Information EYE

InfoSol and MetaWare Partner to Provide GCOS Conversion Services Utilizing PHOENIX® Technology

As a response to GCOS customer demands, to provide a wider range of transition solutions, InfoSol has signed a partnership with MetaWare Technologies of France.

MetaWare specializes in moving GCOS 7 and GCOS 8 legacy infrastructures to an Open Platform solution environment. Since the company was founded in 1995, they have completed over fifty world-wide customer conversion projects involving over two-hundred million lines of code. The MetaWare conversion process is based on their PHOENIX® Technology toolkit.

"InfoSol has been, and will continue to provide, effective migration solutions to GCOS customers for more than five years," said Paul Grill, President of InfoSol, "With the PHOENIX® Technology from MetaWare, we can now also provide conversion options to take GCOS IDS2, Mantis, and Pacbase applications to commodity environments using ORACLE, Tuxedo, and Weblogic running on open system servers. MetaWare has successfully converted over 30 GCOS 8 and GCOS 7 customers to open commodity environments in impressively short timeframes. They provide an ideal solution for the customer who wants to retain their business applications, but move to commodity RDBMS's like ORACLE and TP systems, like Tuxedo, in open environments."

The PHOENIX® Technology is a unique tool-set, along with a set of processes, for automating the conversion of applications from a Bull GCOS mainframe to an IBM/OS390, UNIX, or Win32 environment.

It provides the customer a technology upgrade path, because the tool uses a "Reverse Engineering" rather than a "Code Translation" or "Emulation/Middleware" migration approach. Because this conversion solution is a tool based automated process, and not a tool assisted manual process, there is a noticeable improvement in the speed at which conversion projects can be successfully completed. On an average, a PHOENIX® conversion project is likely to take less than 40% of the time when compared to an equivalent manual conversion process. Also, the accuracy and the consistency of the transformation process save a lot of time on testing and debugging. Projects are typically completed in "months" rather than "years."

Bull's Future Remains Uncertain

After two years of huge losses, selling off various profitable entities, like the Smart Card business and Integris in Europe, two loans from the French government, amounting to around $400 million, massive layoffs, and upteen reorganizations, the future of Bull remains uncertain.

According to reports in French national newspapers in June, Pierre Bonelli, the President and CEO, plans to recapitalize the company in the first half of 2003. However, if the current shareholders, namely France Telecom (16.9%), NEC (16.9%), Motorola (16.9%), the French State (16.3%), and Dai Nippon Printing (5.3%), do not take part, Bull could be in very serious trouble. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal pointed out that the French government has previously expressed an interest in selling its 16.3% holding, and that the other industrial investors have declined to put up more money to finance Bull in the last few years. This situation may leave Bonelli with the daunting task of finding new industrial investors.
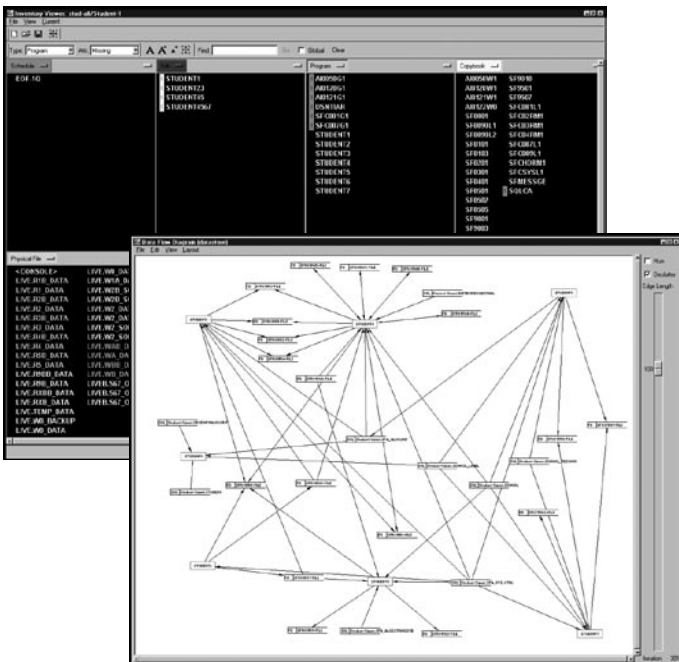
Transsoft Buys blackboxIT to Acquire evolveIT

Transoft, a leading application transformation company, purchased blackboxIT, the UK-based software developer of evolveIT, in May.

BlackboxIT's main product is evolveIT, a COBOL application understanding product, that has been adopted by several major organizations worldwide, including Capital One in the United States, Barclays Bank in the UK and the New Zealand Inland Revenue.

Transoft will retain all the staff at blackboxIT to ensure continued support and ongoing development of the evolveIT product range. In addition, David Goode, blackboxIT's managing director, will become Transoft's sales director for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

InfoSol has been a partner of blackboxIT, reselling the evolveIT product in North America, for the last 15 months. There has been much interest amongst GCOS customers for evolveIT, because it provides a very powerful solution to document, analyze, and interrogate existing GCOS COBOL applications. The impact analysis capabilities are comprehensive, yet visually understandable instantly. Entire systems can be flowcharted automatically, redundant code can be identified, business logic can be extracted, and the impact of any change can be assessed very quickly. InfoSol is pleased to partner with Transoft and continue to offer the evolveIT product to GCOS customers.

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evolveIT provides comprehensive impact analysis of complete legacy COBOL systems including GCOS.

Bull's Future Remains Uncertain

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While there is a lot of speculation as to what will happen to Bull, most Bull mainframe customers are not waiting to find out. Many are in the middle of GCOS conversion, migration, or replacement projects. This is most prevalent in countries outside of France.

At Bull's customer meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, earlier this year, Bull executive management stressed that they had no plans to pull out of the U.S. market, and that GCOS would be supported for at least another ten years. Yet with more than 65% of the remaining approximately 60 GCOS customers in the U.S. (about 30 GCOS 7 and 30 GCOS 8), in some stage of transition off of GCOS, Bull's reassurances have little relevance.

In France, where Bull's presence is strongest, it is more difficult to comprehend a future without Bull. So much of France's infrastructure (government, healthcare, banking, manufacturing, aerospace, transportation, retail, energy, etc.), relies on Bull GCOS mainframe computers that France, as a nation, would be fundamentally affected.

As an expert from a leading French GCOS migration company said at the recent InfoSol conference, "The combined resources of all the GCOS migration companies in the world could not cope with the workload if Bull went out of business. It would be a disaster for all of us."
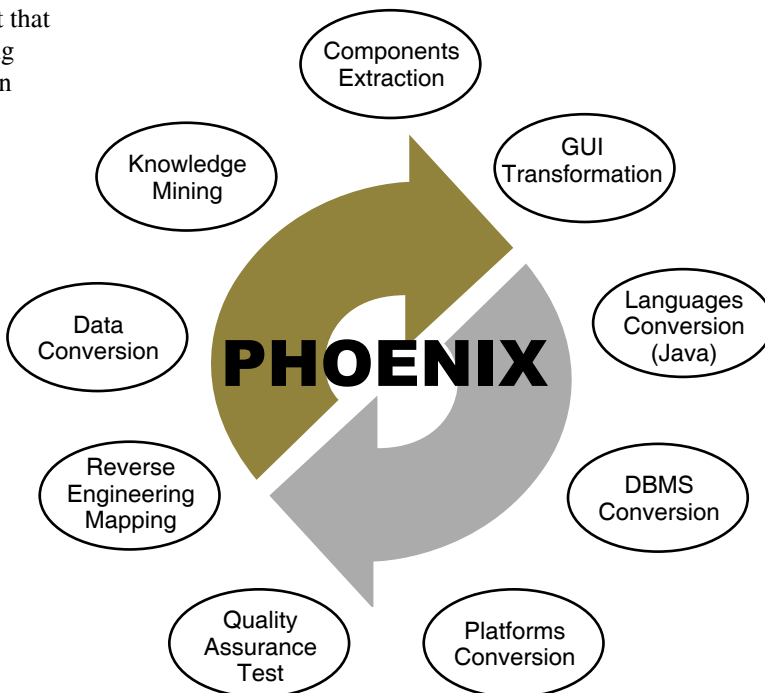
InfoSol and MetaWare Partner
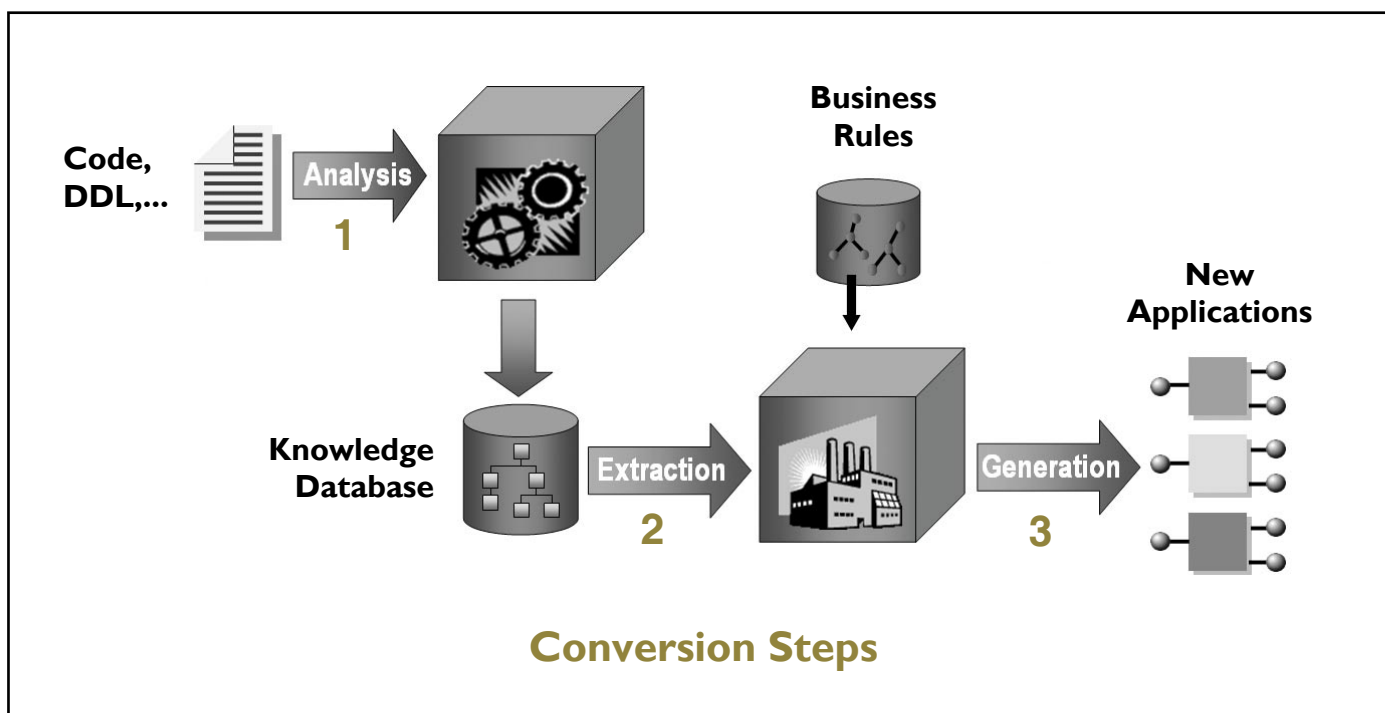
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PHOENIX® is a fully integrated and customizable tool-set that can automate all the critical steps required for transforming a legacy Bull GCOS application environment into an Open Systems environment. At the same time, it retains the application's original business model and processes while providing an Open Solutions platform infrastructure. The conversion steps automated by PHOENIX® are:

- Analysis of existing GCOS application programs and data structures
- Extraction and cataloging of information from existing GCOS applications
- Reporting/Documentation for (optional) re-engineering decision support
- Generation of new application code and data structure for customer target platform
- Support test planning and monitoring
- Support data unloading from GCOS and loading into new target environment

It is the first solution of its kind to combine the power of computers, re-engineering techniques, and the expert domain knowledge of analysts, for the purpose of making the conversion process more efficient. This minimizes customer risks, and reduces the conversion duration, which results in saving the customer time and money.

All conversion projects commence with a comprehensive audit in order to evaluate and document all aspects of the transition. InfoSol will be starting its first conversion project in the U.S. using MetaWare's PHOENIX® Technology in October.

Conversion Steps

"Experience *EXTREME* Education" Receives High Marks

The fourth annual "Eye on the Information Solution" conference, held in San Diego at the beginning of July, received much praise from the 90 attendees that participated. The mix of hands-on education courses, combined with roundtable user discussions, and management workshops produced a winning formula as attendees headed home with education certificates in their hands, and a lot of extra knowledge in their heads, after three days of extreme education.

I really enjoyed being at the conference and was very impressed with all the classes I attended as well as the facilities.

Bill Handelman - Chicago, IL

The most popular session for the GCOS customers was the "GCOS in Transition User Information Exchange." This session featured a panel of experts that included all of the major GCOS Migration and Conversion vendors, namely GDT, MetaWare, Crystal/IntraComp, and Transoft. Attendees learned about the different GCOS migration methods, and were able to ask technical questions on every aspect of a GCOS transition. Attendees expressed concern as to how long Bull would continue to support GCOS in the U.S., and even how long they would continue to operate as a company.

The conference was fantastic. I love San Diego, and my only complaint was that I kept so busy at the conference that I didn't get a chance to see much of San Diego.

Tony Candeloro - Mt. Laurel, NJ

The "GCOS in Transition User Experience Seminar" also drew a large crowd as Tony Candeloro, from ARI in New Jersey, presented an excellent testimonial on their GCOS migration project.

Many GCOS customers attended the "GCOS Migration Using GDT" training modules, while others sat in on the Web Development and Visual Basic training courses.

The meals, receptions, and exhibit area provided great forums for GCOS customers to discuss and compare their future directions with each other, and transition vendors.

The feedback received from attendees was extremely positive with just a hint of regret that this might be the last GCOS related conference they will ever attend.

I want to thank you for a great conference, I learned a lot. I thought it was well done and well put together. It was nice going to one and not feel like a stranger.

Bob Foss - Phoenix, AZ

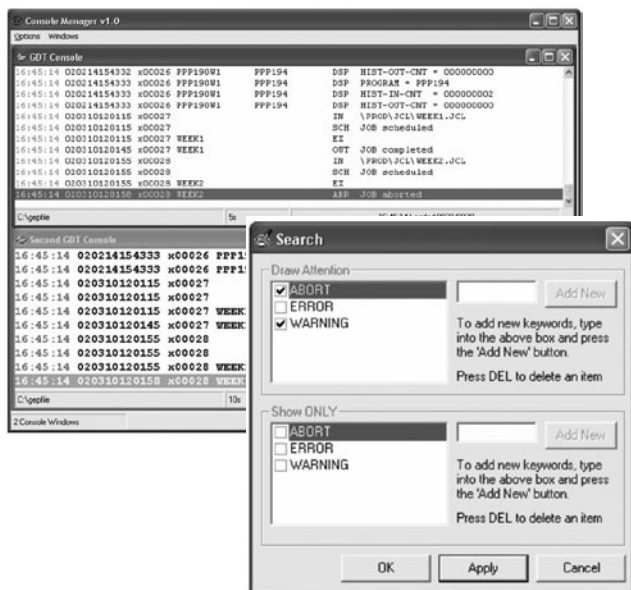# InfoSol Releases New Console Monitor to Track Activity

In a further effort to assist enterprise computer users become more self-sufficient, without compromising the security of the system, InfoSol has introduced a new console monitor for enterprise systems called I-Console.

I-Console is an easy-to-use, yet powerful, tool that can help operations staff or programmers to quickly locate potential error or abort messages that may be difficult to see when a stream of messages are displayed. The tool can connect to GCOS and UNIX systems, and has a built-in support for the GDT environment. It can be adapted to run on any enterprise system that logs console information.

Up to four separate message sources can be established and monitored simultaneously in their own window, and an intelligent search feature can be used to identify certain words that will be highlighted when found. Specific colors can be set for each window to make monitoring and analysis easier for the user.

A "Show Only" mode allows for exception handling, all messages from the input sources are analyzed and ONLY those lines that contain the keywords are displayed. This powerful feature allows an operator to see only those jobs that aborted rather than all activity.

The first version of I-Console is immediately available, and can be evaluated on a trial basis. With I-Console, it is now possible for programmers and users to monitor console activity without interfering with console management, or having access to any console commands. The product is Windows based, and can be installed and configured within 10 minutes.

Rick Pedigo Joins InfoSol

InfoSol further strengthened its GCOS transition and enterprise solution initiatives with the recent hiring of Rick Pedigo, a 23-year veteran of the Honeywell/Bull Research and Development Center.

Rick's experience in the Mainframe and GCOS Computing/R&D System Environments includes positions as GCOS System Software Developer, Project Manager, Customer and Operational Support Specialist and e-Business Architect. He has led teams in the design, development, deployment, and support of WEB based solutions utilizing Object Oriented design methodologies. Rick has also been involved in worldwide GCOS customer teaming initiatives, where he provided architectural and development expertise to meet customer business challenges within the GCOS and Open Systems arena.

He has a wealth of experience and expertise in Hierarchical, Relational, Open System Client/Server, Transaction Processing, Distributed Message Based systems, and e-Business WEB strategic initiatives that have kept him busy working with GCOS customers worldwide throughout his career.

As the new Director of Consulting for Enterprise Solutions at InfoSol, Rick will primarily manage the various transitional solutions and projects for large GCOS enterprise customers.

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GCOS Customers Buying Spare Systems as Bull Future Uncertain

The combination of the erosion of the Bull GCOS base in North America, along with the uncertainty of Bull's future beyond the end of this year, has led several GCOS customers to purchase spare, refurbished systems as an insurance policy.

With only 30 GCOS 7 sites left in the U.S. and a similar number of GCOS 8, customers are concerned about the future availability of both spare parts and support. While the majority of these customers are in the middle of transitions off of their Bull GCOS platform, many will not complete their transition for one, two, or even three years.

During this time, they will continue to run mission critical business applications on GCOS and, therefore, need to make sure they will have solid support.

As a contingency, several companies have purchased or leased spare GCOS mainframes to act both as an on-site disaster recovery system, and as a back-up source of spare parts for their production machine.

Currently, there is reasonable availability of GCOS systems that are more than three years old, and complete refurbished systems can be purchased at excellent prices, making the spare system a very sound and cost-effective strategy.

One GCOS customer who recently purchased a spare system is DeMoulas Market Basket, a leading New England supermarket chain, based in Tewksbury, MA.

"We do not know if Bull will survive in the U.S. much longer, and we want to be sure that we have sufficient spare parts and backup to see us through our transition off of GCOS," said Brian Goddu, Director of I.T. at DeMoulas Market Basket.

Hot site disaster recovery services continue to be popular with the remaining GCOS base as another option for insuring continued running in the event of spare part issues.

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While there are many possible routes to migrating your GCOS applications…

One is more direct, and will get you there in less time and less cost.

EXPRESSWAY

The *GDT Migration Toolset*, provides fast,

effective, and low cost migration of GCOS 7

applications to Windows NT/2000 or UNIX,

without changes to your source code or data.

For more information, contact InfoSol at 623-707-7600.

New DLT Backup Solution for DPS 7000 Saves In More Ways Than One

With the majority of the remaining DPS 7000 customers in a state of transition, fast and reliable movement of large amounts of data has never been more important. Most of the DPS 7000 sites left in North America are using 8mm cartridge devices, either the SCSI unit that comes with the system, or the Turbosave 7000 units for backup. A few have the half-inch 3480/3490 devices, or the newer DLT 7000 units, and a couple are still using 9-track open reel tape units. For most of these sites, backups and restores take many hours and require operator assistance to change tapes. In addition, as they transition to other systems, the number and amount of backups has dramatically increased due to the need to transfer production files on a daily or more frequent basis to the new target system.

In response to this need for faster backup, InfoSol has introduced the B7, a new DLT 7000 based backup system for the DPS 7000. The B7 has been specially designed to provide a high-performance, high-capacity, low cost and robust backup and restore solution for the DPS 7000.
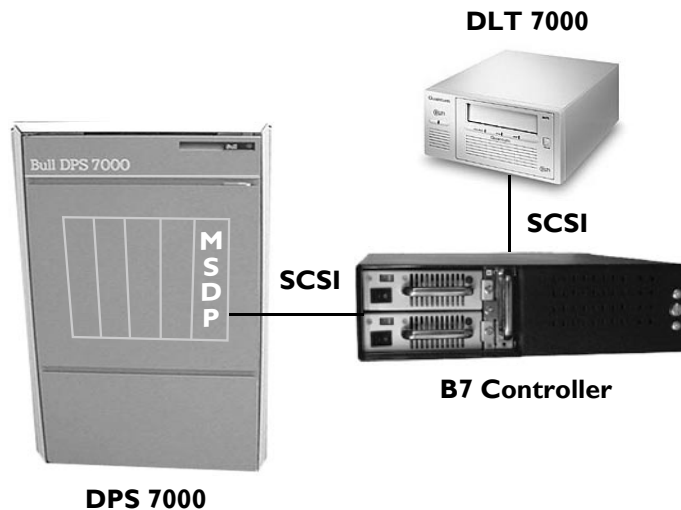
It consists of a dedicated controller that connects to a MSDP controller board on the DPS 7000, and a standard DLT 7000 device, both through SCSI connections. The cartridge unit looks like a standard cartridge device to the DPS 7000 (CT/M6), so all the standard GCOS 7 operator commands are used just the same as for an integrated cartridge device.

The DLT 7000 cartridge stores 35GB of data on a single cartridge in uncompressed mode or 70GB in compressed mode, which is 14 times the capacity of the 5GB 8mm cartridge, and almost 30 times the capacity of a 3490 cartridge.

InfoSol has performed some benchmark tests on the B7 by executing and timing GCOS 7 volume and file saves. The results consistently showed the B7 to be 4 to 5 times faster than the 8mm devices.

The B7 is available in both a single and dual controller/ device configurations and is aggressively priced so that customers can justify the cost savings it will deliver in 12 to 18 months comfortably.

InfoSol is delivering and supporting the solution immediately, and is making it available on a rental basis to assist customers in their GCOS 7 transitions.
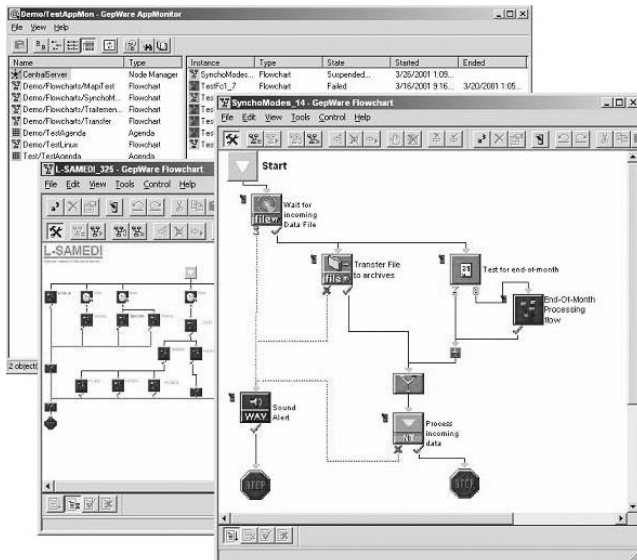
DLT 7000

SCSI

SCSI

B7 Controller

DPS 7000

Technical Specifications

	Single Controller	Dual Controller
	B7	**B7**
Number of Drives	1	2
Number of Cartridges	1	2
Capacity (uncompressed)	35GB (70GB compressed)	70GB (140GB compressed)
Transfer Rate	up to 5MB/s	up to 10MB/s
File Access Time	< 2 minutes	< 2 minutes
Rewind Time	1 minute	1 minute
Interface	SCSI	SCSI
Reliability	Drive MTBF: 250,000 hours	Drive MTBF: 250,000 hours
Power Supply	100 to 240V 50 to 60 Hz	100 to 240V 50 to 60 Hz
Environment	Temperature: 10° to 40° C Humidity: 20 to 80% (non-condensing)	Temperature: 10° to 40° C Humidity: 20 to 80% (non-condensing)

The capacity and compression rate vary according to the type of data.

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It's 2:00 A.M. in the morning and you are still trying to recover the payroll run that should have completed 24 hours ago. The program that generated the checks aborted, the operator did not notice, and continued to run the other payroll update jobs that corrupted the payroll master files. The corruption was not detected until 2:00 P.M. the following afternoon and you have just spent the last 12 hours recovering the files and the payroll.