

CARNIVAL CRUISE LINES

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OVERVIEW

Carnival Cruise Lines has grown fivefold since automating its data centers with SMA OpCon/xps. During this period, the company has not had to hire one additional operator to handle the increased workload. OpCon/xps has proven so efficient, it has also helped the company shave hours off its daily production schedule – without having to buy additional hardware.

SMA OpCon/xps™ is a fast, flexible way to automate and control a wide range of IT and business processes. It's one efficient tool that does the work of many, reducing IT costs, complexity and risks by dynamically responding to changes in your environment.

ISSUES

HETEROGENEOUS ENVIRONMENT

Carnival operates Unisys, IBM, SUN, Wintel, and Linux systems. Its IT operators run 5,400 jobs per day. They also support more than 500 servers, 7,600 desktops and dozens of ships, each a separate subnet connected via satellite.

MANUAL ERRORS

As Carnival's business grew, so did the complexity of its IT operations. Operators who once had to handle hundreds of jobs per day were being asked to handle thousands. Many jobs had intricate cross-platform dependencies. Interruptions sometimes led operators to skip jobs or run them twice. This, in turn, led to lengthy recovery times.

LESS PROCESSING TIME

Manually starting each job also cut into precious processing time. All of this cut into IT's processing window at a time when the business was clamoring for more availability to make reservations more convenient and cruising more fun. Carnival soon faced a choice: buy more hardware and hire more operators or automate scheduling.

ANSWERS

SINGLE POINT OF CONTROL

OpCon/xps controls all of Carnival's platforms from a stand-alone server via software agents. This eliminates timing and cross-platform dependency issues that plague mainframe-based automation software while improving the visibility of operations.

EVENT-DRIVEN AUTOMATION

OpCon/xps automated Carnival's IT and business processes to a degree never before possible. It eliminates manual errors and can respond to a wide variety of external events, i.e., loss of communication. It automatically diagnoses problems and fixes them or notifies the person on call. Meanwhile, it runs non-dependent jobs until the problem is fixed.

LESS TIME BETWEEN JOBS

OpCon/xps eliminates the lag time that programmers normally build in as a safety cushion between jobs with cross-platform dependencies. It also compresses the time between jobs from minutes to milliseconds. This saved Carnival the equivalent of hours on each shift. That supported continued growth without more hardware and additional operators.

SMA
OpCon/xps™

The universal remote of IT automation



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“WE USED AUTOMATION TO HANDLE THE GROWTH IN OUR WORKLOAD.”

Carnival Cruise Lines has 27,000 shipboard staff plus 3,000 shoreside employees who serve more than three million passengers each year. As Carnival’s business has grown, its IT operations staffing has remained level thanks to gains in efficiency. “SMA OpCon/xps helps us maintain quality, consistency and speed of production in a heterogeneous environment,” says Doug Eney, Carnival’s VP of Information Systems Engineering. “It’s improved our efficiency fivefold. We haven’t had to add new operators or hardware to keep up with growth. With SMA OpCon/xps, our existing staff can handle the workload.”

“HAVING EVERYTHING UNDER ONE UMBRELLA FACILITATES MONITORING, IMPROVES EFFICIENCY.”

“SMA OpCon/xps helps us avoid scheduling errors that can eat up lots of time,” adds Jorge Rodriguez, Carnival’s Data Center Manager. “OpCon/xps is very important to our business. It brings everything under one umbrella. It facilitates monitoring and improves our efficiency.”

“When problems are encountered with a job, OpCon/xps tries to solve them by itself. If it can’t, it automatically notifies someone who can via pager or email and continues running non-dependent jobs. That saves lots of time. Our operators don’t have to babysit the schedule. Yet we always know exactly where we are at any given point in time,” says Rodriguez.

“WE HAVEN’T FOUND ANYTHING YET THAT OPCON/XPS CAN’T AUTOMATE.”

“Event-driven automation in OpCon/xps also lets us do things we never would have attempted in a manual environment,” continues Rodriguez. “For instance, we have jobs that schedule jobs, and jobs that are triggered when an external event occurs. We haven’t yet found any scenario that OpCon/xps can’t automate.”

THE NEED FOR SPEED

“To increase convenience for customers, we’ve improved access to our systems. We’ve done that by reducing the time needed for processing. With OpCon/xps, programmers no longer have to build in cushions between cross-platform jobs. That lag time is gone. So is the time it used to take to manually start each job. As soon as OpCon/xps finishes one job, it starts another,” says Rodriguez. “We save hours each shift.”

STAND-OUT SERVICE AND SUPPORT

“SMA service and support really stand out. Any time I have an issue or a question, they resolve it right away. There are no delays – even if I call in the middle of the night. There’s never been an issue they couldn’t help me with,” says Rodriguez.

25 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP

SMA is committed to supporting all platforms, reducing clients’ costs and increasing their ROI.

We provide enterprise automation solutions to businesses and government clients worldwide. Whether you are implementing e-business solutions, installing ERP applications or improving automation of IT environments, our products take the guesswork and frustration out of automating data centers.

For more than 25 years, SMA has led the way. We were the first to provide scheduling solutions for the Unisys market and NT. We will continue to set the standard by integrating our products across platforms, applications and operating systems.

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