealing with structured data.

Solix CDP, on the other hand, is envisioned as a broadly applicable *'Big Data Application Framework'* that acts as a one stop shop for the
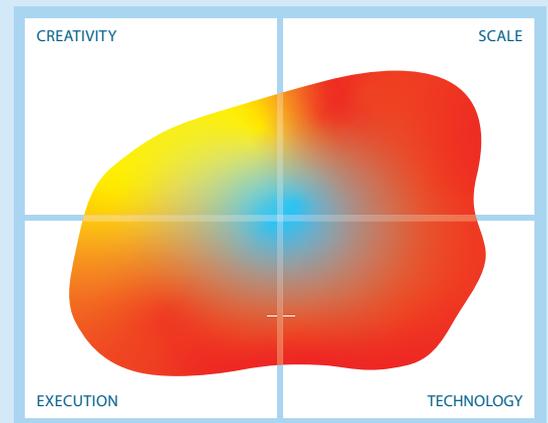
The image in this Mutable Quadrant is derived from 13 high level metrics, the more the image covers a section the better. Execution metrics relate to the company, Technology to the product, Creativity to both technical and business innovation and Scale covers the potential business and market impact.

management and governance of all enterprise data. In many ways it provides a superset of Solix EDMS' capabilities, offering test data management as well as sensitive data discovery and data masking. The product operates across both structured and unstructured data and at big data scale. It also provides an enterprise data lake, enterprise and database archiving, and enterprise data warehouse optimisation.

What does it do?

For subsetting, two approaches are supported. The first of these is conventional – you literally extract a subset against defined parameters – but in the second you take a back-up of your production database to create a gold copy with masked data which can then be mined to create the required subsets. The advantage of this approach is that the turnaround time can be significantly improved. The parameters on which subsets can be derived can be either vertical or horizontal across the database so that, for example, you can subset by time or operating unit as opposed to subsetting by table. Solix also supports snapshot technology, provided by hardware vendors such as NetApp and EMC.

In regards to synthetic data, there is tooling provided to ensure that generated test data is

Data masking	★★★★	Synthetic data generation	★★★★⯪
Ease of use	★★★⯪	Test data provisioning	★★★
Sensitive data discovery	★★★★		

> "We were able to download the software and mask an entire landscape of non-production instances in less than an hour."
>
> **HCL America**

representative of your real data. The embedded rules engine which defines how data should be generated is helpful in automating this process.

As far as data masking is concerned (which may be required to secure sensitive data in test subsets), Solix' masking capability can mask consistently (and without losing referential integrity) within single or multiple databases. It offers a variety of masking rules and algorithms, some of which are generic (for example, a rule that produces a random sequence of letters) while others are specific to particular types of data. For instance, date of birth, or social security number. Custom algorithms are also supported and can be written in Java, T-SQL or PL/SQL. A notable differentiator for Solix is that it offers pre-packaged masking capabilities for Oracle and PeopleSoft application environments. In addition, while Solix provides masking support across most leading relational databases as well as MongoDB and flat files, the company has implemented its masking algorithms natively in Oracle PL/SQL.
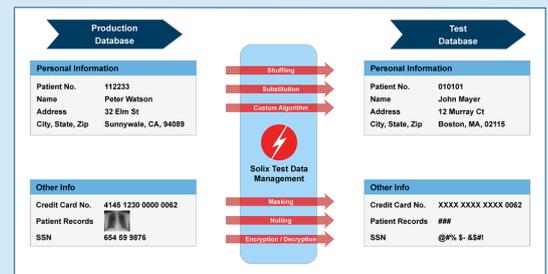

Figure 2 – Synthetic Data Generation in Solix

The product's masking capabilities are complemented by a discovery tool that looks at both metadata (column names) and actual data (looking for patterns in the data values). To reduce false positives, it uses sampling to help users decide what is and is not sensitive. The solution comes pre-populated with discovery rules suitable for identifying PII, PCI, PHI, and other such industry-defined sensitive data elements. It also provides a dedicated GDPR tool for finding and actioning on data that is sensitive under GDPR. This could mean identifying, purging, archiving, or masking, depending on the situation.

Figure 3 – Data Masking in Solix

Why should you care?

Solix offers a well-rounded test data management solution capable of both data subsetting and synthetic data generation. Its data masking and data discovery capabilities are reasonably mature and offer several helpful features that distinguish the product. These include project accelerators for Oracle and PeopleSoft, which will help to reduce implementation time and improve ROI on those platforms; discovery based on patterns within the actual data, instead of just column names (which are often unclear or generic); and several capabilities designed to ease compliance with GDPR, including a dedicated tool.

It's also worth noting that Solix EDMS offers several capabilities in addition to test data management and data masking. Most prominently, this includes database archival and application retirement, which are both useful and relevant capabilities when it comes to complying with regulations pertaining to data retention such as GDPR (and are put to particularly good use in combination with the product's dedicated GDPR tool). Moreover, it's important to note that the company's offerings do not end with Solix EDMS. If you want to deploy test data management or data masking over big data, Solix CDP could be an important differentiator. The same could be said about the ability to deploy snapshot technologies in conjunction with test data management.
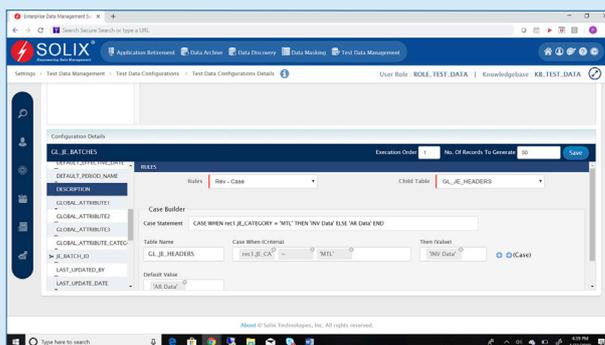
The Bottom Line

Solix EDMS and Solix CDP each provide capable test data management solutions that may be of particular interest to organisations that are struggling with compliance to GDPR or other data retention regulations.

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