

BACS Ltd was established in 1968 and has grown into the world's largest clearing house. The company is owned by the major UK banks and building societies and operates under the APACS umbrella.



At the heart of "UK plc"

BACS business encompasses electronic funds transfer, Direct Debits, credits, standing orders and inter-bank network services transacting "UK plc's" financial business.

This is demonstrated by some impressive statistics. Over 40,000 businesses use BACS services which amounts to up to 44 million financial transactions a day. In 1998 this amounted to 2.8 billion transactions. When you think that the majority of salaries are paid via BACS transfer the importance of the service to everyone in the UK becomes clear!

Migrating BACSTEL

Direct access to BACS is via its telecommunications service BACSTEL, and recently they were going through the process of upgrading the hardware platforms from HP NonStop K-series machines to S-series.



As part of this project BACS had a need to ensure that the performance of its systems would not be impacted at any point in what is a complex migration path.

The Project

Here Peter O'Connor, Capacity and Performance Manager for the migration, takes up the story. "The only tool in the marketplace which promised to provide the sort of performance we needed was VersaTest from Ascertainment.

As part of the evaluation process, Ascertainment produced for us, from our specification, a model of BACSTEL input traffic which we can use to generate the submissions using bisync and X.25 connections for our application."

"VersaTest has proved particularly useful in all aspects of the upgrade for measuring the bottlenecks of the migration process; for performance and capacity testing for current and future volumes; for co-residency testing the mix of applications we had on the new platform, and for contingency testing."

Looking Forward

Peter is clear that VersaTest will be invaluable to BACS in the future. "Versatest will be used to benchmark new releases of the application and operating system. It will also be developed further for use as the standard regression test tool."

In summary Peter said, "Before VersaTest we had no method of simulating multiple users coming onto our system simultaneously. Now we have simulated 100 mixed X.25 and bisync terminals randomly sending submissions into the system and have been able to alter the throughput rate and monitor instantly how the applications and systems cope."



business partner

