

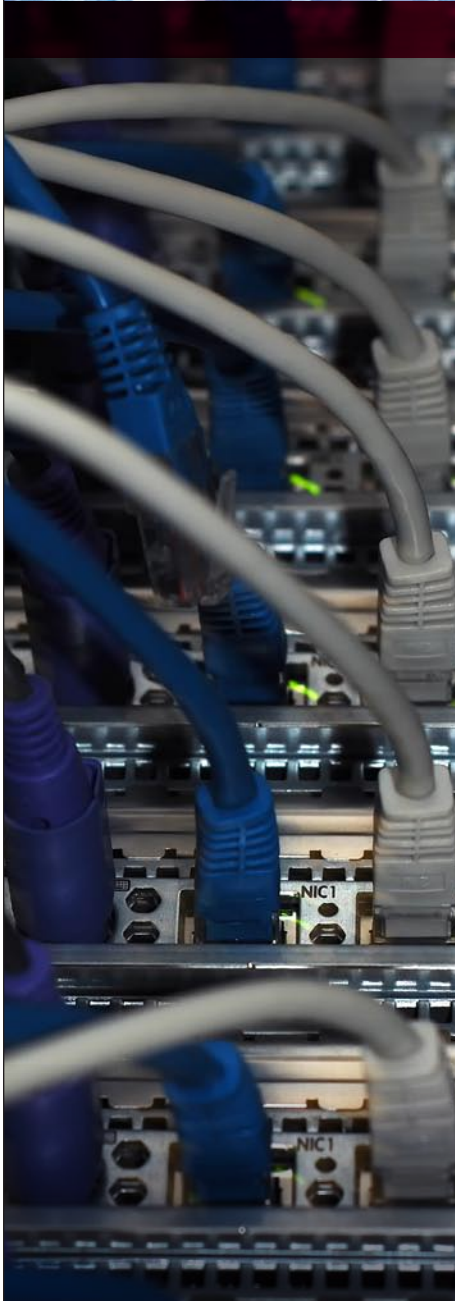


DCU - Digital Federal Credit Union

Automating System Migration, Operations and Innovation

OVERVIEW

DCU (Digital Federal Credit Union) based in Marlborough, Massachusetts, is the largest credit union in New England. It also has branch locations in Colorado, New Hampshire, and Georgia. In total, it has 19 branches with more than \$4 billion in assets and is ranked among the country's top 15 credit unions. For years, DCU raced to keep pace with 20 percent annual growth using an aging processing platform. After a two-year search for better alternatives, DCU chose Fiserv, XP2, and IBM. In addition, DCU selected the SMA OpCon/xps scheduler to manage migration risk. SMA OpCon/xps provided cross-platform compatibility, powerful notification capabilities, and variable day, date, and parameter features that DCU required. The combination of OpCon/xps and XP2 provided reliable, error-free processing during the critical migration period and has ever since. DCU now considers OpCon/xps one of its indispensable core systems. OpCon/xps has proved so reliable and flexible that it is even helping DCU find new and better ways to work.



OpCon/xps™ reduces IT costs and errors via cross-platform, event-driven automation of credit union core processing systems. OpCon/xps is a fast, flexible way to control, monitor and track applications and processes.

ISSUES

Changes During Migration

As its previous system neared the end of its useful life, DCU was growing at double digit rates, but finding it hard to recruit talent skilled in the old system. Moreover, the new system required learning a whole new syntax. In this new environment, mis-keying would have created countless costly errors.

Failure Notification

Error handling is critical to all IT organizations. Incorrectly run programs or missed alerts create highly visible mistakes that can negatively impact members and run the risk of damaging an organization's reputation. "We needed something intrusive that would immediately flag errors or mis-run jobs," says Stephanie Hyles, Computer Operations Team Leader at DCU.

Complex Job Dependencies

DCU has many jobs that need to complete before contingent jobs can be triggered. They also have jobs running on multiple platforms, and need to distinguish between consecutive jobs that have the same name but different parameters. "We need to know that the right job runs, and runs correctly, before the next job starts," says Hyles. "We don't have time for constant checking. That creates bottlenecks."

ANSWERS

Test-Run-Lock Automation

"Once you define a job in OpCon/xps," says Denis Feely, Manager, Information Systems at DCU, "there's no possibility of mis-keying. OpCon/xps eliminates that source of error. Once tested, the job is locked. You can't make careless errors. You just have to make sure the job runs. It's almost 'set it and forget it.'"

Early Recognition of Problems

If a job should fail to execute properly, OpCon/xps can notify operators via pager, email, and more. "Texting has been great for something that's super critical," says Hyles. Custom, user-definable views in Web OpCon/xps also facilitate monitoring. "With OpCon, if something fails, we know 99.99 percent of the time before somebody else tells us something is wrong."

Cross-Platform Compatibility

OpCon/xps is cross-platform compatible. It coordinates 25 different systems. For instance, it can pre- and post-process a job on one system, translate it on a second, and securely transfer it on a third. While one job is waiting to complete, OpCon/xps continues running non-contingent jobs in the background, eliminating bottlenecks and delays. It easily distinguishes between jobs with related names, dates and parameters.



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OpCon/xps provides maximum flexibility for job scheduling and innovation

Said Hyles, “OpCon/xps provides us the cross-platform compatibility and unlimited variability for filename and date parameters we needed for automated job scheduling. We’re constantly learning new ways to do things with OpCon/xps that help us work better, faster and smarter. It’s an incredible tool.”

Could not handle the volume without OpCon/xps

“SMA OpCon/xps totally automated our file handling including pre- and post-processing, validation, and meeting deadlines for incoming and outgoing transmissions,” continued Hyles. “At DCU, this is so complicated and the volume is so immense, that it would have been nearly impossible for our current staff to handle without SMA.”

Moment of recognition

DCU planned its system migration for two years. With only five months before the changeover, the team realized that it needed assistance. There was simply no way to manually migrate a growing number of jobs without countless errors. “We were facing a new system running on new hardware and had to learn a whole new syntax. We were never going to be able to keep this straight,” says Hyles. “It was overwhelming, like drinking from a fire hose. The volume we do is unbelievable.”



Finger-free processing

“File transfer and file processing was our biggest problem,” said Hyles. “A job running in a Windows environment,” continues Feely, “had to execute commands against the output of a job in an AIX environment. When that completed, we needed to reformat the file and send it to a printing vendor using a Linux system. Before, that would take constant monitoring and email exchanges. Now it all happens automatically without a finger ever touching a key. Without OpCon/xps, we would have had to hire a new operator just to handle this type of job.”

Countless errors eliminated

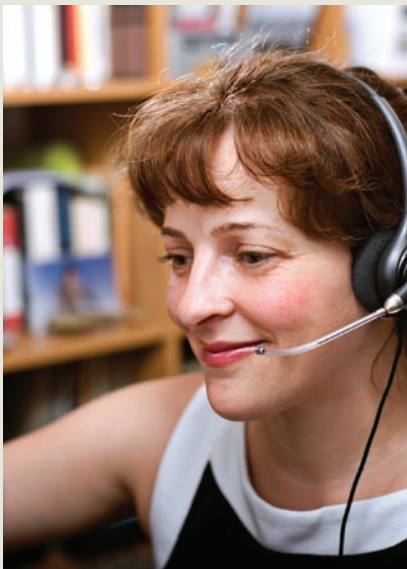
“You won’t believe the number of errors OpCon/xps has prevented,” says Feely. “If a job doesn’t finish, the system lets us know faster than any human could. The system totally eliminates jobs run improperly because of syntax errors, mis-typing or operator error.”

“OpCon/XPS is indispensable!”

“We now consider OpCon/xps an integral part of our core system,” says Hyles. Jeff Smith, server administrator at DCU, adds, “OpCon/xps is indispensable in preventing issues.”

“Support is phenomenal.”

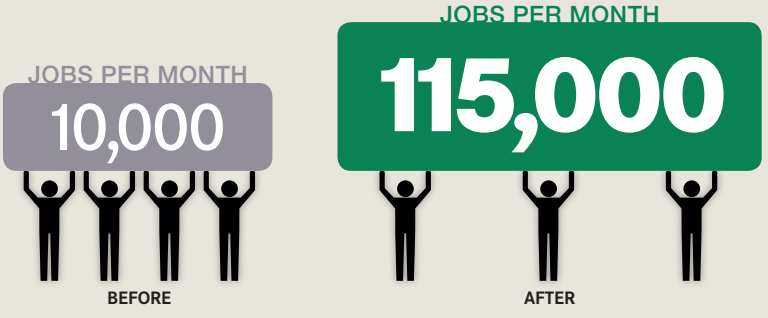
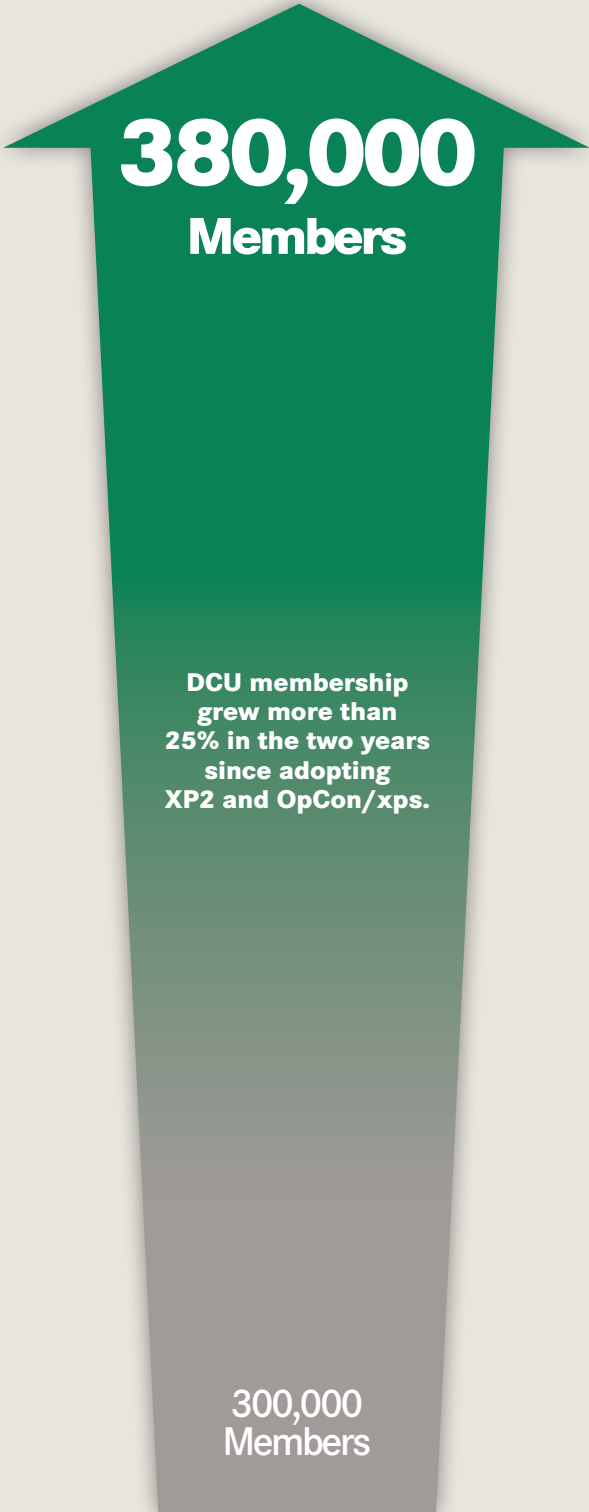
“SMA’s support is phenomenal,” says Hyles. “We called one time in the middle of the night when we couldn’t get a job to start. We just couldn’t see why it would not run. But SMA figured it out. They have 24-hour support. Somebody is always there to help you. And it’s quality support no matter when you call! SMA even created several custom add-on modules for us that made our transition to XP2 even easier.”





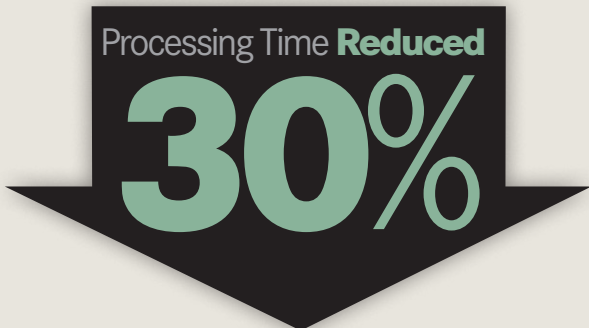
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Higher volume with fewer operators

Since adopting OpCon/xps, DCU has seen its monthly processing load increase from 10,000 to 115,000 jobs. Despite the increase, DCU is now able to run one shift “lights out” except at month’s end. Says Feely, “We work 24/7, but my third shift operator’s name is OpCon/xps.”



Processing Time Reduced Up to 30% with No Manual Errors

With OpCon/xps, the instant one job finishes, a second, dependent job can begin. There’s never any waiting. As DCU automated more and more of its tasks, they found it could compress schedules up to 30 percent and was processing virtually error free.



Easier Audits

DCU set up OpCon/xps as a single user that has the right to move files around. Operators no longer have to touch them or have rights on numerous systems. “Auditors like that,” says Hyles, “OpCon can do all the file moving. All the rules are there for the auditor to see. That’s all they need to check.”



DECADES OF LEADERSHIP

Since 1980, SMA has led the way. We were the first to provide scheduling solutions for the Unisys and Windows markets. We will continue to set the standard by integrating our products across all mainframe, midrange and desktop platforms regardless of the operating systems they run.

SMA OpCon/xps brings innovative automation capabilities to Symitar environments, reducing clients' costs and eliminating human errors.

We also provide enterprise automation solutions to businesses and government clients worldwide. Our cross-platform products take the guesswork and frustration out of automating data centers.



SMA offers a dedicated team of automation consultants experienced in the specific needs of credit unions.

SMA Corporate Headquarters:

3939 Glade Valley Drive
Kingwood, TX 77339
1-877-762-6584
sma@smausa.com

SMA Europe AG:

Technologie Zentrum Linth
CH-8866 Ziegelbrücke, Switzerland
+41 55 617 36 36
sma@smaeurope.com

SMA France:

5-7 Place Marcel Rebuffat
Parc de Villejust-Courtaboeuf 7
FR-91971 Courtaboeuf, France
+33 160 14 89 50
sma@smaeur.com

SMA France:

23, Boulevard de l'Europe
FR-54 500 Vandoeuvre les Nancy, France
+33 383 15 25 76
sma@smaeur.com

Unisoft SMA Korea Co.:

#203-1, Gayang TechnoTown Bldg.
Gayang 3- Dong, Gangseo-gu
Seoul 157-793, Korea
82-2-3272-0833

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