

Redwood Business Solutions

Making complex processes easy to manage.

At A Glance

Industry

- Public Sector

Environment

- 50 IBM AIX servers
- 200 Windows servers
- IBM z/OS server
- Oracle 8, Oracle 9
- SAP® R/3® - MM, CO, HR, FI
- Industry Solutions - IS-H, IS-PS
- Veritas NetBackup

Key Challenges

- Meet planned increase in service availability
- Higher quality of IT environment
- Single point of workload control
- Better use of resources

The Solution

- Integrated SAP Central Process Scheduling across multiple platforms
- Intercepts ad-hoc jobs submitted by SAP users
- Central point of control for all batch processing

Key Benefits

- Basis staff spent less time checking batch jobs
- Single solution to manage both SAP and non-SAP jobs
- Savings in legacy scheduler license fees



Enterprise-Wide Control for LVR with SAP Central Process Scheduling by Redwood

Faced with the challenge of managing a farm of more than 200 servers with different operating systems, Rhineland Regional Council in Germany needed a sophisticated process automation and job scheduling solution to handle batch workload in its SAP® R/3®, healthcare and home-grown application environments.



LVR (Rhineland Regional Council) provides public services to 9.6 million citizens living in North - Rhine Westphalia, delivering healthcare for the physically and mentally disabled, social welfare for children, regional museums and maintenance for historic and archaeological monuments. LVR employs 14,000 people across 70 locations, including hospitals, clinics and specialist schools, across the region.

With five production SAP R/3 instances deployed at its Cologne data centre, LVR has been an SAP customer since 1996. In addition to SAP solutions, LVR relies upon a range of homegrown and bespoke applications, deployed across UNIX, Windows 2000 and IBM mainframe platforms that are used to support the services LVR provides to the community

to investigate acquiring an automated job scheduler. The associated batch workload with the new system was well beyond the scope of the installed mainframe scheduler, which offered primitive support for Windows workload. LVR needed a solution that would fulfill UNIX and Windows batch scheduling needs.

Markus Fahss, Operations Manager at LVR takes up the story: "It was immediately apparent we would need to invest in a scheduler to support the overnight processing demands of our new CIS application. Obviously with the new application being Windows based, it

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Markus Fahss
Operations Manager, LVR



New Clinical System Presents Old IT Challenge

The planned deployment of SAP R/3 and a new Clinical Information System (CIS) across 70 Windows 2000 servers led LVR

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was imperative to find a scheduler that would support this platform. We needed support for cross-system dependencies; we also wanted a solution that would allow us to distribute workload across multiple machines."

"We've been an SAP user since 1996 and used to rely on CCMS to schedule batch jobs. One of the biggest limitations with CCMS is that you have to manually log in to each instance to set up jobs and check log files. As we have five SAP instances at LVR, we thought it would be useful to have a job scheduler that would allow us to create a single SAP job definition that could be reused across multiple instances.

Also, we were keen to find a product that would enable us to monitor all jobs across all systems from a single console. This was quite a long wish list."

Monitoring SAP Batch Jobs

One area where SAP Central Process Scheduling (SAP Central Process Scheduling) clearly differentiated itself from the competition was through its SAP functionality.

Fahss continues: "Some schedulers we looked at required scripts to be written if you wanted to run SAP jobs. We had no problem like this with SAP Central Process Scheduling. It communicates with SAP R/3 through the XBP (eXternal Background Processing) interface provided by SAP. We can also monitor job progress across all SAP instances from a single console. In fact, we've also found that with SAP Central Process Scheduling we can also see jobs that have been submitted by CCMS. Other schedulers we looked at couldn't do this."

"It has been very simple to set up jobs with SAP Central Process Scheduling. Each month we run payroll for 20 of our clients. Each client runs between 10 and 20 SAP jobs. Without SAP Central Process Scheduling we would have to define each job separately for each client. Of course, this is time consuming and error prone. With SAP Central Process Scheduling we create a single set of definitions for all payroll jobs and use parameters to specify the client at run time."

"We were keen to work with a vendor who had a close relationship with SAP. Redwood was the first vendor to deliver the new functionality that SAP provided with its enhanced XBP Version 2.0 support for batch jobs. We're already using SAP Central Process Scheduling to intercept user submitted jobs. We can also set SAP variants without logging in to CCMS. This is functionality you don't get from other vendors - the best you get are future promises."

Additionally, existing SAP job definitions were being automatically migrated from CCMS across to SAP Central Process Scheduling ensuring rapid deployment.

Scheduling Across the Enterprise

SAP Central Process Scheduling also addresses scheduling issues beyond the SAP environment. Overnight Windows processing required by CIS is scheduled using SAP Central Process Scheduling. As well as ensuring optimal distribution of workload across available servers, SAP Central Process Scheduling minimizes latency in the batch window by enabling jobs to be event-driven. LVR also benefits from 'known problems' being dealt with automatically, where exceptional conditions are escalated through SMS message for manual attention.

LVR still relies upon a mainframe-based EFT (electronic funds transfer) application to send financial transactions to banks. Payroll data generated by mySAP HCM running on a UNIX server platform was to be

transferred for mainframe EFT processing on a regular basis. SAP Central Process Scheduling manages this file transfer as well as other ftp requests that need to be performed across LVR's heterogeneous network of Windows 2000, UNIX and IBM legacy systems.

Veritas NetBackup allows LVR to use time of day to control backups. While this might have been satisfactory in managing a single database back up, LVR experienced contention problems when trying to run multiple database back-ups in parallel. SAP Central Process Scheduling has allowed LVR to schedule backups via NetBackup APIs to ensure that all database back ups complete, serializing access to any critical resources that would otherwise result in contention.

Measurable ROI

Technology needs to deliver measurable value if it is to be of any use - especially for a public service provider. SAP Central Process Scheduling has clearly delivered cost savings in a number of ways at LVR.

Fahss observes: "It was taking our Basis people 1-2 hours each day to work through the previous night processing to check the outcome of SAP jobs. They would also spend another hour checking through the log files for our Windows batch applications. We've seen savings with SAP Central Process Scheduling in this area as batch processing problems are automatically highlighted. This ensures the Basis team knows immediately what to investigate. They also have the comfort of knowing, without checking, which jobs have worked OK."

"Another area where we have managed to realize savings is in software license fees. Prior to installing SAP Central Process Scheduling we used a mainframe scheduler to launch Windows batch jobs. We had to pay the vendor an additional fee to use this feature. With SAP Central Process Scheduling we no longer need to pay the license fee."



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