Leveraging CICSPlex SM for
The Royal Bank of Scotland Group

The Royal Bank of Scotland

A case study in Resource Utilisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IT applications have become a major service driver for attracting and retaining customers in the financial services sector. Like many such enterprises, The Royal Bank of Scotland Group (RBSG) relies on CICS to support all its major financial services including ATMs, point-of-sale, payments systems, mortgages, branch banking, telephone banking and internet banking.

To integrate these services, and to give "joined-up-functionality" to customers, RBSG employs CICSPlex System Manager. In a competitive customer environment the maintenance and management of the CICSPlex environment is mission critical to RBSG's business.

In merging with NatWest bank, RBSG was faced with the task of integrating an extensive new user base. To enable this integration and to manage the change with minimum discord and disruption, RBSG needed to extend the deployment of CICSPlex SM.

RBSG had no formal training infrastructure for CICSPlex SM. This led to an urgent requirement to create a Training Environment within which system programmers and administrators could quickly become competent in CICSPlex SM, which could be then left in place as a later training resource for others.

The programme that B & M designed for RBSG enabled a smooth and successful gearing-up of service delivery without the necessity to increase the bank's human resources.

The Business Requirement

After seeking alternative submissions, RBSG engaged B & M to create the Training Environment and to provide training courses that would result in a team of CICSPlex SM practitioners.

Technical Environment

RBSG utilises OS/390 with a production13-way sysplex and extensive use of DB2 data sharing across over 400 production CICS regions managed by CICSPlex SM.

Planning the Programme

It would have been imprudent to take all the relevant personnel onto the programme at once. Accordingly, the RBSG team was split into two groups. B & M planned to modularise the programme into 10 units, most to be taught as theory, the balance to be hands-on workshop sessions, over the course of a week. Students would also be taught the history of CICSPlex SM, and discuss likely future developments, security and programming issues.

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Constructing the Training Environment

The training was undertaken using one of the RBSG LPARs. In effect, each theory session was designed to have students build small CICS regions in morning classroom exercises, and then use the afternoon to implement them in practice.

The IT personnel already had an appreciation of CICSPlex SM and prior to the course were required to:

- have attended C175 CICSPlex SM Introduction
- understand the control facilities provided by CICS/ESA
- understand the intersystem facilities provided by CICS/ESA
- understand the support provided by MVS/ESA for cross-memory services and data spaces.

Course Design

The course was designed for systems programmers and administrators who would be installing and implementing CICSPlex SM, with the training objective that after completion students would be competent to:

- install CICSPlex SM and run the IVPs based on the starter set
- describe and use the CICSPlex SM End User Interface (EUI)
- configure and define CICSPlexes and CMASs
- define CICS systems to CICSPlex SM
- use the SSI operations application to manage a CICSPlex of CICS systems
- create and manage definition records to be used as directives for:
    - monitor services
    - real-time analysis
    - workload manager
- describe and implement security features provided by CICSPlex SM
- describe the problem determination features of CICSPlex SM
- provide further training to colleagues who did not attend the course.

The Business Benefit

In the short term, and with minimum disruption, B & M was able to quickly deliver 12 staff trained to the highest standards in CICSPlex SM, and leave in place a CICSPlex SM training environment for future use.

In a broader business sense RBSG has been able to successfully effect the migration from NatWest systems without manpower increase, to a large extent utilising functionality within CICSPlex SM for which the training provided by B & M was crucial.

Case Study