

Case Study

Automic® Workload Automation Sandvik Selects Automic Workload Automation to Schedule IT Workload



Client Profile

Organization: Sandvik

Industry: Engineering

Business

Sandvik is a high-technology engineering group, with advanced products and world-leading positions in tooling, mining, construction, and the materials technology business areas.

Challenge

- Windows, z/OS and iSeries multi-platform support
- Manage 24x7 hours batch processes
- Automate cross-system workload

Solution

- Intuitive and informative user interface
- Flexibility editing job plans
- Forecasting tools
- Restart capabilities

Benefit

- Operational cost savings
- Reduced run-times for jobs
- Increased staff productivity
- Improved customer service levels

Business

Quality is the Guiding Principle Across its Global Operations

Sandvik is a high-technology engineering group, with advanced products and world-leading positions in tooling, mining and construction, and the materials technology business areas. The group was founded at Sandviken, Sweden, in 1862 and has grown to 50,000 employees, with representation in 130 countries. Products are based on high value content and are developed in close cooperation with customers. Quality is the guiding principle across its global operations.

Within Sandvik, Information Technology is concentrated in areas that enhance customer benefits, improve productivity and strengthen profitability allowing the group to benefit from distinct competitive advantages. Sandvik's core IT systems are based on custom developed manufacturing and production applications built using COBOL, IMS/TM, and DB2 to run on IBM z/OS servers. UNIX, Windows, and iSeries-based logistics and distribution applications communicate with the mainframe platform using MQSeries messaging middleware.

Challenge

Windows, z/OS and iSeries Multi-Platform Support

For many years Sandvik had relied on an in-house developed job scheduling tool to control timed submission of z/OS jobs. Problems could occur if a file failed to get processed resulting in users working with information that was incorrect or out-of-date. Facing operational issues and an increasing proportion of IT workload being dispersed across distributed as well as mainframe platforms, Sandvik realized they could benefit from utilizing an automation tool that could support multiple operating system platforms.

"It was important for us find a solution that was easy to use and gave us enterprise wide visibility of batch processes. My staff was keen to move on from a tool that gave us green on black screen displays," said Anders Weiss, Global Operations Manager of the Mainframe Operations and Preparation & Planning, Sandvik Group. "We wanted to minimize maintenance with single sign-on security and to find a tool that offered cross platform support for Windows, IBM z/OS and iSeries."

Sandvik investigated four alternatives, which included a Solution from CA Technologies, A Broadcom Company. One vendor was unable to offer a single solution that covered all platforms. Another vendor failed to meet Sandvik's criteria with a scheduler that was mostly mainframe oriented. The remaining vendor only managed to offer presentation slides as a demonstration. Weiss said, "It was important to find a company that was committed to job scheduling. CA is committed to this market."

Solution

Intuitive and Informative User Interface

Automic® Workload Automation was selected by Sandvik because it offered a user interface that was informative and intuitive. Online help meant that staff required minimal training and were soon scheduling jobs ensuring a swift return on investment. Graphic visualization combined with drag-and-drop made it easy for Operations personnel to track and change the workflows within job plans. Automic Workload Automation also offered forecasting allowing Sandvik to become predictive in managing and monitoring their IT workload.

"We've had several new team members recently join the Preparation & Planning group. Even though they are inexperienced, they're all productive making the system work which shows its ease of use," said Weiss. "Our operators are pro-actively monitoring what is happening across the IT landscape and reacting to situations where action is required. This is a great improvement on receiving calls from our business users telling them to check problems that they are having."

Within the Sandvik environment there is significant workload that traverses IBM mainframe and Windows server platforms—especially at month-end and year-end when important financial information needs to be transferred. Automic Workload Automation provides enterprise-wide scheduling and automation of these and other background processes across heterogeneous systems. Monitoring is centralized to the same pane of glass for viewing of z/OS and Windows workload.

Solution (con't)

"The challenges we face are not platform specific," said Weiss. "Our tooling order-to-delivery process is a typical example. Sandvik has a following day delivery guarantee with its customers. Sales order processing is handled by an iSeries application which generates an MQ Series request that is dispatched to an application running on a z/OS system. We use Automic Workload Automation to automatically schedule transactions on the mainframe to undertake order fulfillment, and ensure Windows and UNIX-based warehouse management and logistics systems are dispatched."

Benefits

Reduced Run-Times for Jobs

Sandvik runs a 24x7 operation. Hence there is very little room for a traditional batch window. Prior to the implementation of Automic Workload Automation, there were lots of gaps in the cross platform processes. Compressing these gaps has enabled Sandvik to save lots of time and become more responsive in meeting customer demands. An easy to use interface from which to control cross platform IT processes has improved staff productivity.

As Sandvik looks to achieve extra operational cost savings, they are considering replacement of third party managed file transfer tools to move data between systems. "We have plans to optimize when jobs run that will allow us to achieve even more efficiencies with Automic Workload Automation," said Weiss. "There's still more low hanging fruit to pick in this area and we are confident that it will continue to add to the value it brings to Sandvik's business."

For more information, please visit ca.com/automation.