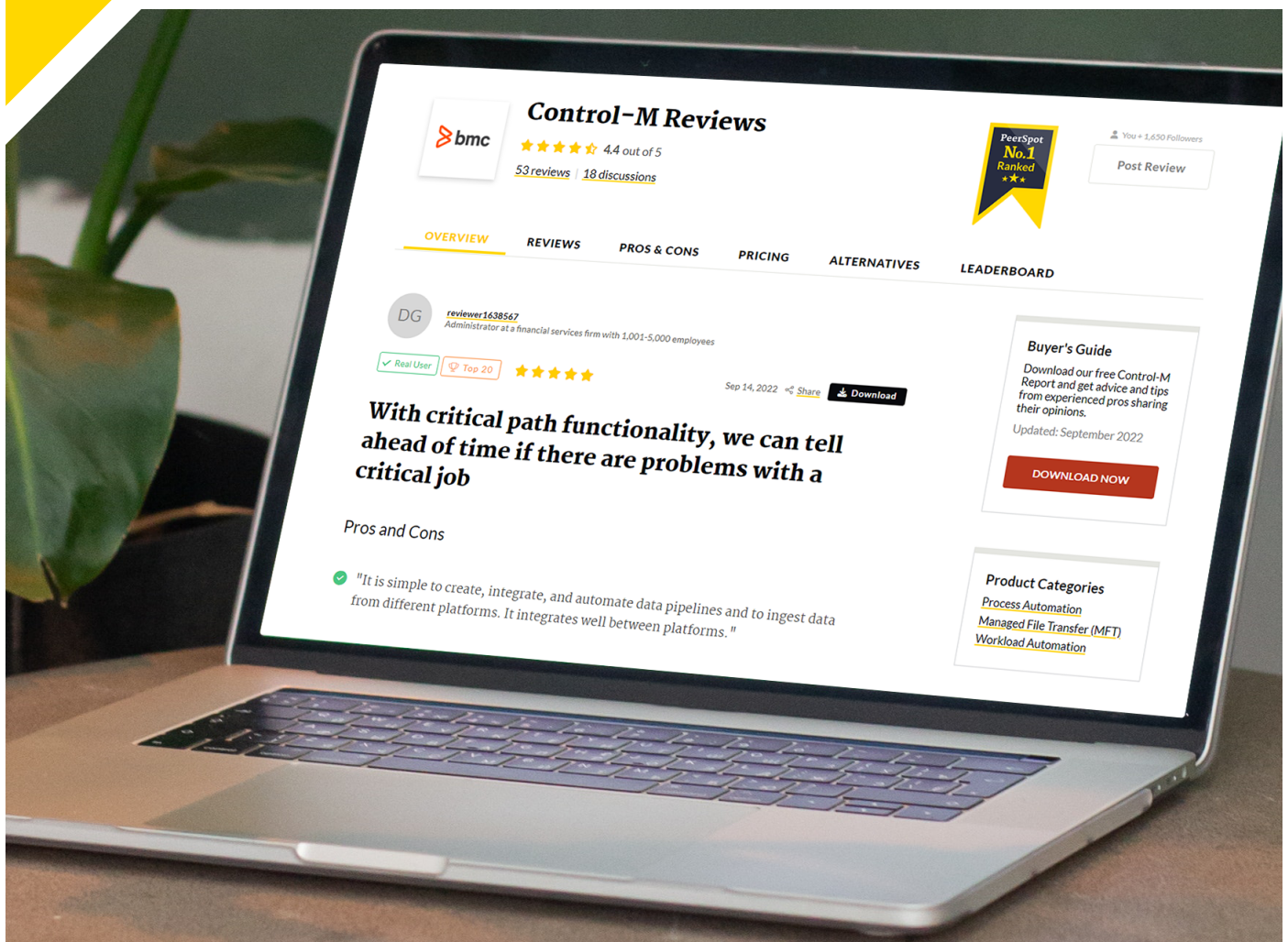


PeerPaper™ Report 2022

Based on real Control-M user reviews

4 Key Success Factors for Managing Data Workflows and Pipelines



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Introduction

IT teams tasked with managing complex data workflows and pipelines face pressure from three separate directions. Their work has to be accurate, but it must also be done quickly and efficiently. It's a stressful job as a result, especially for organizations with complex environments that extend from critical legacy applications to the cloud. As PeerSpot members who use Control-M reveal, however, it is possible to flatten the curve and get faster and more efficient while maintaining high levels of quality. They identify four key success factors: Automation and orchestration capabilities, data processing capabilities, business analytics, and performance.

Overview of Orchestrating Data Workflows and Pipelines

IT is no stranger to managing data workflows. For as long as there have been multiple computer systems, there has been a need to orchestrate processes that work across them. A modern example would be workflows that transfer files or move data across multi- or hybrid-cloud systems for the purpose of processing. Other workflows might involve monitoring for business-critical files and flagging those that meet certain criteria. Copying data from an SAP® system is another common use case. Many of these workflows involve data pipelines, which are multi-step processes that ingest data and transfer it to other systems for processing, analytics, and so forth. Figure 1 shows a simple example of such a data pipeline.

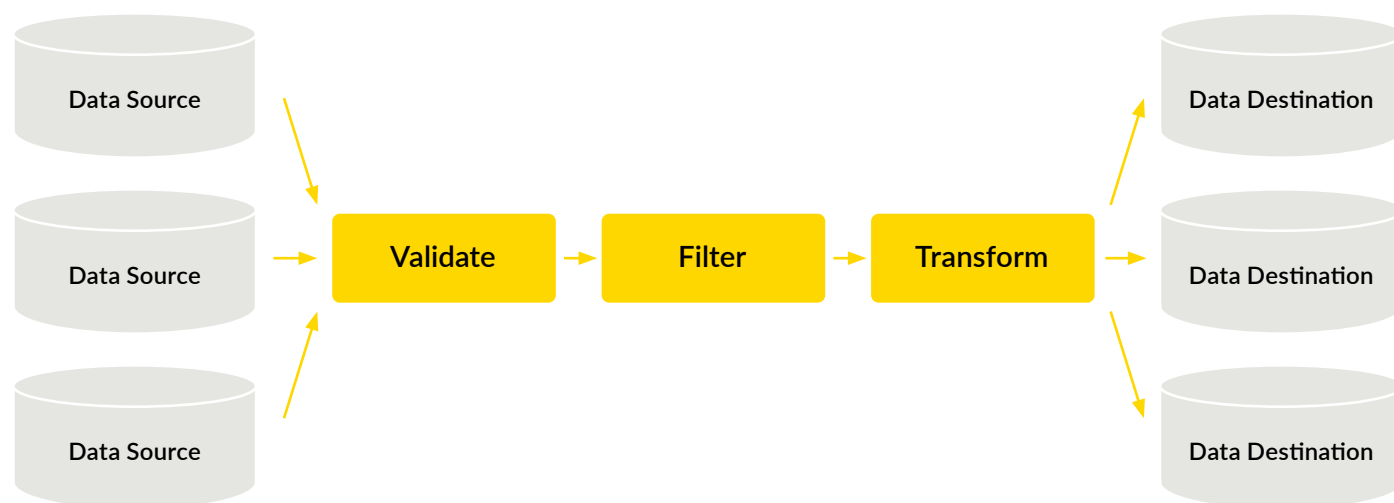


Figure 1 - Simple data pipeline, involving validation, filtering, and transformation of data from multiple sources.

4 Key Success Factors

How can companies get more efficient at managing data workflows and pipelines? According to PeerSpot members, the best results come from having a platform with strong automation and orchestration abilities. The solution should have good data processing and business analytics capabilities. It also needs to drive improvements in service level performance and be robust enough to support essential business services.

#1 – Ability to Automate and Orchestrate

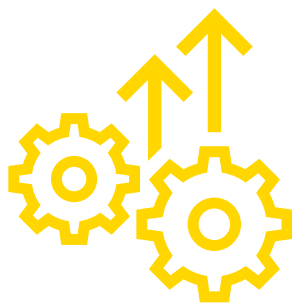
Automation and orchestration are at the heart of data workflow and pipeline management. An effective solution, therefore, has to provide rich functionality in these two areas. For example, a System Engineer at a health-care company with over 10,000 employees explained, Control-M has made it easier to create, integrate, and automate data pipelines across on-premises and cloud technologies. He said, “It’s due to the ability to orchestrate between workflows that are running in the cloud and workflows that are running on-prem. It gives us the ability to have end-to-end workflows, no matter where they’re running.”

“Control-M gives us the ability to have end-to-end workflows, no matter where they’re running.”

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“We can easily define, orchestrate, and monitor all our application workflows and data pipelines.”

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Performance is very reliable

“It could take us anywhere from a day to a week to get a new integration in place,” said an Automation Engineer at CARFAX. His team moves faster now with Control M. He added, “It can orchestrate all our workflows, including file transfers, applications, data sources, data pipelines, and infrastructure with a rich library of plug-ins, which is very important for us. Having the ability to set up a job, set up a connection, deploy that job, and automatically have the feedback on where your files are when they’ve been moved has made life five times easier.”

A Director at a performing arts organization with more than 5,000 employees also spoke to the importance of plugins for orchestrating and monitoring workflows and data. He said, “We have a lot of different applications, plugins, and API automation, which are really important for us. We are migrating a tool from Apache, which is Java code. So, we can schedule the Java code with the [Automation API] plugin that Control-M delivers for us.”

A unified view is what mattered to an IT Operations Specialist at a bank with over 1,000 employees. He elaborated, saying, “We can easily define, orchestrate, and monitor all our application workflows and data pipelines. It centralizes things and does automatic job scheduling.” He then added, “We use Control-M to integrate file transfers within our application workflows. Nowadays, we depend on this feature for all our applications’ file transfers. This feature is helpful when you need to manage complicated documents or other files.”

“[Control-M] frees up our operations personnel to focus on what’s more important for the business.”

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Automation and orchestration are processes that involve people, and the more productively they can get their work done, the more successful the business will be. In this context, the bank’s IT Operations Specialist shared that Control-M’s Role-Based Administration feature empowers decentralized product teams to manage their own application workflow orchestration environments with full autonomy. He said, “The feature is important, because without it, the day-to-day operations of the bank would not run. It is managing all our on-premises jobs, like application clean-ups. We are doing everything via Control-M.”

A Sr. Automation Engineer at a software company with over 1,000 employees was also pleased with the Role-Based Administration feature. He said, “We have been able to decentralize teams to manage their own application workflow orchestration environments. That’s important because it frees up resources. People can get things done more quickly without having to stop what they’re doing.”

The tool allows his team members to focus, “instead of constantly being pulled in a thousand directions or having to call in different people for help,” as he put it. It helps eliminate tickets or requests to a Control-M administrator, which “frees up our operations personnel to focus on what’s more important for the business. Instead of watching for and answering tickets, they’re actually able to be proactive and look for potential bottlenecks or to help people enhance their processes.”



Streamlines our data analytics

“The ability to set up a job, set up a connection, deploy that job, and automatically have the feedback on where your files are when they’ve been moved has made life five times easier.”

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#2 – Data Processing Orchestration Capabilities

Data pipelines include steps that process data. Being able to process data is thus a key success factor for solutions that manage data pipelines. PeerSpot members discussed this idea in their reviews of Control-M. An AVP - Systems Engineer at a financial services firm with over 10,000 employees, for example, remarked that his team uses Control-M to orchestrate a diverse landscape of vendor products that includes Pega, MuleSoft and others. He said, “File transfers and data feeds fetching are quite important for us. So, a lot of data processing happens through Control-M.”

“It allows us to easily ingest and process data from different platforms,” said a Tech lead at a retailer with over 10,000 employees. “It is good for creating, monitoring, and ensuring the delivery of files as part of our data pipeline. I would rate it a nine out of ten from this aspect. It is pretty straightforward to create actionable data. It is simple and precise to know what information needs to be in and how it has to run based on the job.”

“[Control-M] allows us to ingest and process data from different platforms... You can easily design a pipeline workflow and schedule jobs.”

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For an SAP Solution Manager and Control-M Admin at a wholesaler/distributor with over 10,000 employees, what mattered was the ability “to ingest and process data from different platforms.” A Sr. Integration Developer at a computer software company with more than 5,000 employees likewise stated, “It allows us to ingest and process data from different platforms. For example, you can have a flow that starts with a REST call. Once that is processed, the records are picked from the database and sent to SAP. You can easily design a pipeline workflow and schedule jobs.”

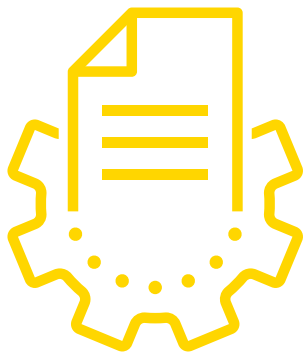
Per this user, the tool’s ability to specify the dependencies also stood out as a desirable characteristic. He said, “For example, you can specify to execute Job B when Job A is completed or execute Job C when Job A and B are completed. There are multiple options in Control-M to ingest and not miss data from any platform.”



Simple and precise

#3 – Data Analytics Support

Ideally, a solution for managing application workflow and data pipelines should have robust support for data analytics. After all, data analytics and business analytics are two of the main workloads that involve data pipelines. The software company Sr. Automation Engineer put it this way: “When it comes to data analytics, Control-M helps make sure that as we’re ingesting data and running it, that the workflows are kicking off in the correct order, and that we’re actually getting the data. It’s also making sure we return data to the appropriate business units or partners. It definitely streamlines our data analytics. It has sped things up because we don’t have to wait on humans anymore to kick things off.”



Easily ingest and process data

A Senior Engineer - IT Infrastructure at a tech services company with more than 500 employees uses Control-M to streamline their data and analytics projects. He elaborated, saying, “When it comes to data, we have a lot coming daily. It can be product, purchase, or business information... 70% of the data is being used with Control-M. It can be a data transfer from one location to another location. Using its analytics, we are tracking reports that help us provide more services to our customers.”

“[Control-M] has given us some actionable insights. The streamlining has improved our business service delivery because we can tell if something is running behind, and why. We know if there’s an issue before anybody notices.”

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“It also streamlines our data and analytics project,” said an IT Operations Specialist at a retailer with more than 5,000 employees. Developers in his organization create different types of processes that they automate within Control-M, which helps streamline and format the projects and reports they send out to executives. “That helps out a lot,” he stated.


A financial services firm with over 1,000 employees also uses Control-M to streamline their data and analytics projects. According to their Administrator, “It has given us some actionable insights. The streamlining has improved our business service delivery because we can tell if something is running behind, and why. We know if there’s an issue before anybody notices.”

#4 – Performance

Ultimately, managing data workflows and pipelines is about performance. PeerSpot members spoke to this issue when they described Control-M’s performance as a platform, as well as its potential to improve service level performance. An IT Specialist at a financial services firm with over 10,000 employees remarked, “It’s very reliable and the performance is good. There aren’t bugs or glitches. It doesn’t crash or freeze.”

A Sr. Systems Engineer at a financial services firm with over 1,000 employees similarly noted, “I know that in 20 years, I have [only] had probably two problems where I’ve had to call the company to get immediate assistance from them, where we had a system down or something. Its performance is very reliable.”

“Overall, Control-M lets us spot problems more quickly. And in terms of Service Level Operations performance, it helps because we now can be proactive instead of reactive,” said the software company Sr. Automation Engineer. He added, “If we know that we’re not going to meet an SLA, we can meet ahead of time instead of having to wait and see.” Figure 2 depicts this scenario.

 Notice issues.
Respond proactively.
Improve service level operations performance.

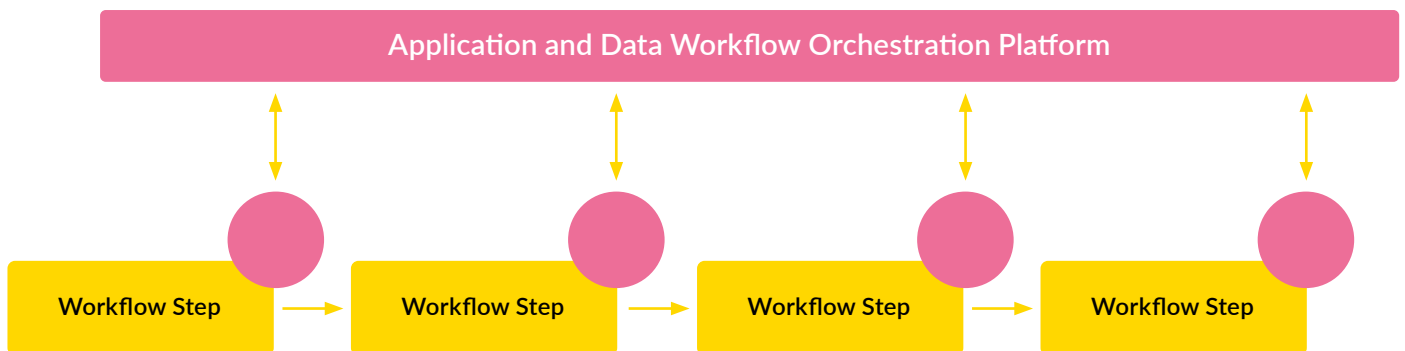


Figure 2 - An application and data workflow orchestration platform can enable admins to notice issues in workflows and respond proactively – saving time and improving service level operations performance.

“Our service-level operations performance has improved by 80% with the use of Control-M.”

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The financial services administrator also shared that Control-M helped his team improve service-level operations performance. He commented, “We have a critical job stream and because we’re an institution, we have to have certain data out at a certain time for the Federal Reserve. If we can detect when something is running behind, and why, then we can notify them ahead of time so that they know the reports are going to be late. It helps them on their end, too. This way, they don’t have to call and ask us where their report is.”

Some users quantified their performance gains:

- “Control-M has also helped to improve our Service Level Operations performance. If I had to guess, I would say it has improved SLO performance by 20 percent.” - Lead Consultant at a media company with over 1,000 employees
- “Our service-level operations performance has improved by 80% with the use of Control-M.” - Control-M Administrator at Cognizant, a tech services company with over 10,000 employees
- “Control-M has helped us to improve the performance of our service-level operations by approximately 60%.” - Project Manager at an energy/utilities company with over 10,000 employees
- “Control-M has helped us to improve Service Level Operations performance by 30%, because we no longer need to manually copy reports and receive email notifications. So, the process has improved a lot.” - Analyst at a financial services firm with over 10,000 employees
- “Control-M helped us double or triple our Service Level Operations performance.” - Operations Support Analyst at a retailer with more than 5,000 employees

Conclusion

Managing data workflows and pipelines does not have to be stressful for IT teams. The pressure is always on to speed things up and keep costs low, but improvements are possible. Control-M enables companies to become more efficient while raising quality at the same time.

Four key success factors are essential to achieving these goals. The solution for workflows and pipelines has to feature powerful automation and orchestration capabilities, along with support for data processing and data analytics. The right solution will also drive gains in service level performance. As these factors come together, IT teams are able to handle ever more complex and large-scale challenges.

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Control-M simplifies application and data workflow orchestration on premises or as a service. It makes it easy to build, define, schedule, manage, and monitor production workflows, ensuring visibility, reliability, and improving SLAs.

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