



How to consolidate 10 AS400s into one simpler, larger system.

VISUAL Control Performance Planner

## ...about the Company

Boise Cascade Office Products is a premier multinational distributor of office and technology products, office furniture, and paper, with annual sales totaling \$3.5 billion. The company, based in Itasca, Illinois, is a leader in B2B e-commerce with domestic online sales reaching an annualized rate of approximately \$800 million.

### The Problem

Boise Cascade Office Products selected the AS/400 platform as a corporate standard back in 1992. Over the years the Boise AS/400 environment evolved into a regional environment that supported their core order entry processing. By 2001, Boise had 10 separate machines that were managed in three data centers. The Technical Support staff at Boise knew the consolidation of multiple servers into a single, larger system held promise of significant savings. Just how to do it was not obvious.

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### The solution

Boise has been a Performance Planner user since 1999. The initial goal for the product was to replace tedious weekly reporting on the 10 systems. Doug Mewmaw, Manager of Technical Support, said, "I used to spend over a day each week crunching performance numbers into spreadsheets, then printing and distributing them. Now PerfPlan does it all automatically in an hour or two, and it even emails the reports and charts to the addressees."

Having mastered the performance management and reporting capabilities, Boise needed to be able to perform complex modeling on the consolidation of multiple workloads. Using the "What If" function of

multiple workloads. Using the "What If" function of Performance Planner, Mewmaw was able to collect the data from seven selected systems and model their combined workloads on various processors. The "What If" functions include the ability to consolidate workloads from disparate time zones, which was a factor in the analysis. Performance Planner selected the appropriate peak periods from each system, and then Mewmaw was able to validate the consolidated workloads on a target iSeries Model 840-2403. Each workload was modeled into an LPAR, to which varying system resources were allocated until all workloads were assigned the right amount of processor power and interactive feature card resources. "I had been to the LPAR classes at Rochester, and thought this was going to be straight forward. I don't know how I would have done this without Performance Planner", said Mewmaw. He continued, "With Performance Planner, you know very precisely, in advance, how each workload in each LPAR will perform." Performance Planner also generates a report formatted to IBM's LPAR Validation Tool, with all the data needed for validation from IBM.

Performance Planner saved Boise a lot of time and effort, and the consolidation in process will save significant operating costs. Already, Boise has saved \$115,000 annually in the consolidation of the seven machines and the LPAR functionality provided by OS/400 V5R1, through lowered maintenance charges, eliminated license and software subscription fees, etc. Further savings in operations costs such as operator salaries, and reduced space, electricity and air conditioning requirements will be realized when the project is fully deployed.