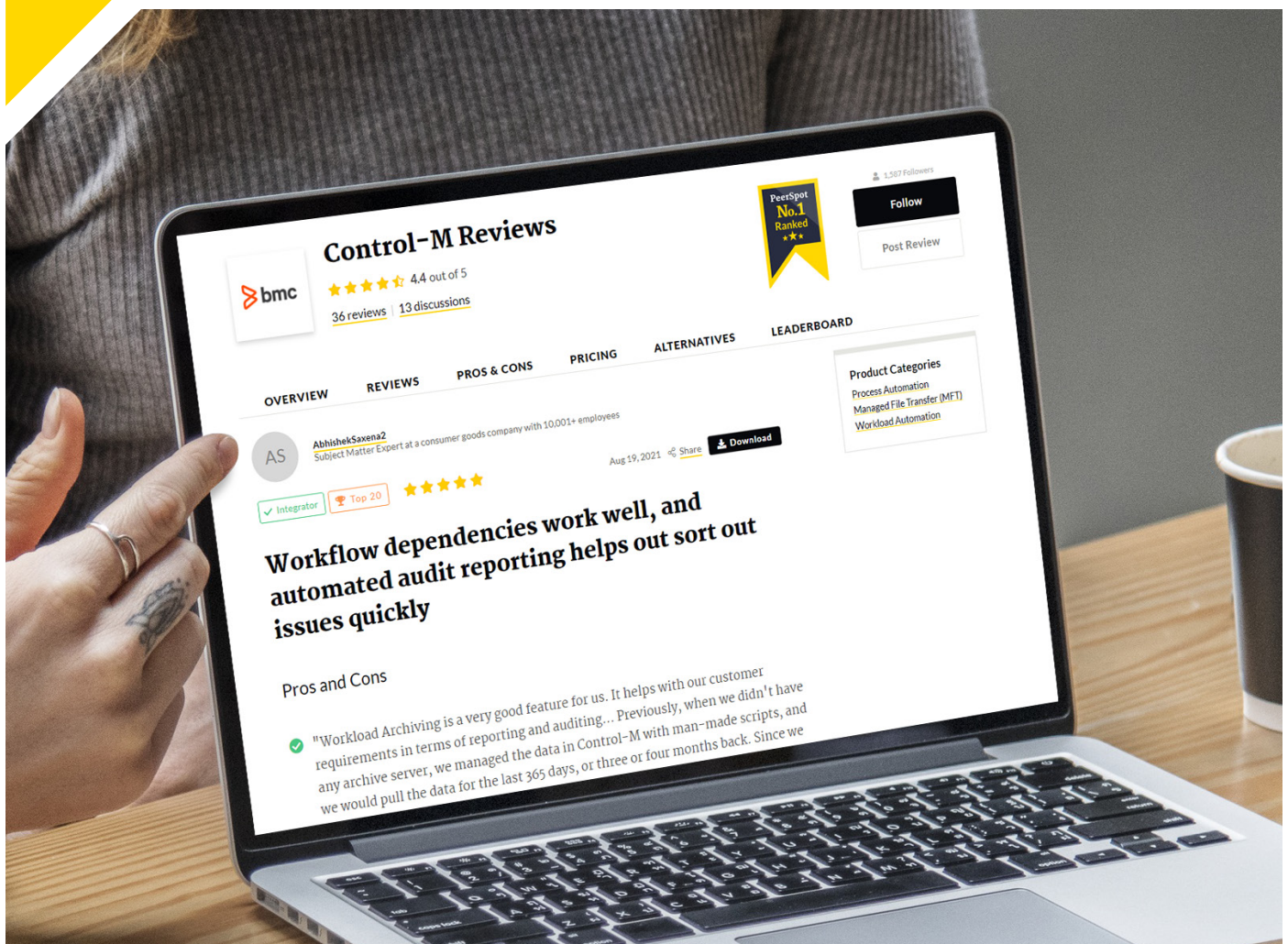


PeerPaper™ Report 2022

Based on Real Control-M User Reviews

Orchestrating Application and Data Workflows Across SAP Environments



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Introduction

SAP is one of an enterprise's most significant technology investments. Companies around the world rely on SAP to keep their businesses running. As a result, IT departments are keenly focused on having their SAP landscapes function properly—while keeping administrative costs as low as reasonably possible. Many organizations are finding that having a solid application and data workflow orchestration strategy and platform is critical. As PeerSpot members who use Control-M from BMC explain, orchestrating application and data workflows across SAP environments requires a platform that can optimize workflows and provide extensive visibility and control. The platform also needs to streamline workflows and data pipelines while enabling efficient management and improved performance.

NOTE: Except where noted, the companies described in this paper have over 10,000 employees.

Overview of SAP Use Cases and Workflow Orchestration with Control-M

Without the right platform, the orchestration of application and data workflows across SAP and non-SAP source systems can be challenging for IT teams. The size and complexity of SAP landscapes tends to make workflow visibility, monitoring, and scheduling problematic. If a workflow fails, the failure may not be addressed quickly enough. Systems get out of sync and business operations can suffer. IT needs a solution that can provide effective orchestration and constant monitoring.

In this context, PeerSpot members are putting Control-M to work in a variety of use cases. For example, a Batch Scheduling Administrator at a software company uses Control-M to provide business services to its customers. The use cases involve Hadoop, many file transfers, and SQL scripts. As they automate their business, the company is using Control-M to connect SAP with databases, Hadoop, Informatica, and other technologies. Figure 1 shows a simplified version of this workflow.



Cuts down on operational staff, costs and time

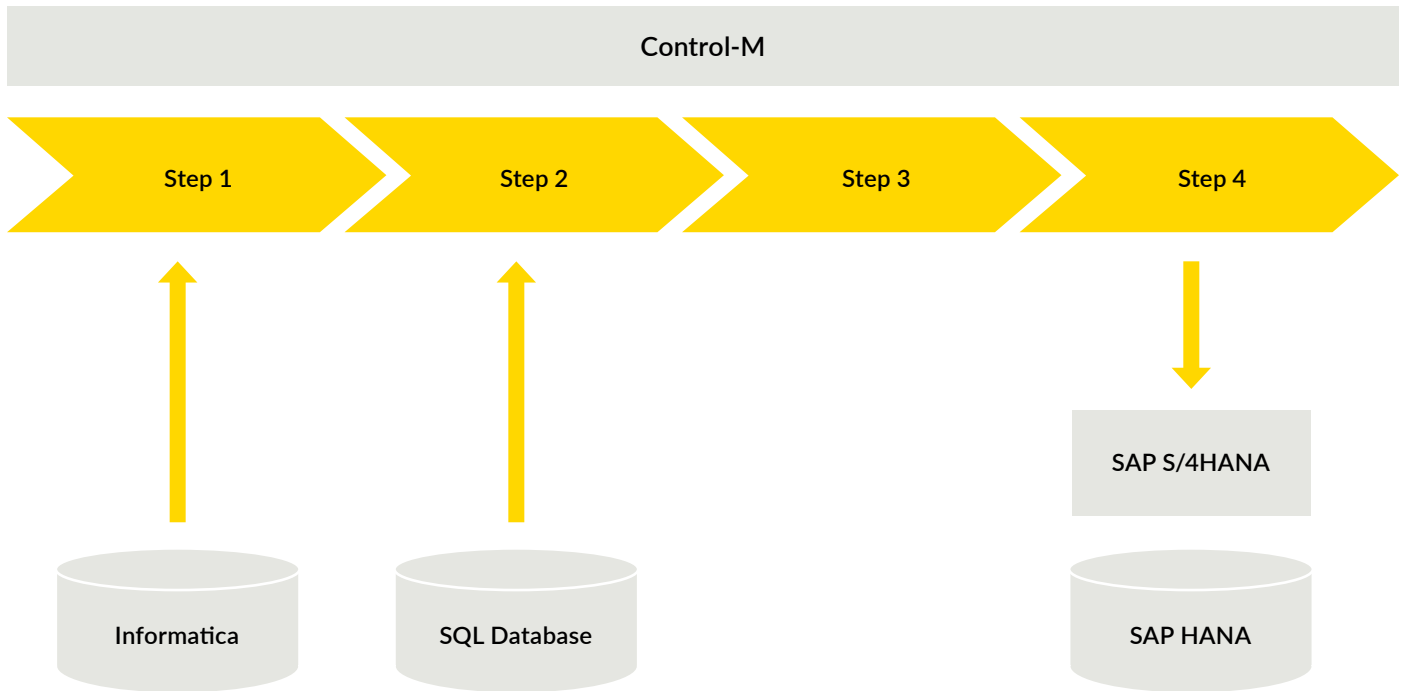


Figure 1 - A data orchestration workflow from Informatica and SQL to SAP HANA.

According to an Operator/Assistant Scheduler at Engen, an energy/utilities company with over 1,000 employees, “Control-M is the primary tool used in our department as an interface between desk jobs and SAP. I create and monitor the jobs in Control-M and that ties into SAP.” A System Programmer at a small educational organization uses Control-M to orchestrate workflows across their SAP environment.

This user said, “We use it for everything financial, like payroll, because SAP is our primary ERP [enterprise resource planning solution]. Our system administrator uses Control-M when he is scheduling batch jobs.” Orchestrating workflows is also the use case for a Senior Associate at a tech services company, who deployed Control-M for orchestrating jobs on Linux, Windows, SAP, and DataStage environments.

At Estee Lauder, the global cosmetics firm, one of their subject matter experts explained, “In my organization, Control-M supports large services and data management. We are mostly using it to schedule jobs in applications, like Informatica PowerCenter, PeopleSoft, and SAP. We are dealing with supply chain issues. Most of the jobs in Control-M are through SAP.” In their case, it is deployed on-premises, but his team is planning to move to the cloud soon.

Regarding orchestration, an AWS Certified Solution Architect at a tech services company with more than 5,000 employees revealed that Control-M provides a unified view to easily define, orchestrate and monitor all of their application workflows and data pipelines. He said, “We didn’t have to go inside the box to find out what was happening behind the scenes. All that was easily showing up on the UI, which was a good part of it.”

“Control-M gives us a unified view where we can easily define, orchestrate, and monitor all our application workflows and data pipelines.”

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“We use Control-M to orchestrate a diverse landscape of vendor products such as Pega, MuleSoft, etc.,” said a VP/ Systems Engineer at a financial services firm. “File transfers and data feeds fetching are quite important for us. So, a lot of data processing happens through Control-M. Control-M provides us with a unified view where we can easily define, orchestrate, and monitor all of our application workflows and data pipelines.”

This user added that with such a diverse landscape, utilizing Control-M helps tie everything together or, as he put it, “act as the glue.” He further remarked, “Once you do that, everything is clearly defined, and you can view these disparate systems using one unified pane....”

Estee Lauder’s Subject Matter Expert commented, “Control-M gives us a unified view where we can easily define, orchestrate, and monitor all our application workflows and data pipelines. We are mostly using SAP and other business warehouse jobs, and we can easily see the systems through Control-M. It gives us a very good view of geographical data. If I go through the Web Services to show things to my customers, they are very satisfied with the Control-M views. They can check historical data and they can see the current view. They can easily pull these up. We are satisfied with the fact that, with one click, we can see all the applications within one view.”

Key Success Factors for Orchestrating Application and Data Workflows Across SAP

A solution that can successfully orchestrate application and data workflows across SAP will be one that can optimize and streamline large-scale and complex workflows. It needs to provide complete visibility, along with improved performance. As PeerSpot members also highlight, the solution has to enable efficient management of workflows on SAP as well.

Optimize Workflows

IT resources are always at a premium, so IT managers prize the ability to optimize workflows. As a Maintenance Manager at a transportation company said, “We are optimizing, saving money for the customers and ourselves, while reducing the number of executions, jobs, etc.” He then shared, “We are definitely seeing more value in reporting on the batch schedules, optimizing it and seeing if we can cut costs.”

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“We have seen quicker file transfers with more visibility and stability.”

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Complete Visibility

Team members who are responsible for orchestrating application and data workflows across SAP need to know what’s happening at all times. Complete visibility into workflows is critical. To this point, the transportation company’s Maintenance Manager said, “With Control-M, you get visibility on your file transfers and how it mostly interacts with your batch schedule. Something gets created, it’s sent over, and then it gets processed.”

He elaborated, describing how Control-M has already been part of the executing, extracting, import, or processing. “Now,” he added, “with the file transfer, customers can see the entire workflow from the data being generated, transferred, and processed. This resolves a lot of complexities because you used to need to contact three different teams to find out if the file arrived and was processed. One tool does all of that now. We have seen quicker file transfers with more visibility and stability. Because data transfers are part of the Control-M tool, they form as part of the normal workflow.” Figure 2 shows what this looks like.

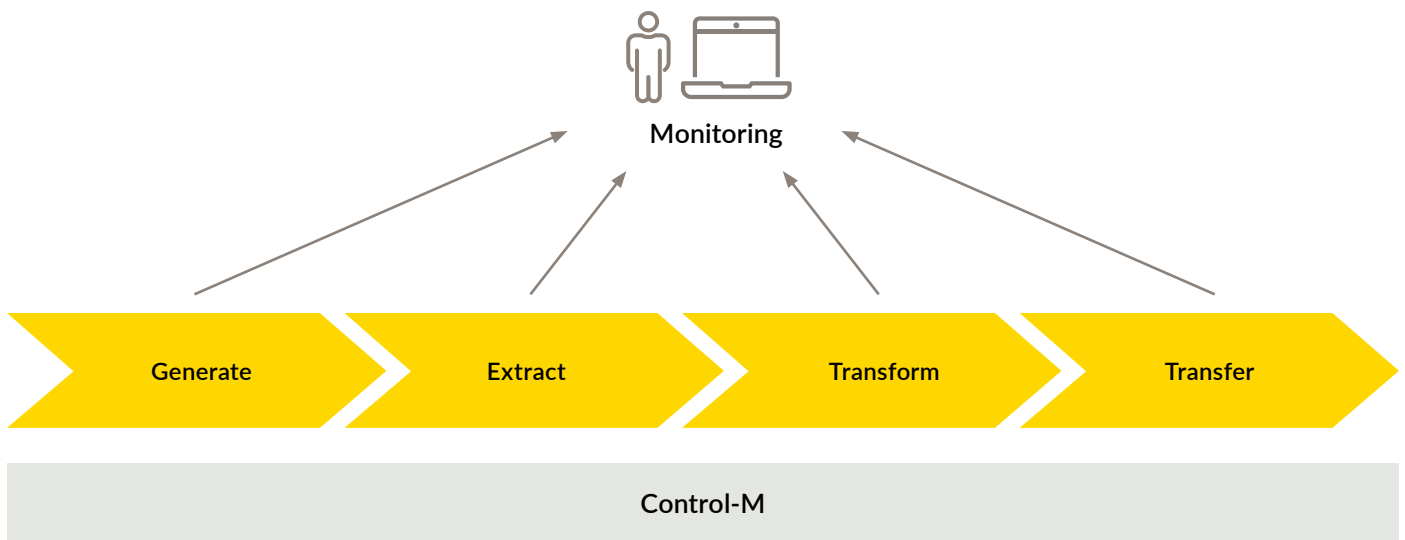
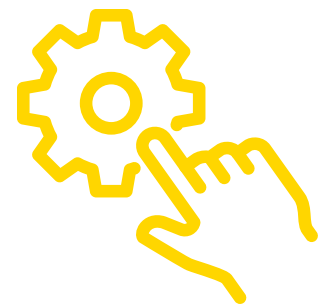


Figure 2 - Monitoring of each workflow step creates constant visibility for IT team members.

This user schedules the majority of his team's SAP jobs on Control-M. As he explained, "We do that globally for all the production plants. We have tens of thousands of SAP jobs and managed file transfer. SAP batch and managed file transfer are critical processes that we have automated." They are in the process of replacing their legacy file transfer solution with Managed File Transfer (MFT) on a global scale.

The financial services VP/Systems Engineer said, "We've built integration between Control-M and our ITSM... and that has certainly allowed us to gain more visibility within our community.... Every time a production job fails, an incident ticket is cut, and that's highly visible. That needs to be escalated too, and there is a much more defined process to be able to resolve that issue. In the past, obviously, when you didn't have that level of visibility or that integration, there was always time lost in identifying what the issue is."

The tech services Senior Associate connected visibility with productivity. In his experience, use of Control-M has led to improvements in service level operations. Fewer team members are required compared to before. He said, "We had a bigger team, and that has been reduced because of Control-M's latest features, like development. Therefore, a lot of things are now being done by the application team instead of having a separate scheduling team, which has now been reduced."



**It makes
processes very
streamlined**

“Now, we are able to control real-time monitoring and real-time notification of any failures that would occur within the system.”

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He added, “The application team is currently being trained to handle more things on their own. They also have visibility on what jobs are running and what jobs are failing. Multiple critical processes have been automated. Automating these processes provides more visibility to our application team. They can see critical jobs failing and immediately taking action in Batch Impact Manager (BIM).”

Improved Performance

An effective solution for orchestrating application and data workflows across SAP should improve the performance of the teams who use it. For Engen’s Operator/Assistant Scheduler, “Control-M has helped us improve Service Level Operations performance. It helped us from the monitoring perspective. Now, we are able to control real-time monitoring and real-time notification of any failures that would occur within the system.” They run Control-M 24/7, with mobile notifications for any failures. This further improves service delivery performance.

In Engen’s case, one of their main focuses for Control-M is the notification tools and its ability interface with SAP. He added, “Our SAP jobs are fairly critical, because there are a lot of collections from a financial aspect coming through on a daily basis. From that regard, Control-M is fairly critical for us. We need to know when and if jobs fail since that has an impact on the collection of money.”

“Issue resolution, with Control-M in place, is about 90 percent faster”

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In addition, as this user remarked, Control-M “has the ability to notify people about jobs and schedules based on prerequisites, because this is not something that we can actually do within SAP. For example, if one job is dependent on another job completing, SAP doesn’t have this capability. This is why we went with Control-M.”

Estee Lauder also saw improvements in Service Level Operations performance after they adopted Control-M. Their subject matter expert said, “We have some monitoring tools in Control-M and our service SLAs have definitely improved. We have a ticketing system integrated with it and we can easily monitor the SLAs for tickets generated through Control-M. If the person responsible for a ticket will not handle it in the right amount of time, the ticket will pop up with a message saying it’s in danger of breaching the SLA. Our service levels are much higher with Control-M, when compared to other tools.”

Some users were able to quantify their performance gains:

- “Our service-level operations performance has improved by 80% with the use of Control-M.” - Senior Associate at a tech services company
- “Issue resolution, with Control-M in place, is about 90 percent faster, because most of the issues are resolved without intervention. It has also helped improve Service Level Operations performance by between 80 and 90 percent.” - DevOps Expert at Saint-Gobain ADFORS CZ s.r.o., a wholesaler/distributor

“Our service-level operations performance has improved by 80% with the use of Control-M.”

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Streamlined Workflows

Automation that streamlines SAP workflows helps team members get more done while using fewer resources. The financial services VP/Systems Engineer elaborated on this idea, saying, “We’ve automated many time-consuming business reports and other things that were very manual and took a tremendous amount of manhours. We’ve also automated a lot of maintenance using Control-M.”

In this case, Control-M is integrated with the Ansible Tower automation solution. They can run Ansible playbooks and Ansible job templates. He said, “With the scheduling capability and the multitude of integrations that Control-M offers, it really acts as the unifying glue and as a communicator and orchestrator across the enterprise. With Ansible Tower, you can run a number of playbooks through it to perform patching and reboots and whatever maintenance that the infrastructure teams require.”

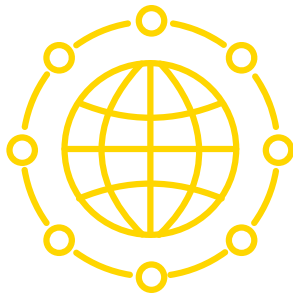
Ultimately, as he shared, “With Control-M, you can see that and you can actually enact workload policies to put jobs on hold prior to running Ansible playbooks. Once your Ansible playbook is complete, you can release the jobs again by deactivating the workload policies. So, it makes those processes very streamlined.”

The tech services Senior Associate described using Control-M to streamline the company’s data, though they use other tools to view and run analytics. For his time, “The major work that we do is creating and adding those jobs to the tool.”

Efficient Management

Teams that are responsible for SAP orchestration workflows prefer to work with efficient management tools. The tech services AWS Certified Solution Architect spoke to this need when he said, “The scheduling and management were really good. Monitoring was also better. It had a good visual presentation. It showed me charts and all such things. It was really good...”

The software company Batch Scheduling Administrator discussed the need for efficient self-service management. He said, “It is really important that our clients can manage their own application workflow with full autonomy. Our customers are using this capability a lot and it helps because we don’t need to be present when they want to perform a simple task.” In his view, it is better for the customer because they don’t have to wait or ask to have something changed. “They can just do it themselves,” he said. “Also, it’s better for us because we have more time to do other things.”



**Very good view
of geographical
data**

“Instead of the customers contacting us to find out what happened, when it happened, and why it happened, they are able to service themselves,” said the transportation company’s Maintenance Manager, echoing the previous sentiment. He added, “It is easy to just search for jobs, files, etc. This allows us to cut down on operational staff, costs and time because customers can manage it themselves to a degree.”

What stood out to a Senior Systems Analyst who uses Control-M Managed File Transfer at The Stamford Group, a recruiting/HR firm with over 200 employees, was that the product works well with the modules. He said, “For example, if you have MFT..., you can link that to processing jobs. You can use other modules as well and sort of control them for SAP or various other products. The alerting is very good, so you can send out SMS messages or emails to people if there’s a problem overnight and they get an immediate alert.” He also liked Control-M’s flexibility, saying, “If a user came along and said, ‘I don’t want to use it the way you’re doing it, I want to do something completely different,’ that would be possible as there are many different options of ways to use the product.”

Conclusion

Working with SAP is a given in almost every sizable business. The challenge is to keep the SAP landscape operating well, while maintaining an efficient IT operation. In particular, some teams struggle with orchestration of application and data workflows across SAP environments. Control-M has proven to be an effective solution in this regard. It enables IT to streamline and optimize SAP orchestration workflows. The platform offers extensive visibility and control, management efficiency, and improved performance.

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