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The HIMS prototype runs on **Oracle Express 6.0** and extracts data from an **Oracle 8** database. Data were taken from various sources, consolidated or aggregated based on business rules, and displayed in cubes. The prototype summarizes transactions into multidimensional views ahead of time. And because the data are summarized or aggregated at the time they are loaded into the system, user queries are very fast. These data cubes display the HIMS information in several views, including by program, provider, time, and ad hoc.

The prototype includes such user-friendly features as drop-down menus, spreadsheets, graphs, and drill-down capabilities. For example, users can view the client population, segmented into age groups, in a specific homeless shelter over the course of a year.

The ad hoc queries enable users to access specific slices of information. Data are available from the aggregate level all the way down to specific client populations and individual shelters. Users can search based on age, education level, family size, individual shelter, provider, and so on.

The versatility of the prototype system, which also produces graphs, allows users to access a wealth of information for analysis and decision making. The power of the HIMS data mart lies in allowing users to view the data according to their unique perspective and needs.