

SAP Customer Success Story Public Sector – Regional Government Services



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Markus Fahss, Operations Manager, Landschaftsverband Rheinland (LVR)

AT A GLANCE

Company

- Name: Landschaftsverband Rheinland (LVR)
- Location: North Rhine–Westphalia, Germany
- Industry: Public sector
- Products and services: Regional government services
- Employees: 14,000
- Web site: www.lvr.de
- Implementation partner: Redwood Software

Challenges and Opportunities

- Nonintegrated, heterogeneous IT environment
- Inadequate support for complex, cross-system dependencies
- Rapidly growing business-process workload
- Inadequate scheduling solution for multiple systems and applications

Objectives

- Implement application workload management solution across heterogeneous IT landscape
- Enable cross-system dependencies
- Support overnight processing needs of newly deployed system
- Distribute workload across multiple machines
- Monitor all jobs across all systems from a single console
- Intercept ad hoc jobs submitted by users

SAP® Solution and Services

- SAP® Central Process Scheduling application by Redwood

Implementation Highlights

- Length of implementation: 2 weeks
- Number of users: 5,000

Why SAP

- Proven ability to manage IT workload across heterogeneous applications
- Comprehensive functionality
- Superior integration
- Long-standing user of SAP software

Benefits

- Robust, enterprise-wide scheduling of business-process workload for both SAP and non-SAP applications
- Improved efficiency and productivity of SAP core software administrators
- Savings in legacy scheduler license fees
- Centralized business-process workload management and control

Existing Environment

- Legacy systems

Third-Party Integration

- Database: Oracle
- Hardware: IBM
- Operating systems: UNIX, Microsoft Windows, IBM

LANDSCHAFTSVERBAND RHEINLAND (LVR)

Rhineland Regional Council Achieves Enterprise-Wide Control with SAP® Central Process Scheduling by Redwood

Faced with the challenge of managing a host of more than 200 servers with different operating systems, the Rhineland Regional Council – Landschaftsverband Rheinland (LVR) – needed a sophisticated job scheduling solution to handle the business-process workload for its SAP® and non-SAP application environment.

LVR provides public services to 9.6 million citizens living in North Rhine–Westphalia, Germany. Services include delivering healthcare to disabled people, providing social welfare to children and young adults, and developing the culture throughout the region. LVR employs 14,000 people across 70 locations, including hospitals, clinics, and specialist schools.

With SAP software deployed at its Cologne data center since 1996, LVR is a long-standing SAP software customer. In addition to SAP solutions, LVR relies upon a range of homegrown and custom-made applications deployed across multiple mainframe platforms to support an array of services.

New System Presents IT Challenges

The planned deployment of SAP software and a new clinical information system (CIS) across 70 Microsoft Windows 2000 servers led LVR to investigate acquiring an automated job scheduler. The business-process workload generated by the new system was beyond the scope of what the existing scheduler could handle. LVR needed a solution that was designed to integrate process automation for disparate applications across a heterogeneous IT environment. The SAP Central Process Scheduling application by Redwood fit the bill.

“It was immediately apparent we would need to invest in a scheduler to support the overnight processing demands of our new CIS application. Obviously, with the new application being Microsoft Windows-based, it was imperative to find a scheduler that would support this platform. We needed support for cross-system dependencies; we also wanted a solution that would allow us to distribute the workload across multiple machines,” explains Markus Fahss, operations manager at LVR.

Superior Process Automation Based on SAP Software

One area where SAP Central Process Scheduling clearly differentiated itself from the competition was through its SAP-based process integration. “Some schedulers we looked at required scripts to be written if you wanted to run jobs. We had no problem like this with SAP Central Process Scheduling,” Fahss says. Touting the centralized management feature of the solution, Fahss adds, “We can also monitor job progress across all processes from a single console.”

“We were keen to work with a vendor who had a close relationship with SAP. Redwood was the first vendor to deliver the new functionality that SAP software provided. . . . This is functionality you don't get from other vendors.”

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“It has been very simple to set up jobs with SAP Central Process Scheduling. Each month we run payroll for 20 of our clients. Each client runs between 10 and 20 jobs. Without SAP Central Process Scheduling we would have to define each business process separately for each client. Of course, this is time-consuming and error-prone,” explains Fahss.

Fahss notes, “We were keen to work with a vendor who had a close relationship with SAP. Redwood was the first vendor to deliver the new functionality that SAP software provided. . . . This is functionality you don't get from other vendors – the best you get from the others are future promises.”

Scheduling Across the Enterprise

In addition to handling business processes that run on SAP software, SAP Central Process Scheduling enables efficient, centralized management and integration of non-SAP applications. This was particularly important to LVR due to its heterogeneous application and operating system landscape. The overnight processing required by LVR's Microsoft Windows-based CIS application was easily managed using SAP Central Process Scheduling.

LVR relies on a mainframe-based electronic funds transfer (EFT) application to send financial transactions to banks. With SAP Central Process Scheduling, the organization can manage the EFT file transfers – as well as other kinds of transfer requests – across a heterogeneous network. In addition, prior to implementing SAP Central Process Scheduling, LVR experienced contention problems when trying to run multiple database backups in parallel. Implementation of the SAP application enabled LVR to manage growing backup requirements with improved efficiency and reduced contention.

Measurable Return on Investment

To be of use, technology needs to deliver measurable value – especially for a public service provider. SAP Central Process Scheduling delivered cost savings in a number of ways at LVR. Fahss observes, “It was taking our SAP core software administrators one to two hours each day to work through the previous night's processing to check the outcome of jobs. They would also spend another hour checking through the log files for our Microsoft Windows-based applications. We've seen savings with SAP Central Process Scheduling in this area as [processing] problems are automatically highlighted. This ensures the core team knows immediately what to investigate.”

In addition to improving the efficiency and productivity of system administrators, LVR realized significant savings in software licensing fees. As Fahss explains, “Prior to installation, we used a mainframe scheduler to launch Microsoft Windows-based processing jobs. We had to pay the vendor an additional fee to use this feature. With SAP Central Process Scheduling we no longer need to pay the license fee.”