

The PowerCenter Automation Conundrum



Create Real-Time Data Warehousing &
"Agile BI" With Workload Automation

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Introduction:

In recent years, the democratization of analytics and Business Intelligence (BI) solutions has become a driving force in the growing complexity of data integration and data warehousing processes. The use of BI applications is growing exponentially, making data repositories an essential component of enterprise IT organizations.

Add in new forms of data, such as various enterprise resource planning (ERP), inventory and supply chain management (SCM), web services applications, mobile devices, cloud-based sources, Big Data and more, and it's clear just how important real-time data warehouses have become.

IT Boundaries Identified

The extract, transform and load (ETL) and data integration processes to access and integrate large volumes of data from multiple sources are becoming increasingly intricate. These complex data pathways can fail, dependencies cannot be met, systems go offline, all without the visibility into each process step. As a result, reports will be incorrect, late, or both.

While many tools exist to automate the processes used to update data stores, most have significant limitations. For example, many leading enterprise data warehousing and BI solutions come with native scheduling capabilities but these are typically limited in their respective functionality and to scheduling on only that system, leaving IT to rely on error-prone and time consuming scripting to pass data and manage dependencies across the vast array of BI and data warehousing solutions. Developing and testing a custom script or program to automate these processes can take weeks and even months.

Integrate & Manage Workflows Across Data Warehousing Environments

To solve this problem, IT process automation has become a cornerstone that allows IT to efficiently integrate and manage workflows across their data warehousing environments for improved data quality and reporting. Workload automation solutions provide a single automation solution to integrate data pathways into automated, repeatable and schedulable processes that deliver a high degree of control over all steps of the ETL and BI process. A good workload automation solution will simplify the creation of these workflows, reducing or eliminating the custom scripting and/or manual intervention that have been traditionally required to execute these processes.

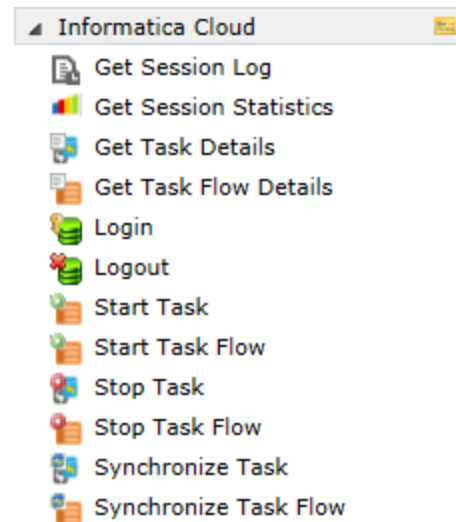
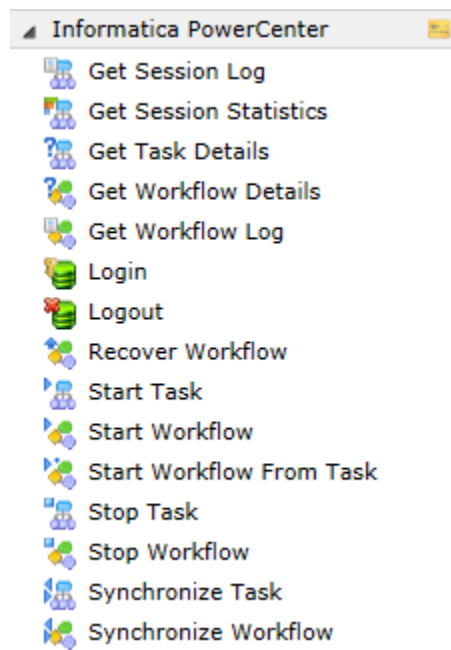
Workload automation solutions should support your particular IT environment by providing cross-platform and cross-application support. Whether you operate a mix of Linux, UNIX or Windows, are using PL/SQL, Java, Web Services, databases such as Oracle or SQL Server, or OpenPGP to encrypt and decrypt tasks, an IT automation solution should be robust enough to handle it all. This should also include direct integration with many of the leading data warehousing and BI solutions on the market today and support indirect integration with other solutions via support for web services, APIs, etc.

Finally, ease of authorship of both simple and complex workflows in a script-less fashion is critical. In addition, tracking and alerting capabilities to increase efficiency, reduce errors and support enterprise objectives to allow IT staff to focus on innovation and efficiency is also important.

Make PowerCenter ETL Scheduling Simpler, Faster & More Reliable

ActiveBatch® Workload Automation from Advanced Systems Concepts, Inc. is a robust Enterprise Job Scheduling and Workload Automation solution that makes Informatica PowerCenter ETL scheduling simpler, faster and more reliable. The ActiveBatch Extension for Informatica PowerCenter provides production-ready Job Steps to automate PowerCenter processes and integrate them within workflows that include other applications, databases and systems, including IBM Cognos, SAP BusinessObjects Data Services, Netezza, Teradata and more.

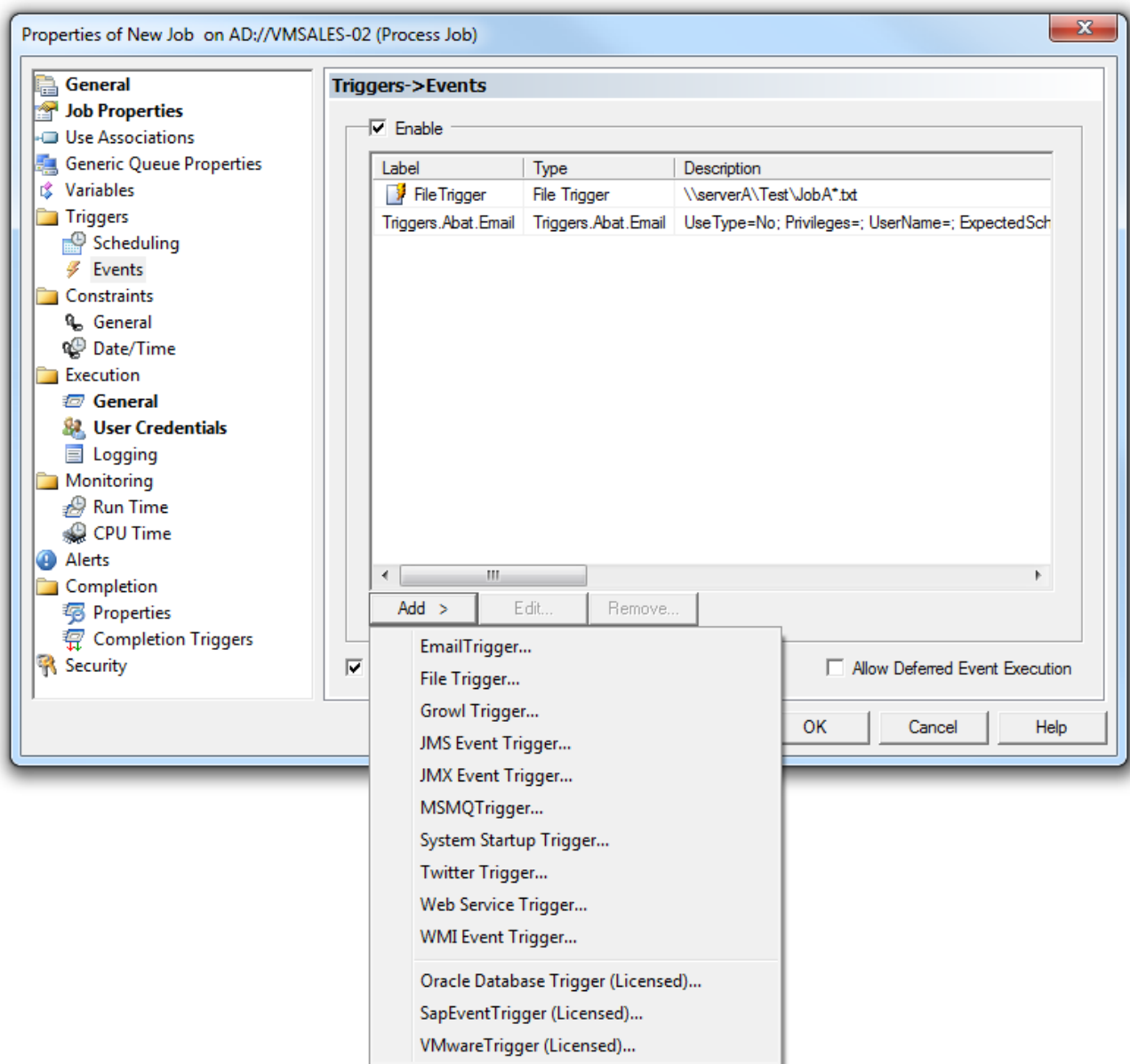
> Integrated Jobs Library Job Steps for Informatica



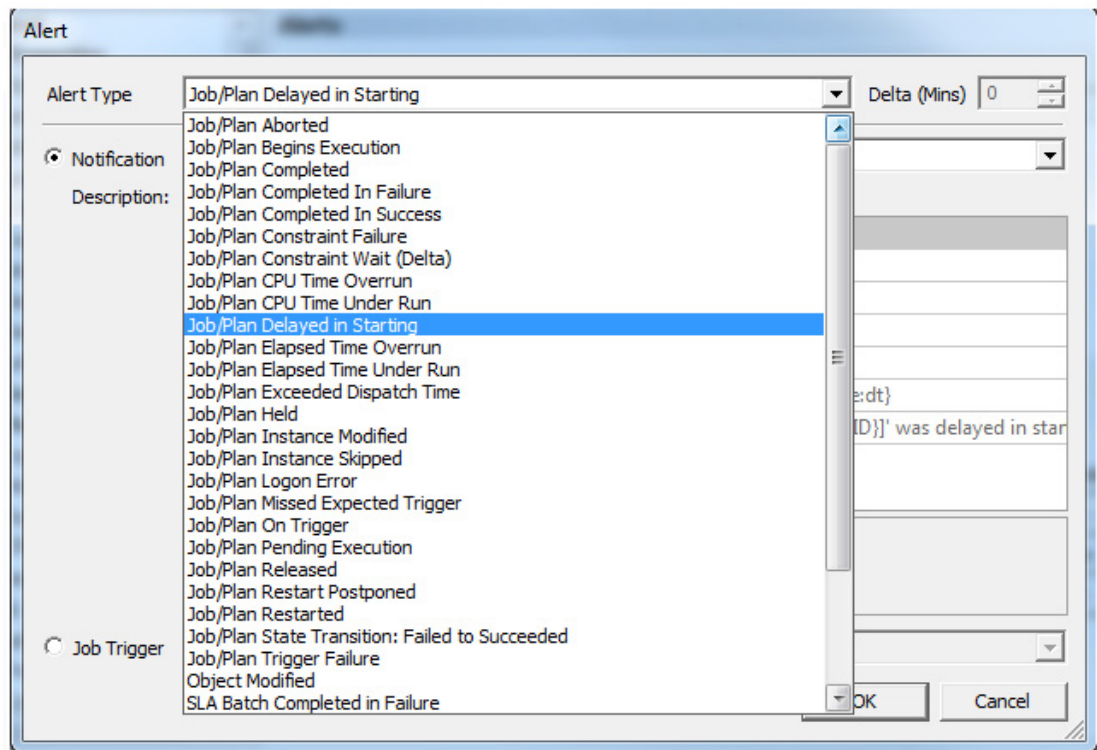
The PowerCenter Automation Conundrum: Create Real-Time Data Warehousing & "Agile BI"

ActiveBatch enhances the automation of these processes with robust scheduling and automation capabilities, including Date/Time scheduling, triggers, event automation, constraints, alerting and monitoring and more. It allows Informatica users to integrate all data pathways into automated, repeatable and schedulable processes that deliver a high degree of visibility and control over all steps in the ETL process, therefore improving data quality through enhanced scheduling capabilities that better manage the dependencies and passing of data between systems and data sources.

> Event Driven Scheduling Trigger



> Job Alerts



For example, using ActiveBatch with Informatica PowerCenter allows a developer to create a workflow that automates the entire ETL and BI process. This workflow could be triggered based on an IT event, such as local data marts downloading a file, then running a PowerCenter ETL job to pull that data into a single repository from which a BI or reporting solution is running off of, run an analysis of that data, generate new reports and distribute them to end users via email.

By using ActiveBatch Workload Automation to centralize the integration and automation of the disparate jobs and tasks that comprise today's data warehousing and BI processes, IT organizations can better meet business demands by more seamlessly updating data warehouses and downstream reporting applications. ActiveBatch makes it easier to build these end-to-end workflows faster and more reliably, reducing IT's reliance on custom scripting, improving data quality through enhanced scheduling capabilities and improved reporting and faster time to insight for the business.

> Integrate Informatica PowerCenter and non-Informatica job scheduling processes into logical workflows without having to create custom scripts

The screenshot displays the Informatica Job Designer interface for a workflow named "Informatica SqlData ETL". On the left is a "Search Job Steps" pane with a tree view containing categories like System Administration, Amazon EC2, Cognos BI, DataStage, Informatica, Netezza, Oracle E-Business Suite, PeopleSoft, SAP, SAP BO Data Services, SCOM, SCSM, SCVMM, SharePoint, Team Foundation, Teradata, and VMware. The main workspace shows the workflow configuration with the following sections:

- Queue:** /QA/PointTests/Sales_Demo/Objects/Queues/localhost
- UserAccount:** /QA/PointTests/Sales_Demo/Objects/UserAccounts/DemoUser1
- Backup (Database (Sql Server)):**
 - ServerName: TESTDBS2
 - Database: Informatica_DEV
 - FileName: \\nas1\softwarelib\Informatica\TestFiles\NameValues_DDBBackup.bak
 - UserAccount: /QA/PointTests/Sales_Demo/Sales Demonstration/TargettedCapabilities/Informatic...
 - Type: Incremental
- Login (Informatica):**
 - ConnectionProperties: InformaticaConnectionProperties
 - WebServicesHubUrl: http://informatica:73...
 - RepositoryName: AbatInformaticaRepository
 - UserCredentials: /QA/PointTests/Sales_Demo/Sales Demonstration/TargettedCapabilities/Informatic...
 - ServiceName: AbatIntegrationService
 - RepositoryDomainName: (empty)
- StartWorkflow (Informatica):**
 - FolderName: Test
 - WorkflowName: SqlData_ETL
 - RequestMode: NORMAL
 - ConnectionProperties: <empty>
 - WaitCompletion: True
 - AdvancedProperties: <empty>
- GetWorkflowLog (Informatica):**
 - FolderName: Test
 - WorkflowName: SqlData_ETL
 - Timeout: 10

A context menu is open over the Login task, showing options: Continue, Stop Sequence, and Fail Job.

The ActiveBatch Extension for Informatica PowerCenter is part of the Informatica Marketplace and has received the Informatica Seal of Approval which "gives you the confidence of knowing that you're using proven tools backed by Informatica's expertise and integrity". The ActiveBatch Extension for Informatica PowerCenter is separately licensed as part of Integrated Jobs Library.



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