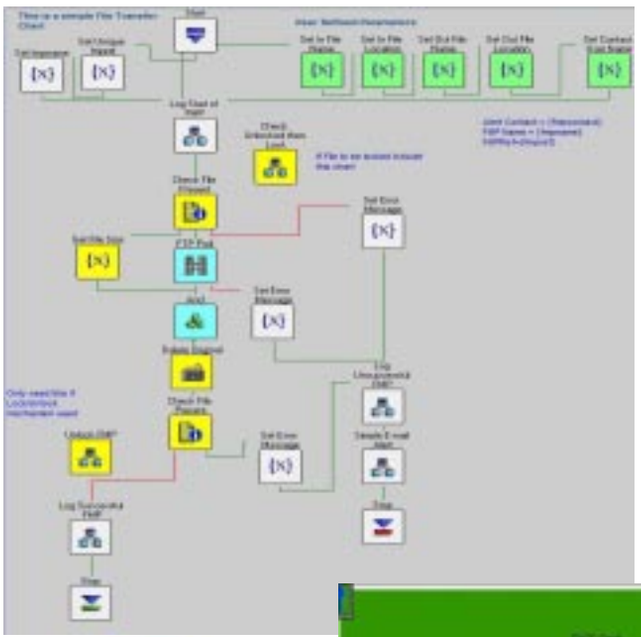
# London Borough of Barnet

BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

## A Story of Vision and Success in Integrating the Multi-Platform Application Environment



Todays IT environment is radically different from 10, or even 5 years ago.
Gone are the days of the mainframe, with its one operating system, standard file formats and easily managed inter-application dependencies and control. Schedulers such as Helmsman and JFCF made it easy to automate and control applications. Not to mention single point of problem notification provided by a system console with ever watchful operators.
The environment now consists of many servers, of different types, running applications using different database platforms and written in different languages.
Even though there are now applications vendors who will sell one package for all an organisations needs, from Financial Systems through to Revenues and Benefits and Housing systems, the end user and IT departments are looking for best value products that perform each function the way they want it.
No longer is it good enough for the IT department to buy such a Global package. Each department can buy its own chosen solution and often even hardware to run it on.
The end result, therefore, is often many applications running on many servers of different types, sometimes even in different locations.
And, of course, most of the applications want to pass data to, and receive data from, other applications. Do we need a host of people to control these application data transfers?

> The adoption of a SAP ERP solution and the migration of our mainframe Revenues & Benefits systems to the windows based Pericles system would significantly change the volume, complexity and business criticality of the batch processing and interfacing that would be operating in a windows environment
>
> *Steve Brooks, Interim Head of Information Systems, London Borough of Barnet*

PTC SOFTWARE
Maximising IT Performance

case study

# London Borough of Barnet
# Automating to Improve and Save

## The Risks & Dangers of Application Data Sharing

We all know the risks and dangers involved when multiple applications pass data between them. How often do we find that a process has failed due to incorrect data? A simple **missing file** is often enough to bring an application to its knees. But more dangerous than that is the application that quite happily continues without a particular input file, so processing can continue without data that should have been there, but has disappeared for some technical or procedural reason. How many Christmases have been spoiled because the benefits payments run failed to pass its data to the BACS system for payment.

The opposite problem, of **a file being processed twice**, is even more dangerous. The tales of Direct Debit payments being taken more than once from customers accounts, or even Benefits payments being paid twice give everyone a shiver down their back, often provoking the thought 'There but for the grace of god.....'

## S Y N O P S I S

### The Requirement:

To provide London Borough of Barnet with the control and management of data that they were accustomed to in their mainframe environment

### The Resolution:

Implementation of standards for file naming and generation numbering, followed by automation of file transfer and authorisation. A system that:
Knows **when** an interface files is due
Knows **what** generation of a file to expect
Can tell from the data **where** the file is to go
Automatically **transfers** the file
Can have **authorisation** for sensitive files
Can expect **notification** after Cheques and Remittance Advices have been printed
**Alerts** when any problems arise

### The Software:

The PTC Suite consists of a number of Components:
**PTC Scheduler**
Task scheduling and monitoring on Wintel, Unix and Mainframes
**PTC Alerts**
Alert Management that guarantees someone knows
**PTC Availability**
Measures Service Availability and Status
**PTC Console**
Provides a Central Real Time Problem Monitor and Historical Review

### The Benefits:

- Improved service availablity.
- Increased failure prevention.
- Centralised control.
- Streamlined work procedures.
- Significant increase in IT resources made available due to a reduction in day-to-day maintainence.
- High quality of service delivered to citizens of Barnet.

for more information on PTC Scheduler or this Case Study, visit www.ptcsoftware.com or contact us: s o f t w a r e @ p t c . c o . u k

**Steve Brooks relates LB Barnet's reasoning behind their adoption of the PTC Scheduler and Alerting suite.**

We had many years experience of scheduling and operational process management systems from the use of those systems in our mainframe environment. We recognised the importance of those systems when it comes to:

- protecting the integrity of systems and data by reducing the risks of incorrect processing
- carrying out batch processing for systems in a timely fashion
- securely capturing and reporting process failure any time day or night
- providing tighter integration of loosely interfaced systems
- providing an audit trail of operational processing
- minimising staff time and cost spent managing batch processing

Whilst we had lots of experience of this in the mainframe arena, we had yet to emulate that in our Windows server environments. Why? Well because the majority of the Windows based systems at that stage had limited and simple batch processing requirements, limited and simple interfacing needs and low demands in terms of timeliness of processing. So, we could survive with some basic scripts to meet the scheduling needs.

That all changed with the migration of a number of our mainframe systems to a Windows based SAP ERP solution in August 2005. And the further expected migration of our mainframe Revenues & Benefits systems to the Windows based Pericles system in April / May 2006. These changes would significantly change the volume, complexity and business criticality of the batch processing and interfacing that would be operating in a windows environment. It was those changes that demanded a rethink of the need for an effective scheduling and management system and confirmed that such a system was necessary for all those reasons stated above.

*"We have made considerable savings in resources by automating our interfaces between applications, " said Steve Brooks, Interim Head of Information Systems, London Borough of Barnet "plus the obvious benefits of efficiency improvements and customer service we get by doing it right first time every time".*