

newsletter



PGCG

Pretty Good Consulting Group

Got a problem? We create solutions.

**EOM News and Views
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Custom Jobs to the rescue

Extend EOM capability with Custom Jobs to solve tricky problems...

The Custom Job (and precursor User Job) feature has been around in EOM for a long time. The concept is pretty simple - a data stream comes in, the Custom Job executes, usually using the data stream to process or otherwise manipulate content of the data stream, and EOM goes onto the next task. What follows are two recent examples where creating a Custom Job solved the customer's problem.

Got SPIN-X?

EOM has been used in the past to migrate from the O.S. 2200-based SPIN-X software, usually replacing the channel connected Xerox printers with non-proprietary printers. This is fairly straightforward because the DDA feature can search for the embedded DJDE command syntax, remove those commands, and simulate the command actions. Recently, we ran into a customer that was upgrading to an O.S. 2200 system that no longer supported channel (bus & tag) connections but wanted to keep the Xerox printer and continue to use the DJDE syntax. Sounded like a pretty easy job for EOM, but that was not the case. Certainly the O.S. 2200 EOM component could replace the SPIN-X software simply by servicing the SYMQs previously controlled by SPIN-X. The real surprise was that the TCP enabled Xerox printer required a special data format when sending LCDS (DJDE commands) to the Xerox printer via a TCP connection. The requirement is that each line of the data stream sent to the Xerox printer must be prefixed with a byte count and carriage control. DDA would not solve this problem, so a Custom Job was created. The Custom Job creates a new file based on the file received from the O.S. 2200 system that removes the usual carriage control EOM understands (carriage return, line feed, formfeed,...) and creates the prefix required by the Xerox printer TCP connection. This file is then given back to the EOM File Mask process which is configured with a Transfer Job to send the contents of the new file to the Xerox printer.

The really cool part of this solution is that much of the SPIN-X configuration that controlled formatting can be accomplished within the Print Attribute and then relies on individual Command Files for the DJDE commands.

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Need barcodes?

Another customer recently required the 3 of 9 barcode for customer statement printing. The problem was that there were inserting issues when using the standard OMR marks, so using the 3 of 9 barcode would be more accurate and keep a customer's pages together. While EOM can produce the 3 of 9 barcode with ease, the technical difficulty was that the encoded information for the barcode had include information from subsequent pages. There are multiple 3 of 9 encoded formats used for inserters, many of which require that the barcode contain the total number of pages for that particular customer (i.e. on the first page of the statement you would have to know that there 4 pages total for this customer statement). EOM's DDA feature does not give you the ability to look forward in a file, so a Custom Job was written to "look ahead" in the file and insert the required barcode information on each page. Even better, since we had run into other 3 of 9 barcode requirements from other customers in the past, the Custom Job was written so that multiple barcode encoding formats could be produced depending on the insertion equipment requirements.

How do I ...?

This section of the newsletter will discuss solutions to questions that come from real customers trying to solve real problems.
Can I have more than one version of EOM on the same PC/Server?

Yes and No. We are happy to report that you can certainly have multiple EOM versions at your disposal, but you just cannot run more than one version at a time. This is a great way to test new versions or support different versions across your enterprise. The EOM Development gurus report that they have had multiple versions installed on their development PCs for a long time.

The solution is really quite simple - use the EOM Desktop agent. In case you have forgotten (see PGCG Newsletter June '09), the EOM Desktop agent allows the EOM service program to run right from a Windows logged on session. The requirement is that the EOM service is not running at the same time.

There are a few steps required to have access to multiple versions of the EOM software. The general steps are:

- 1) Install the first version of the EOM service software in a unique directory (i.e. C:\EOM71). You may even want to install the EOM client software as a subdirectory of this directory (i.e. C:\EOM71\Client).
- 2) Make a copy of the entire directory from Step #1 above.
- 3) Uninstall the EOM service that you installed from Step #1. The reason you have to do this is because very shortly you will be installing another EOM version and the installation process will not let you install another version if one already exists.
- 4) Install the second version of the EOM service software into a unique directory (i.e. C:\EOM80). Lets assume you installed the client software for this version in a subdirectory of this directory (i.e. C:\EOM80\Client).
- 5) Using the Management Console, set the "Startup type" to "Manual" or "Disabled" for the Services entry "Unisys Enterprise Output Manager" so this version of the EOM does not run automatically.
- 6) Copy the files saved from Step #2 back into the first version directory (i.e. C:\EOM71)
- 7) Create two desktop shortcuts, one that references the eomdesktopagent.exe from \bin directory of the first version install (i.e. C:\EOM71\bin\eamdesktopagent.exe) and another that references the eomdesktopagent.exe from \bin directory of the second version install (i.e. C:\EOM80\bin\eamdesktopagent.exe).
- 8) Start the EOM Desktop agent for the version you wish to run. Run the appropriate EOM client and connect as usual. When you want to stop using that version, right-click the EOM Desktop agent in the taskbar tray and select either "Shutdown / Delayed" or "Shutdown / Immediate". Then, start the EOM Desktop agent for the other version.

Note that the EOM configurations are completely separate, but with current EOM versions it is very easy to export and then import configurations. By the way, if you wanted to do so, you could use the same directories of Command Files, Custom Jobs, Email files, and so on. Just to not share the same Data, Bin, API, Help or LogFile directories.

External Notification

Often we are asked "How do we notify a user that a file has printed?" For example, let's suppose that you wanted to notify a particular person when a payroll check file is printed. A brute force way would be to have a program reading the EOM log file looking for Print Complete records. This is pretty easy with the EOM .Net API, but requires software development and then the on-going maintenance. The program would then blink a light, beep, create an EOM alert, or somehow electronically do the notification.

Easy there an easier way? Yes, there are a couple of ways but with catches.

1) How about using the DDA Start Job command to start an E-mail Job when the file is printed? This is pretty straightforward in DDA, simply create an E-mail attribute with static email addresses (the person or people to be notified). Then in the DDA, one of your DDA Items includes the Start E-mail Job call. Clearly you would not want to have the Start E-mail Job occur multiple times nor when the file is in Print Preview. So, you might have logic that looks something like:

```
DDA Item: TextLines, lines 1-66
  Print Data: Data to Output $CurrentData
  If $PREVIEW is Undefined
    If AlreadySentEmail is Undefined
      Start Email Job using Email Attribute NotifyPayrollPeople
      Set Variable AlreadySentEmail = TRUE
```

The Start E-mail allows you to set the Subject, To:, CC:, From:, and so in the E-mail Attribute Override Settings section of the Start E-mail Job command, either statically in the DDA command or dynamically. So, you could grab an email address somewhere in the file to use instead of the static address in the Start E-mail Job command or the E-mail Attribute.

The catch with this solution is that you would be sending the incoming payroll report to the e-mail recipients, which is probably not what you want. The solution then is to use a Print Attribute on the Start E-mail Job - but as soon as you define a Print Attribute you can no longer use the E-mail Attribute Override Settings. You can set a page range right in the Start E-mail Job attribute now, or have the defined Print Attribute limit the page range (as in send only one page), or use a DDA that uses the END Report command to limit the lines of the report inserted into the email.

2) When the payroll file is received, have the File Mask also create an E-mail Job. This is really easy but there are multiple catches. The first catch is that the notification is sent when the file is received so there could be a delay before the file is actually printed. Then, like the solution above, you probably do not want the entire file received to be emailed with the notification. So, you would have a Print Attribute and DDA to restrict the data sent along with the email. Another catch is that the payroll file could be printed multiple times without additional notification.

3) When the payroll file is received, have the File Mask also create a Custom Job. The Custom Job could be a simple script that submits an email, or rings a bell another way. Again, the Custom Job executes when the file comes in, not when actually printed. You could also use a Start Custom Job in solution #1 above if you did not want to send an email using EOM.

There are other solutions and many variations on the solutions provided above but give you a good start. Clearly the site specific requirements (like how to notify) will dictate the solution.

Whoa - 7.0 & 7.1 decommitted in October?????

You heard right. It was recently brought to our attention that the EOM 7.0 (released in 2005) and EOM 7.1 (released in 2007) are on-track to be decommitted in October of 2010. You already know that EOM versions 6.1 and older are no longer supported. So, it is probably time to take a closer look at EOM 8.0.

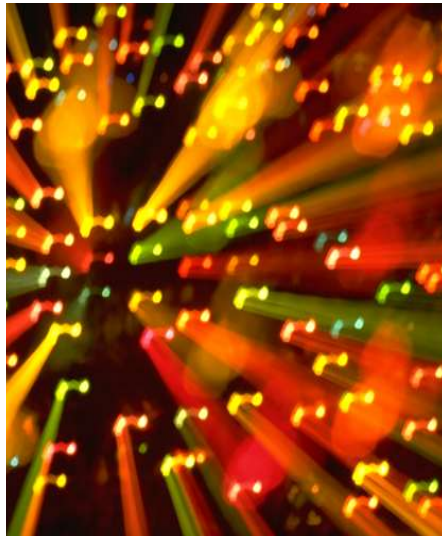
Shameless plug: Multiple customers have successfully used PGCG support time for help with migration, so it does not have to be a painful process.

Who are we?

Highly skilled, creative, solution provider focused on the Unisys Enterprise Output Manager product (formerly known as DEPCON) with a sense of urgency sums up who we are and what we do. We provide general Enterprise Output Manager consulting, migrations, upgrades, configuration, training, and custom programming.

On-site services, remote services, and general consulting are available now.

Why use PGCG? Deep knowledge of the EOM product integrated into a variety of customer environments sets us apart. Our customers production environment depends on solid, working solutions that we provide.



Quick Hits

When using keyword substitution: remember to surround file name keywords with double-quotes. For example, when configuring a Custom Job that passes the file received by EOM, the property "Arguments for command line" might look something like this:
I1="<PCFILENAME>" D1=c:\temp

Reminder: There are Interim Corrections available for multiple levels: 7.0.12, 7.1.8, 8.0.1, and a few Web Assistant versions.

Unisys Customer Education has scheduled web-based EOM classes. The **EOM Basic Workshop** will be held April 13th through April 16th. The **EOM Advanced Workshop** will be held May 10th through May 14th.

Have a suggestion for "How do I ...?" Write a brief description and send it to SteveD@PrettyGoodConsultingGroup.com for future newsletter discussion.

Interested in EOM training? We can either do custom training on-site, via WebEx or arrange for a formal class through Unisys. Please contact us for details.

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