Bringing Visibility and Control to Financial Asset Management

BlueCrest Capital Management Standardizes on Cisco Tidal Enterprise Scheduler to Automate Mission-Critical Business Processes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BLUECREST CAPITAL MANAGEMENT
- Financial Asset Management
- Headquartered in London, UK
- 20 Core IT staff and 60 developers

BUSINESS CHALLENGE
- Make critical business processes visible to upper management
- Centralize scheduling and management of nightly data downloads
- Integrate disaster recovery processes into job scheduling efforts
- Migrate away from heavily scripted point solutions

SOLUTION
- Install Cisco Tidal Enterprise Scheduler in BlueCrest's two data centers
- Remove a layer of development processes through standardized components that can be integrated into custom applications

BUSINESS RESULTS
- Increases the ease and efficiency of business process scheduling
- Reduces portfolio risk as well as the risk of scheduling errors and job failures
- Enhances visibility into mission critical business processes
- Improves the speed and efficiency of development efforts

Business Challenge

Headquartered in London, BlueCrest Capital Management was founded in 2000 by two former senior traders from JP Morgan. The organization manages major institutions' financial assets using sophisticated, diversified trading strategies.

BlueCrest employs teams of market specialists in a variety of disciplines, with each team leveraging state-of-the-art proprietary analytical technology. This approach is designed to reduce portfolio risk, while allowing managers to focus their attention on often-overlooked anomalies of market behavior.

BlueCrest runs front- and back-office applications such as customer relationship management (CRM). However, company management believes that finance-centric software, such as risk analysis and reporting, are most vital to its core business operations. BlueCrest IT works to ensure that the access to data and analytical resources used by portfolio managers and specialists is not compromised as the company grows.

Every evening, BlueCrest downloads all trades executed during the day. These downloads typically involve a number of critical business processes which must be made visible to senior management. They must also be tightly scheduled—and complex dependencies taken into consideration—in order for the data produced to be accurate and useful.

Prior to deploying Enterprise Scheduler, BlueCrest developers created custom scripts to manage these nightly downloads. Though workable, IT management knew that such a heavily scripted solution would not scale sufficiently going forward. In addition, development staff members were creating code anew for each special project they tackled. Although this code could potentially be reused across applications, it did not solve the bigger challenge that only a scalable enterprise job scheduling solution could.

Solution

BlueCrest adopted Enterprise Scheduler for several compelling reasons. First, this powerful product enabled IT to centralize and manage all downloads through a secure dashboard. The scheduler also made it simpler and easier for BlueCrest to handle disaster recovery activities. When combined with standard alerting functionality, these capabilities delivered the visibility required by senior management. Second, Enterprise Scheduler supported

BlueCrest's commitment to efficient programming practices, because it allowed developers to create standardized, reusable components and deliver custom applications more quickly. Third, the scheduler integrated neatly into BlueCrest's existing System Center Operations Manager 2007 and Active Directory Microsoft environment.

Summing the decision process up, Andy Roberts, co-head of BlueCrest IT, comments, "By removing an entire layer of development processes, Cisco has made our development process much more productive. We are also better able to manage operational risk aspects such as disaster recovery and more quickly respond to integration requests. Our process failure detection rate is improved as well."

> "Making sure that every single business process is exposed to Tidal Enterprise Scheduler is smart. It is the way we're looking to go."
>
> **— Andy Roberts, Co-Head of IT, BlueCrest Capital Management**

Business Results

Enterprise Scheduler is delivering vital business results to BlueCrest. Using this powerful solution, IT has been able to:

- Reduce overall operating costs by reducing processing errors and centralizing job scheduling and analysis
- Manage critical processes easily and efficiently without labor-intensive, custom scripting
- Deliver business applications more quickly through more effectively managing development efforts
- Increase proactivity and reduce portfolio risk by gaining visibility into business processes

The scheduler's secure, central source of control has enabled BlueCrest to reduce operating costs by automating and streamlining significant areas of its data center operations. Prior to implementing this solution, BlueCrest relied on custom scripts to manage specific jobs and applications, a time- and labor-intensive approach. In addition, BlueCrest now has visibility into mission-critical business processes and is therefore better able to reduce investor portfolio risk.

With Enterprise Scheduler, the company now has the support required by analysis and reporting activities that are key to fund management. And BlueCrest can quickly create business applications through a component development approach that enables it to reuse chunks of code.

Enterprise Scheduler supports proactivity, visibility, and efficiency in programming and business operations. These capabilities, plus centralized scheduling and analysis, have enabled BlueCrest to reduce operating expenses and better fulfill its mission of effectively managing highly sophisticated financial instruments.

Next Steps

As BlueCrest moves forward with Enterprise Scheduler, IT is looking at ways to leverage its capabilities. In the plans are exposing more business processes to scheduling and management. The company is also considering the use of the scheduler's reporting module.

As Andy Roberts notes, "At BlueCrest, when something solves problems, it really takes off. This has certainly been the case with Enterprise Scheduler. Its usage has expanded, and it is getting to be quite a mature technology here."

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Tidal Enterprise Scheduler, go to www.cisco.com.

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