

Fortune 500 Corporations

Clients Count on Stratus

Improving operational management of mission-critical systems with VOS Essentials from Stratus and ARI

Business situation

For businesses that execute thousands of financial transactions each day, the reliability and speed of their processing platforms are crucial for business success. Major financial services enterprises rely on Stratus® VOS systems due to their unmatched availability and operational simplicity. Employing teams of operators to run hundreds or thousands of jobs each day, these organizations are constantly seeking ways to streamline resource utilization, control costs and quickly resolve production issues.

An analysis of the processing environments in our three VOS customer examples revealed specific areas that would benefit from operational improvements:

- **A major US Options Exchange** running multiple Stratus VOS modules wished to incorporate automation techniques in order to control the overall system with fewer operators
- **A leading US credit card processor** that handles payment transactions for more than 1,100 card issuers nationwide needed to automate the execution of thousands of jobs each day on the VOS system
- **A major US brokerage firm** wanted to gain visibility into the performance of its Stratus VOS production module to assist in troubleshooting and capacity planning activities.

"We've implemented the Scheduler to consolidate, simplify and secure all our process management activities (startups/shutdowns, batch, etc). The product automatically restarts and restores any failed applications and frees us from the tedious task of monitoring our system."

Chief Information Officer

Quick Facts

Sold and Supported by Stratus

Solution profile

- Improves efficiency and reliability of production system environment
- Enhances visibility into system performance
- Reduces risk of operator error
- Automatically resolves potential problems without interruption
- Operates 24x7 without operator intervention

Products

- VOS Essentials from Application Resources, Inc
- Stratus VOS operating system
- Stratus Continuum® and V-Series systems

Services

- Ongoing technical support from Stratus

Common to all three enterprises was a mission-critical IT environment that depended not only on the reliability of the Stratus VOS systems, but also on the integrity of the operational processes and the people that run those processes. Each company realized that it was imperative to incorporate tools to help manage these sophisticated IT environments.

Business objectives

Improving the operational management of mission-critical business production systems meant developing or acquiring VOS system tools that fulfilled the following objectives:

- Automate process scheduling and monitoring as much as possible
- Reduce the likelihood of human error during execution of VOS system processes
- Increase visibility into VOS production system activity and performance levels
- Generate timely alerts and analyze performance data

Business solution: VOS Essentials

Each company selected the VOS Essentials toolkit to optimize the management of its Stratus VOS environment. For more than 25 years, Softmark, Inc. and Application Resources, Inc. (ARI) have been dedicated to helping customers optimize their use of Stratus VOS systems through customized software and professional services. Today, all of these proven solutions are sold and supported by Stratus.

Count On Stratus™

The VOS Essentials solution suite includes several tools that are designed to streamline resource utilization and enable IT staff to quickly resolve or prevent performance problems. Each of the VOS Essentials tools can be fully deployed within hours or days, is easy to use and involves no changes to business applications. Among the tools selected¹ were the:

- **MENU system:** organizes VOS system applications behind an intuitive user interface that presents options to users according to their security profiles, and records all activities, including detailed information about any security violations
- **Alert Manager (LAMS):** monitors system elements, automatically executes user-defined corrective procedures and funnels critical alerts to the system operator
- **Job Scheduler and Monitor:** automates application startup, shutdown and batch processing according to a predefined schedule, monitors running applications and recovers failed processes
- **Performance Monitor (PERF):** monitors, displays and records system performance, generates real-time and historical data reports and issues alerts

“...we are now able to quickly identify and resolve any potential application bottlenecks. The product also helps us track and learn where and how system resources are spent.”

Chief Information Officer

Business impact

The major US Options Exchange deployed two of the VOS Essentials tools to help automate the operation of its multiple Stratus VOS modules. Now, operators initiate VOS command execution through the intuitive MENU system, which streamlines system operation while eliminating command input errors and logging operator activity. The LAMS module monitors all VOS applications and their queues, issuing alerts upon detection of any abnormal behavior. Using VOS Essentials, the Options Exchange has more control over operations with fewer staff and is able to proactively handle issues before they become problems.

The major US credit card processor selected the Job Scheduler and Monitor tool to automate the execution of more than 2,000 jobs each day. The tool automates the start and finish of each job, properly sequencing process execution by ensuring the successful termination of one job prior to the start of another. The Scheduler starts some jobs based on an external event — with no human intervention — as

¹ See your Stratus sales representative for complete information on the VOS Essentials tools.

configured by the system administrator. All running applications are monitored, failed processes are automatically restarted and a detailed audit trail is logged. With very little system overhead, the Job Scheduler and Monitor enables the credit card processor to fully automate its complex processing activities, while reducing the risk of production disasters.

Within a couple of hours, technical staff at the major US brokerage firm had installed the PERF tool, learned how to use it and begun monitoring and recording all aspects of VOS system performance. PERF displays a list of all running processes and their use of system resources, giving technical staff real-time information needed to troubleshoot production problems quickly. Running a server in the background, PERF collect VOS system utilization data every minute, records the data to a file and transfers the file to a PC for offline analysis. The system administrator uses PERF to create weekly spreadsheet-based performance charts, which are used by IT management for system optimization and capacity planning purposes. With its powerful monitoring and analysis capabilities, PERF is recognized as a critical component of this brokerage firm's operations management system.

ARI's VOS Essentials toolkit has substantially improved the overall operation of each of these organization's Stratus VOS production environment. By automating manually-intensive procedures and enhancing visibility into system performance, the tools enable IT staff to run complex production environments with greater ease and reliability. In each case, VOS Essentials increases operational efficiencies and reduces risk, enabling IT management to spend less time overseeing production — and more time focusing on strategic initiatives.

About Stratus

Stratus Technologies focuses exclusively on helping its customers keep critical business operations online without interruption. Business continuity requires resiliency and superior availability throughout the IT infrastructure, including virtual environments. Stratus delivers a range of solutions that includes software-based high availability, fault-tolerant servers, availability consulting and assessment, and remote systems management services. Based on its 28 years of expertise in product and services technology for total availability, Stratus is a trusted solutions provider to customers in manufacturing, health care, financial services, public safety, transportation & logistics, and other industries. For more information, visit www.stratus.com.

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