

Jabil and iWave Transport Manager

Jabil Circuit, Inc. (NYSE: JBL) is a global leader in the Electronic Manufacturing Services (EMS) industry, offering innovative manufacturing and supply chain solutions to world-leading electronics and technology companies across a broad range of industries. Founded in 1966, Jabil has 85,000 employees with annual revenue approaching \$12 billion. The company currently operates 55 facilities in 21 countries.

The Challenge

Over the past five years, Jabil experienced explosive growth that created the need for extensive operational changes. As a result, the company was forced to introduce a large number of new projects into its SAP environments to support Jabil's expanded operations. The Jabil SAP® team discovered they spent an inordinate amount of time managing their transport requests and wanted to find a more efficient way to control their change management process.

Jabil identified the following challenges:

- The need to efficiently manage complex, large scale projects involving multiple transports while maintaining the ability to effectively execute smaller projects. Previously, Jabil used SAP's built-in workflows and discovered it could not sufficiently fulfill its needs. Jabil's transport management process consisted of spreadsheets and e-mails to track transport requests and results. This process was cumbersome and time-consuming, and the risk of errors was high. In addition, SAP lacked built-in tools to easily check object dependencies before moving transports across the landscape.
- The ability to quickly recover from mistakes or faulty transports. A faulty transport can be disruptive or sometimes devastating to a company's SAP infrastructure. SAP's built-in workflow lacked the capability to undo a transport and return the application to its previous state. For particularly critical transport failures, much time and energy were expended tracking down developers – sometimes in the middle of the night, and occasionally in different countries.



Customer Quote:

"Transport Manager allows Jabil to identify issues before they become problems. But if we discover an erroneous transport, Transport Manager's rollback saves us time and money, so our systems are not down. Although we've had to use it infrequently, it has been a lifesaver for Jabil every time."

Erwin Heblon
Jabil Circuit

Requirements

- Managing Jabil's transport process became a nearly full time job for the Basis team. With so much energy dedicated to managing transports, the amount of time the Basis team had available to spend on other critical tasks was greatly reduced. Jabil decided to evaluate several vendors based on these identified requirements:
- Reduce the amount of time dedicated to transport management.
- Provide the ability to efficiently manage multiple projects.
- Shift the approval of transport requests from the Basis team to the Functional teams.
- Provide an efficient way to manage large projects and associated change requests.
- Identify transport dependencies before any objects are incorrectly overwritten.
- Provide an audit trail for the movement of change requests and the associated approvals.
- Possess the capability to undo a transport.

Approach

Jabil selected iWave's Transport Manager to facilitate its transport management process. One of the key reasons Transport Manager was selected is because it has functionality that allows an administrator to rollback or undo a faulty transport. In addition, Transport Manager is completely written in ABAP, which allows Jabil to consolidate its entire transport management process within SAP, eliminating the need for disparate systems, manual actions, and having to purchase additional software or hardware.



CASE STUDY

Results

Transport Submission and Approval Process Before:

- The entire transport process was managed using spreadsheets, e-mail or other manual processes. Approval requests were handled via e-mail or telephone.
- Jabil's multiple SAP environments, projects, and upgrades resulted in high transport volume. As a consequence, the manual transport process was a resource drain.
- Managing transport routes in a complex landscape was cumbersome using the tools provided by SAP.
- Success or failure notification related to transport movement was occasionally omitted.
- Documentation related to the movement of change requests was inconsistent or incomplete.

Automated Transport Submission and Approval Process After:

- The time required per day for Jabil's transport management process has been reduced from several hours to just minutes.
- Transport Manager routes messages to the designated approvers based on the contents of the change request.
- Jabil discovered that defining landscapes in Automate!Change is quick and dynamic. Complex transport routes with up to 24 SID's can easily be facilitated through basic configuration or the use of virtual landscapes, allowing Jabil to efficiently manage its complex transport routes.
- Jabil now benefits from the ability to configure automatic notifications that inform selected users of any transport action without intervention.
- When a change request is created, comments and attributes can be required for documentation purposes even before the request is released.
- Transport Manager provides the ability to generate reports based on transport activity and approval. Because Transport Manager tracks all transport details, these reports can be used to create an accurate audit trail of system changes for use with Sarbanes Oxley compliance.

Separation of Duties Before:

- Functional teams were dependent on the availability of Basis personnel for the movement of change requests.
- The Basis team approved transport requests without the knowledge of what they contained.
- Separation of Duties After:
- The actual movement of a transport request is automatic and is seamlessly executed after the designated approval process is satisfied.
- Using Transport Manager's Authorization Matrix, Jabil is able to authorize individual users to have full control over their transports across the landscape. Upon release of a change request, the approval notification is automatically delivered to the designated approver.
- Transport Manager allows users responsible for change to facilitate its movement while enabling the Basis team to focus on other relevant priorities.

Support for Transport Dependencies Before:

- Dependent transports were often moved out of sequence, causing some objects to be overwritten.
- In large projects, there was a threat of losing track of transports.

Support for Transport Dependencies After:

- Jabil now uses Transport Manager's automatic dependency checking routines to prevent transports from being moved out-of-sequence.
- Transport Manager's cluster functionality provides the ability to move an entire project or a subset of a project with a single approval.

Customer Quote:

"One recent project involved more than 1300 transports – an amount unimaginable with SAP Solution Manager Change and Transport System – and would have taken several days to complete. With iWave's Transport Manager for SAP, it took less than 16 hours, with almost no intervention."

Rick Smiley
Jabil Circuit



CASE STUDY

Ability to Recover from Erroneous Transports Before:

Transports that caused errors required the Basis staff to track down developers, frequently at night and sometimes across the world.

Ability to Recover from Erroneous Transports After:

Transport Manager's rollback functionality allows designated users to immediately return the environment to its previous state.

Customer Quote:

"Before Transport Manager, transport management was becoming nearly a full-time job. Now, those tasks take us only a few minutes a day."

Lorena Elkins
Jabil Circuit

What's Next

Transport Manager became an integral part of Jabil's future plans for better management of its SAP environment. For instance, the company will use Transport Manager's transport comparison feature to refresh its SAP systems more often, a task that was previously undertaken only once a year. The Transport Manager team continually evaluates customer needs and includes many of their suggestions in future versions of the product. So, as Jabil continues to grow, its SAP team can continue to rely on Transport Manager to provide them with the most efficient way to manage their transport activity.

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