

Principality

Modernizing a bimodal processing environment with OpCon

Reconnecting the IT Department

When Billy Stewart, IT Infrastructure Operations Manager, started at Principality in Cardiff, the building society was using a scheduling system that was made just for the Unisys ClearPath MCP system called BL/SCHED. As the building society grew, their IT core expanded to include Windows systems, and their scheduling tool couldn't support the new systems. When they realized how disconnected this made their IT department, the search for a new automation solution began. Principality began exploring new automation options that would encompass their entire environment which eventually led them to select OpCon.



With over 150 years of expertise, Principality is the 6th largest building society in the UK.

- Windows, Unisys MCP
- \$9B Asset Size
- Over 500,000 Members
- 70 branches and agencies in Wales

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
IT was fragmented and siloed across multiple system lines	OpCon runs on all platforms, systems, applications, and databases from a single point-of-control	The IT Operations team is not only unified, but also more connected to the business
Disaster recovery process was manual and time consuming	OpCon automates any process with a command line interface or web service	Backups and restores are completely automated, saving time and reducing errors
Mainframe WFLs were massive, unmanageable, and had no save points	OpCon can break up large WFLs and establish points of failure for recovery and subsequent successful execution of the process	Large processes no longer require constant monitoring, which allows operators to spend their time on more important projects

“OpCon helped us build trust from the business that things were actually running”

Philip Allford, MCP Platform Specialist - Infrastructure Analyst

Replacing Silos with a Single Point-of-Control

Billy said that OpCon's "cross-platform integration is the single most helpful thing." Not only has this automation created better business processes and data, it has also broken-down silos that existed between departments. As a result, Principality was able to standardize processing across every platform.

"It's difficult to quantify, but the impact has been huge. We've gotten an awful lot more from this team, and OpCon has facilitated that."

Billy Stewart, IT Infrastructure Operations Manager

On the MCP system, numerous large and complex workflow language processes (WFLs) were easily simplified into OpCon jobs. Not only did Principality greatly reduce the number of WFLs, but they were also able to put in restart points with OpCon. Previously, a monolithic job deck might take all night to run, but if an error occurred during the process, that would mean the entire WFL would have to start from scratch. With replacement workflow in OpCon, and the automatic checks in the job progress, the Principality team can recover from any errors, at any time, without having to restart from scratch.

Another area Principality has automated with OpCon is their backup process. Principality previously used virtual tape systems from Dynamic Solutions International (DSI) to create daily backups. Weekly, the daily backups get written to one tape, offloaded from the mainframe, moved into the DSI library and

then a physical tape was written. This process was all automated by OpCon. "All we need to do is pick up the physical tape and take it downstairs for offsite storage" Philip said. The entire process is reversed for data recovery testing. A physical tape can be put in; and OpCon automates the extracting, moving and loading of the data onto the system.



Unifying and Connecting the Company

Now, thanks to OpCon, the guess work and time padding between platforms is gone, and the data is finally reconciled across all systems. Not only that, but Principality is seeing more uses for OpCon that has helped improve the entire building society. In addition to the core financial system, DevOps, and DRP; Principality uses OpCon to help automate marketing reporting and dashboards, helpdesk requests, SQL operations and more. "This has extended our reach enormously. This group was mainly mainframe, now we tie it all together" Billy said. The IT Operations team is no longer babysitting processes, other departments are not constantly checking on their workflows, and trust across the entire organization grew. These changes enabled more important projects to take priority.