

UNUM DRIVES INNOVATION WITH AUTOMATION



Unum Group, a longtime Control-M customer, acquired Starmount Life Insurance Company in 2016, adding dental and vision plans to Unum's employee benefit portfolio. Following the acquisition, Zach Warren, an experienced leader in automation projects, was part of a team who assessed Control-M automation opportunities for Unum's new dental and vision operation. He shares that experience in this blog. To learn about Zach's previous successes at Unum, check out this [blog](#) and [video](#).

By Zach Warren, Unum

I have seen firsthand how Control-M can improve IT operations by automating many IT processes and supporting [DevOps](#) data initiatives. However, these recent projects provide excellent examples of how Control-M can have positive and immediate impacts to the overall business – far beyond IT.

Through the acquisition of Starmount, Unum business leaders saw an opportunity to expand market share and further business objectives by adding dental and vision benefits to Unum's growing product portfolio. After Unum acquired the dental and vision carrier, the IT team saw an opportunity to apply automation that would help scale the new business and position the operations for highly anticipated growth.

There is a strong correlation between how our IT systems run and how we provide dental and vision benefits to our customers, as well as how responsive we are to our dental and vision care providers. From processing claims to paying our provider partners, our IT systems are a central part of our day-to-day operations and customer satisfaction.

Here are three examples of how we used Control-M to improve our operations and business:

Streamline automation and IT processes.

Without a strong automation solution, batch cycles can be quite demanding on IT teams by requiring a tremendous amount of manual effort to support and maintain. Additionally, these manual tasks are time-consuming and can regularly impact the availability of business applications.

Automation can eliminate the need for unnecessary manual attention while increasing efficiencies for a solid batch cycle environment. More importantly, automation of the batch cycle can transform a daily headache into a highly streamlined and efficient workflow.

That was certainly the case after implementing Control-M into our dental and vision operations.

However, we took the Control-M solution far beyond batch processing to even improve other business applications. One of those applications is at the center of our business – claims adjudication.

The process of reviewing, approving and paying a dental claim involves multiple business users, databases and other systems. Therefore, claims processing can be time consuming without the right systems. With Control-M for Databases, we created various scripting and reporting techniques to automate workflows, enhancing our claims adjudication capabilities. Automatic claims adjudication increased significantly and reduced the workload for both the IT team and the Claims Department. In addition, the automation updates and the associated operation improvements positioned the company to better handle an increase in claims volume associated with expected future growth.

Create more efficient data management systems.

We're getting similar operational and business benefits for our monthly and other periodic processes. For example, every month we receive a historical file from our vendor that contains updated contact information, statuses (active or not, accepting new patients or not, etc.), and other details from our provider networks. To keep our systems up to date, we need to import the file each month in a timely manner. After reviewing the end-to-end process, we recognized that Control-M could improve the flow of multiple data transfers and create a more efficient data management system.

Control-M has bridged all data transfers for a completely automated process into our internal systems and eliminated almost all need for manual attention. Our data management system for provider information now runs more efficiently and 95% percent faster.

Improve overall business operations

We are also expanding our use of Control-M's self-service capabilities to allow the business to get more out of our systems and data. Non-IT users can run complex and dynamic reports through a simplistic web interface. The business no longer needs to submit such requests to the IT team and wait for the team to execute the request. It's an IT solution that has improved overall business operations by empowering the business to access data quicker and reducing IT requests by at least 200 to 250 per month. That's taken a huge burden off our IT staff. Considering the average cost to process such a request, the cost savings and productivity improvements add up to tens of thousands of dollars each month. Plus, we've been able to scale our operations and position them to grow significantly more without corresponding growth in our IT staff.

Control-M has been an integral part of our [digital transformation](#) journey. The more we seek to automate within our organization, the more streamlined our business will become. More importantly, automating our processes allows us to deliver the ultimate customer experience for our customers and providers. And, we are in a position to handle the anticipated growth of our business.

In my experience, people are only limited by their imaginations when it comes to producing reliable, automated end-to-end solutions for their business. People in IT need to be more agile with our thinking and creative when applying solutions that have the potential to positively impact the entire organization – beyond a single department. Through this mindset, IT professionals and teams can truly be innovative and grow business efficiencies in a fast-paced world driven by digital information and technology.