



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



# CA Automic Workload Automation Achieves Top Marks at University of North Texas

## CLIENT PROFILE

Industry: Education

Company: University of North Texas (UNT)

### BUSINESS

One of the largest universities in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, University of North Texas (UNT) is committed to helping 35,000 students succeed at whatever endeavor they seek to pursue.

### CHALLENGE

- Reduce manual intervention in PeopleSoft Financial Aid processing
- Synchronize workload across multiple PeopleSoft instances
- Centralize management of PeopleSoft and external applications

### SOLUTION

- Intuitive, object-oriented, modular design tools
- Validated integration with PeopleSoft Process Scheduler
- Connectivity to Cognos, Cypress, Informatica, Kronos Workforce Timekeeper

### BENEFIT

- Significant reduction in staff manual processing
- Reduced elapsed times for long running jobs
- Lower maintenance and admin overheads

## Business

### Committed to student success

One of the largest universities in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, University of North Texas (UNT) is committed to helping 35,000 students succeed at whatever endeavor they seek to pursue. By providing access, welcoming diversity and strengthening collaborations with educational, business, local and global community partners, faculty and staff work to prepare students for the challenges they will meet in a changing world. As a public university, UNT bears a special responsibility to advance and improve society, through a range of programs and initiatives that include offering opportunities to academically talented students.

Struggling with 20-year old mainframe legacy student administration software, UNT decided to implement PeopleSoft's Higher Education application suite, including Financials, HR, Student Administration and Contributor Relations modules.

## Challenge

### Manage high-volume workload

While PeopleSoft could handle the number of transactions and opened the doors for developing Web-based services for the students; it quickly became apparent that the sophisticated process scheduling automation available on the mainframe was not available on the new distributed systems platform. Batch processes that once were scheduled nightly on the mainframe were now required to be run manually by staff during the day.

To run Financial Aid processes in the correct sequence, six senior staff people were required to sit in the same room at individual workstations. The session consumed 80% of their workday. Jenny Brooks, Programmer Analyst, UNT said, "We found very quickly that the PeopleSoft scheduler would not work the way we needed it to work. Also, some processes required undivided attention all day to complete. There were days when processing did not complete and Student Accounting, which had to wait for Financial Aid finishing, was not able to complete their processes on time."

#### Automated processing at UNT had several obstacles to overcome:

- Lack of communication between separate process schedulers running in PeopleSoft Student Administration and PeopleSoft Finance modules made it impossible to create dependencies between applications. This forced UNT to build in lag time between jobs, stretching processing times to unacceptable lengths.
- With a high level of manual processing, errors were inevitable. If a step in the process failed, the process had to be evaluated to determine which step had the error and where the process could be restarted.
- Execution times were extended because non PeopleSoft applications such as Kronos Workforce Timekeeper, Informatica, Cognos, backups and database refreshes required operations to run these jobs manually, or to be scheduled with other schedulers on multiple servers.

In addition to lacking critical automation features, UNT found they could not modify PeopleSoft jobs reliably. The maintenance was difficult and time consuming each time they needed to add or delete processes from a job.

## Solution

### Automated migration tools

The PeopleSoft implementation team quickly realized they had to find a better way to automate the PeopleSoft processes and external workload. After reviewing several products, UNT selected CA Automic Workload Automation for its extensive features, versatility, and maintenance-reducing object-oriented architecture.

Financial Aid was the first area to automate their processes with CA Automic. Beginning with Authorization/Disbursement, they proceeded with other processes that were time consuming to run and also critical to meeting federal regulatory and compliance requirements. Within a few weeks, other processes including Right-to-Cancel notices, financial aid award notifications, Institutional Student Information Records (ISIR) loads, checklist assignment and satisfactory academic progress were automated.

Automation and integration of other PeopleSoft applications including Financial Systems and Human Resources followed along with database backups, data warehouse refreshes, and other processes.

UNT staff was impressed with how easy it was to use. "CA Automic Workload Automation is intuitive. It's easy. It's simple. You can sit down and figure it out with a little bit of training. The object-oriented development environment contributes to its ease of use, and reduces development and maintenance time," said Brooks.

On average, UNT gets around four update requests per year from government relating to financial aid regulation changes. UNT is able to use CA Automic Workload Automation in their development environments to ensure that these changes effecting batch processes get fully tested before getting migrated to their live systems.

"We've been really pleased with being able to set up job streams not only for our student systems but also to automate our data warehouse workload. Prior to being controlled by CA Automic Workload Automation, these jobs could run out of time – you'd never know for sure when they would finish. With it we've managed to reduce run times and become more accurate in knowing how long things will take. Running jobs that cross applications and servers is a real big plus for us."

- Jenny Brooks, Programmer Analyst, UNT

## Benefits

### Significant reduction in staff manual processing

Results have been dramatic. End to end automation of many processes has reduced staff time required to run the processes by 90%, allowing them to return to their regular job duties, including departmental management and strategic planning.

Running approximately 12,000 jobs a month, CA Automic Workload Automation reduced financial aid processing times from the better part of a day to a few hours. Manual errors were reduced and reliability went up. Productivity improvements are being achieved by automating other applications as well.

Scheduling of all applications, managing and monitoring of all systems are possible from a single, centralized workstation. Brooks comments "CA Automic Workload Automation makes computer operations a lot easier because it allows processes from different applications, environments, and operating systems to be dependent upon each other."

CA Automic Workload Automation provided UNT with full cross-application automation that matches what they had on the mainframe. Packaged and custom application integration capabilities, easy development environment, and central management of all processes, CA Automic Workload Automation exceeded expectations.

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