



City of Long Beach

- » Enterprise workload automation simplifies job scheduling across platforms and empowers users, saving time and boosting reliability of critical scheduled processing

BEFORE

- » Mainframe job scheduling was under control, but the staff didn't have adequate scheduling tools for distributed systems
- » Traditionally the staff created very large jobs that were difficult to manage/troubleshoot
- » Users had to rely on operations staff to start jobs, make changes, create reports, and perform other batch job tasks
- » Even simple changes often required assistance from technical services.

AFTER

- » The staff now has a single solution for scheduling jobs across mainframe and distributed systems
- » Jobs are broken into smaller steps so problems are easier to detect and problems with non-critical steps no longer stop processing
- » Users can now enter variables, restart jobs, generate reports, check job status, and perform other tasks on their own
- » Technical services staff is freed up from time-consuming tasks that users can now handle.



GEOGRAPHY

United States

INDUSTRY

Government

SOLUTIONS

BMC Control-M

BMC Control-M Self Service

BMC Control-M/Tape

BMC Control-D

There's a reason the City of Long Beach has been named a Top-10 Digital City. The City takes pride in applying technology to improve responsiveness to the community while keeping costs in check.

The strong focus on technological innovation has resulted in a variety of programs that garnered praise from the Center for Digital Government, the national research and advisory institute that conducts the annual digital cities survey. Examples of innovation include the Go Long Beach smartphone application that allows citizens to submit service requests from their phones, virtualization of servers and desktops to cut IT costs, and the smart use of social media to engage and communicate with the public.

The technology services department is committed to providing communication and information systems and technical support services to employees, elected officials, and citizens with the goal of ensuring the highest level of service at the lowest possible cost. Toward that end, technology services recently launched an initiative to replace its outdated job scheduling tools with an enterprise workload automation solution to ensure timely, error-free processing of scheduled work.

To handle this critical function, the City chose BMC Control-M, which allows the technology services staff to manage scheduled processing from a single point of control — across applications and platforms, including both mainframe and distributed systems.

The department also implemented several related solutions to facilitate workload automation. These include BMC Control-M Self Service to give business users access to workload automation services, BMC Control-M/Tape to better manage tape libraries, and BMC Control-D to provide easy access to reports.

THE NEED FOR ENTERPRISE SCHEDULING

The technology services staff has used job scheduling for many years to handle mainframe batch processing. However, the department is now replacing older mainframe systems with solutions designed for the distributed environment. The utility billing application, which issues bills for water, sewer, gas, and refuse, is one example. The department is migrating to Oracle Customer Care and Billing to provide these services in the future.

The staff was using CA7 for job scheduling on mainframe applications but did not have a scheduling solution for distributed systems. With an overall strategy calling for migration away from the mainframe, it became apparent that the City needed an enterprise solution that offered a cross-application, cross-platform approach to managing scheduled processing.

The staff conducted a rigorous evaluation of the top three workload automation solutions and selected BMC Control-M. The staff was particularly impressed with the ability of BMC Control-M to schedule and manage workloads across both mainframe and distributed systems.

“BMC Control-M lets us connect the jobs so that processes run without the staff having to step in and take action. It’s one less thing for the operations staff to worry about. It makes it easier for us to complete jobs within our batch window. And it helps us identify problems and correct them so that jobs are completed on time.”

RUSTY CLARK
DATA CENTER SUPERVISOR

“We had good control over mainframe batch jobs, but not over jobs for distributed applications,” said Rusty Clark, data center supervisor at the City of Long Beach. “What’s more, we had no way to link the two environments. If a job needed to run on a distributed system after a mainframe job had completed, there was no way to trigger it automatically.”

This inability to tie processes together across platforms created several challenges. If a job on a distributed system needed to run after a mainframe job, the staff had to monitor the first job and, upon completion, manually start the second job. Moreover, if a problem occurred with the mainframe job, there was no easy way to discover it before running the distributed job.

“BMC Control-M lets us connect jobs so that processes run without the staff having to step in and take action,” Clark said. “It’s one less thing for the operations staff to worry about. It makes it easier for us to complete jobs within our batch window. And it helps us identify problems and correct them so that jobs finish on time.”

The staff is constantly adding new processes within BMC Control-M. As the portfolio of jobs grows, so does reliability of the scheduled processing environment. The staff is also changing its approach to creating jobs. “With BMC Control-M, it’s easier to break large jobs into smaller pieces and link those pieces together,” Clark explained. “So we might have a job that runs a file transfer, followed by a job that modifies data, followed by another file transfer. By splitting jobs up, we can pinpoint problems faster and get the right people involved when a problem occurs.”

HASSLE-FREE CONVERSION

According to Clark, the conversion to the BMC solutions went smoothly and was easily completed within the aggressive two-month timeline the City had established.

“We actually converted three products,” he said. “In addition to moving from CA7 to BMC Control-M, we also converted from CA Dispatch to BMC Control-D and from CA1 to BMC Control-M/Tape. BMC solutions helped speed the conversion, and I was pleased with how well everything went.”

USER SELF SERVICE

Once BMC Control-M was in place, the staff implemented BMC Control-M Self Service to put workload services at the fingertips of business users. With Self Service, business people and technical staff can display a business-oriented service view of their jobs using a web browser. Business people as well as technology services staff can start jobs, supply user values, and check the status of jobs without assistance from schedulers or support staff.

“Business users are much happier when they have control over their jobs,” Clark noted. “And our staff is freed up from time-consuming tasks that users can easily handle themselves. People can also check the status of their jobs, so they no longer have to call us back to find out when a job will be done or when a report will be available.”

Technology services has extended Self Service capabilities to external users as well. For example, before employee checks can be printed, the payroll must be certified. A BMC Control-M job sends the appropriate files for review. Certification triggers the next job in the series so that payroll processing is completed and employee checks are issued on time.

RELIABLE FILE TRANSFERS

Much of the current effort with BMC Control-M centers on file transfers. Previously, failed transfers interfered with reliable completion of some jobs. “We didn’t always know right away when a transfer had failed. Often the problem was something that was simple to fix — like changing a password on the server. But we couldn’t easily see why a job wasn’t working. Now we can find the source of the problem and fix it quickly before the next job runs.”

Clark added that file transfers are more secure with BMC Control-M. “Now that we’re handling transfers with a single solution, fewer people are involved, so we can transfer data in a more secure and stable fashion. We can also encrypt files to increase the level of security.”

CUSTOMER'S FINAL WORDS

“BMC Control-M and Self Service are giving us full visibility into the batch schedule,” Clark concluded. “Everybody sees the same thing. That makes it easier to troubleshoot problems when something goes wrong. It also helps us find weaknesses and potential points of failure so we can improve processes and eliminate problems.”

“Business users are much happier when they have control over their jobs. And our staff is freed up from time-consuming tasks that users can easily handle on their own. With Self Service, people can also check the status of their jobs so they no longer have to call us to find out when a job will be done or when a report will be available.”

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ABOUT CITY OF LONG BEACH

Long Beach is California's fifth largest city. The city government employs more than 4,700 employees and serves a population of more than 460,000. Long Beach is a dominant maritime center. The Port of Long Beach is the second busiest container port in the U.S. and one of the world's largest shipping ports. Local industries include oil, aircraft, car parts, electronic and audiovisual equipment, and home furnishings.

BUSINESS RUNS ON I.T. I.T. RUNS ON BMC SOFTWARE.

More than 25,000 IT organizations – from the Global 100 to the smallest businesses – in over 120 countries rely on BMC Software to manage their business services and applications across distributed, mainframe, virtual, and cloud environments. With the leading Business Service Management platform, Cloud Management, and the industry's broadest choice of IT management solutions, BMC helps customers cut costs, reduce risk, and achieve business objectives. For the four fiscal quarters ended December 31, 2011, BMC revenue was approximately \$2.2 billion. For more information about BMC Software (NASDAQ: BMC), please visit www.bmc.com.



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