

ServiceSPAN

Java™ CAPS accelerates back-office resolution times for CSP customers

Customer Success Story

Industry

Telecom

Issues and Challenges

- Streamline back-office work item processing for CSP customers
- Automate sub-tasks to accelerate resolution time frames
- Bridge data silos to get the right information to the right people at the right time

Customer Requirements

- Configurable application that easily incorporates custom business logic
- Proven infrastructure that runs the business integration platform with no performance penalty
- Comprehensive support and training for applications and systems

Sun Products/Services

- Systems: Sun SPARC Enterprise® and Sun Fire™ servers
- Software: Java™ CAPS and the Solaris™ 10 OS
- Services: Sun Professional Services, SunSpectrum™ Support Services, Sun Learning Services

Sun Partner Products

- ServiceSPAN Work Center Manager
- ServiceSPAN Professional Services and Managed Systems Operations
- ServiceSPAN Training

Results

- Improved work center productivity
- Lower operating costs
- Faster service delivery
- Continuous improvement through flexible infrastructure

Back-offices are the “trenches” of Communications Service Providers (CSPs). What happens there directly impacts the success of the business, and the right technology can make all the difference. By incorporating Java™ CAPS into its flagship Work Center Manager product, ServiceSPAN, a Sun OEM partner, has made it possible for its CSP customers to dramatically improve back-office work center productivity, cut operations costs, and deliver better services, faster.

No more slogging through work items

The back-office work center plays a key role in the CSP’s overall service fulfillment process, and typically handles a variety of work items relating to service management, exception management or the implementation of new services. Unlike front-office tasks — where customer service representatives and automated systems take customer orders, handle billing inquiries and other service requests — the back-office work items are usually not “high touch,” meaning little or no customer interaction takes place.

Resolution of customer issues typically requires research, which may require tapping into multiple databases, so manual processes are the norm. As a result, resolution times can be slow; tasks can be repetitive and back-office staff can quickly become overworked, slogging through backlogs of work items.

Accelerating these back-office processes requires a high level of connectivity and integration with the CSP’s operations support systems (OSS) infrastructure. The solution needs to bridge dispersed databases, integrate multiple applications, and connect users in many different locations — preferably via a common interface.

That is why ServiceSPAN selected the Sun Java Composite Application Platform Suite (Java CAPS) as a foundation technology for its Work Center Manager product, and why so many CSPs have selected Work Center Manager as their back-office work center solution.

“We chose Java CAPS because it enables our customers to radically reduce work item handling times,” said Dan Corcoran, CEO of ServiceSPAN. “Specifically, we use it for its integration components, business process management capability, and as an anchor to our use of SOA across Work Center Manager, which is a configurable application we created for the management, presentation and resolution of manual work items. Our customers use it at an application level, a cross-application level or as a reusable component across an enterprise.”

High configurability, no performance penalty

Service providers use Work Center Manager to manage the completion of end-to-end business processes such as service activation or termination and outage management. For example, when customers complain that their phone service is interrupted, the service provider must coordinate many potential activities to solve the problem, including updating the

mainframe operational system, invoking the work order management system to schedule a service, or notifying a partner to alert them of a technical problem.

Work Center Manager allows the service provider to control a large number of parallel instances of these complex processes, and uses Java CAPS to communicate with all the associated operational systems and to control the workflow of the service personnel involved.

The Work Center Manager application is highly configurable, meaning customers can add their own business rules and quickly implement a solution that can be leveraged across the enterprise.

Once configured, the application delivers a browser-based presentation to users, which aligns with each user task involved in completing manual work. That alignment is then controlled by management in real-time to calibrate and align groups of users with the objectives and goals of the organization, resulting in faster resolution times and better business results.

Java CAPS extends the capabilities of Work Center Manager by providing a lightweight, modular, pluggable business integration platform. With Java CAPS, CSPs can service-enable a large portfolio of monolithic applications efficiently and easily combine existing applications with newly created services.

Sun and ServiceSPAN have worked closely together to optimize Java CAPS for Work Center Manager, and the result for real-world customers is tremendous flexibility with no performance hit.

“The integration of Java CAPS into Work Center Manager has been a big win for our CSP customers, our company, and Sun,” said Mr. Corcoran. “For our customers, the bottom line is higher work center productivity with lower operations costs — and for end users the result is better services delivered faster.”

Dan Corcoran
CEO, ServiceSPAN

“The benchmarking we performed in early 2008 achieved 325 composite application displays per minute (20,000 per hour) on a two server Sun hardware configuration, which delivered sub-second response times to the most processor-intensive transaction in our system,” said Mr. Corcoran.

A recent load test performed with Work Center Manager running on Sun Fire™ T2000 servers showed extraordinary performance of Java CAPS even on an entry-level server. Throughput thrived in an environment where significant concurrent transactions were provided, and performance was linear up through 119 transactions per minute, representing 57,000 transactions per day.

For more information about this Java CAPS performance benchmark go to “Application Load Test” at <http://www.sun.com/software/java-enterprisesystem/javacaps/whitepapers.jsp>.

Proven in real-world CSP environments

The market success of Work Center Manager underscores the benefits of Java CAPS technology, and one particular ServiceSPAN customer — one of the leading providers of voice, video and data services in the U.S. — shows how versatile Work Center Manager can be.

The customer is already using Work Center Manager in a variety of ways in service fulfillment and customer support, but recently began a new implementation of the product in its network reliability operations center. The goal: *enhance alarm resolution efficiency*. Specifically, the customer will be using Work Center Manager to add sub-task automation around manual processes currently required for resolving network alarms. For the manual work that remains, Work Center Manager provides an efficient browser based desktop for completion of work.

“Essentially, our application increases visibility into the customer’s network alarms and makes fixing the alarms much more efficient,” said Mr. Corcoran. “Our software ties together the alarm management system with research from a variety of sources such as circuit inventory, outage planning, and automated test and field dispatch systems. Information is provided in a composite view for center personnel so that the root cause of a problem can be quickly determined and the resolution quickly identified and completed.”

Based on supervisor inputs, WCM prioritizes the presentation of alarms and tracks all activities through resolution of the alarm — providing a full audit trail for compliance and other needs.

Network alarm management systems provide an excellent view of the network, but tend to fall short in providing visibility of the resolution process. WCM fills this gap with intuitive dashboards and drill-down reports that give supervisors real-time visibility into the resolution process complete with status and center personnel performance metrics.

Since WCM is so flexibly configurable, the CSP can create specialized business rules, scripts, and composite views for each type of network alarm and each underlying network element. “Rather than feeling like they have minimal control, the back-office staff can now create visibility into what’s going on, get the right information at the right time as opposed to ad hoc, and take the appropriate action faster,” said Mr. Corcoran.

Complementary services, total support

In addition to the technological synergies between Sun and ServiceSPAN, the two companies also collaborate on service and support. ServiceSPAN provides full implementation services and training for its Work Center Manager application, and Sun supplements those offerings with technical support for Java CAPS and its full array of server and storage systems.

Learn More.

Get the details about Java CAPS at www.sun.com/javacaps.

For more information about ServiceSPAN and Work Center Manager visit www.servicespan.net.

ServiceSPAN

sun.com/customers

Sun Microsystems, Inc. 4150 Network Circle, Santa Clara, CA 95054 USA **Phone** 1-650-960-1300 or 1-800-555-9SUN **Web** sun.com



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