

September 2001 Issue 6

NEWS

What's the Latest?

It is **Time To Upgrade** to Change Action release 6! See article on page 2 of this newsletter!

The current release of Change Action is 6.04. The following section describes some of the highlights, changes, and enhancements included in Change Action releases 6.00 through 6.04 (released June 2001).

For a complete list of all of the new features and enhancements included in the current Change Action release 6.04, contact Action Software and ask for the "What's New in Change Action?" summary document. Also checkout our web site (www.actionsoftware.com) for the latest information.

Release 6.00 Highlights

Changes included in release 6.00 include the following.

- > General availability of the SVC update tracking feature.
- > DFSMSshm function level tracking and control.
- > Beta version of TestAction.
- > Changes were also made to the change request processing options to optionally suppress messages generated by change requests.
- > Users can now directly enter datasets for Reference Tracking, as well as Reference Tracking by Members, directly from a change request. Users can simply enter either the RT or RTM primary command on the DS panel.

Release 6.01 Highlights

Some of the key features included follow.

- > Program Execution Tracking support has been updated to include support for tracking the execution of JES2 Procs, TSO Clists, and REXX Execs.
- > Change Action now tracks changes even when the Change Action started task has been stopped. Please note that Panvalet, ROSCOE, or Librarian users must install the new version of the Change Action exits for these products to take advantage of this functionality.
- > The beta release of Change Action's "Command Tracking and Control" component which allows administrators to implement control options on commands issued from operator consoles, TSO, batch, or started tasks.
- > Enhancements to the Compare Utility have been made to the batch volume compare options to allow the user to define INCLude and EXCLude control cards.
- > All job definitions for reports, batch jobs, ELI jobs and LULU now include support for Change Action "Selection

Templates". This feature requires a data base migration. See Selection Templates Facility article below.

Release 6.02 Highlights

The following functions and features were included.

- > Change Request options are now provided to allow the administrator to define:
 - if multiple changes per change request are allowed;
 - if dataset and member names can be masked;
 - and if the REINIT command can be used.
- > New subtypes for external logging have been added, including *Subtype 0A* for updates to dataset options at a dataset level, and *Subtype 0B* for updates to dataset options at a member level.
- > The RACF interface for the "Command Tracking and Control" component has been improved to allow the definition of which users can update a specific entry for a command definition, and which users can add, modify, or delete entries in the Change Action command definition table.
- > Change Action messages for **change request approval** and **changes made to datasets** can now be sent via email.

Release 6.03 Highlights

Some new features / enhancements included are:

- > ISPF edit can be used to modify the implementation instructions (II) and manual backout instructions (IB) for a change request.

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> In the Reference Tracking and Reference Tracking by Member options, a new option has been included to limit the amount of data that will be recorded in the Change Action database.

> A new batch utility has been provided to allow users to copy and/or clear datasets created by the External Logging task.

> New FTP option of the PRT command enables clients to FTP problem documentation to Action Software. (See FTP Data article later in this newsletter).

Release 6.04 Highlights

Some new features / enhancements included are:

> Now you can select Change Requests using selection criteria for data provided in User Fields.

To avoid re-entering the selection criteria each time you use Option C, you can build Selection Templates and provide the name of the template on the List of Change Requests panel. To build one or more Selection Templates, use command UFSEL on the List of Change Requests panel.

> Whenever a PDSE load library was present the execution of a module was not tracked since no BLDL is issued. A change has been made in 6.04 to track the execution even if a PDSE load library is present.

> Symbolic parameters have been provided in the batch volume compare utility which allow you to equate different qualifiers or strings of characters so that a group of data sets with one set of names may be compared to an equivalent group of data sets on a different volume with different names. For details refer to the sample JCL, SAMPVCMP, in the CNTL library.

> Additional messages now use the email facility.

Selection Templates Facility

As of Change Action Version 6.01, selection templates can be used in multiple facilities of the product so that the same selection criteria can be used to obtain information online via the ISPF panels and in the background under various batch functions (Reports, Batch jobs, ELI jobs and LULU). This facility applies to both change statistics and reference tracking information.

With this enhancement, you are able to create a permanent selection template (other users may see and use it) under the Selection Templates facility (option SCT) and specify this same template on a report or other batch job definition so that the exact same criteria can be used both online and under batch. Whenever a template is changed that change is reflected to all definitions that reference the template.

All future enhancements within Change Action to selection templates and batch job definitions will only be implemented using this facility.

Please note that new formats of the selection templates and all batch job definitions are necessary to support the

enhanced facilities. Therefore all current database job definition records must be converted to the new format.

Since the database conversion job, that has to be run to implement these newer selection templates, affects database records, each system or host connected to a database must be using at least Version 6.01 of Change Action once the records are converted. If there is an older version of Change Action connected to the database, new records may be created in the old format

and thus not be usable once migrated to Version 6.01 or higher. Earlier releases of the product cannot see the new-format records. You should upgrade all systems to a minimum of Change Action Version 6.01 before performing the database conversion.

TIME TO UPGRADE

Support for Change Action releases up to and including 5.10 will be withdrawn effective January 2002.

To upgrade to the current release of Change Action, and to take advantage of all of the new features and enhancements that are included in Change Action release 6.00 to 6.04, contact your Action Software representative to order your tape. Also see Selection Templates Facility article below.

Installations that are not certain if the Change Action database has been converted for this facility can enter the appropriate option command (for Reports, Batch, ELI or LULU) from the primary selection panel and note the headings on the first panel. As an example, for the ELI option, the heading on the first panel previously said 'List of External Interface Jobs'. After the database conversion the heading on the first panel will be 'Batch Functions: List of Functions' and an extra column **Function** is displayed that for ELI will contain **ELI**.

Contact Action Software for details on migrating to Change Action V6.01 or above to be able to take advantage of these new facilities. **All installations should plan to run this database conversion job so that they can continue to take advantage of Change Action enhancements as they are released!**

FTP Data to Action Software

Since 1999 Action Software has had available an FTP server so that clients could send data to our Technical Support team for problem diagnostic purposes. With Change Action release 6.03 (December 2000), the PRT command has been enhanced to automate this process. Entering /PRT on any panel, or PRT from most table display panels, displays a new FTP send panel (see the extensive HELP once you're there).

PRT puts the table display into a temporary dataset, while PRT dataset /FTP puts the output in a permanent dataset before entering the FTP panel. The old formats of PRT still work as before. /PRT from any panel allows you to send any type of data set(s), eg SVC dumps, system messages, etc.

From the 'Send data' panel, you can send any data in ASCII, BINARY, or TSO/E XMIT format in the foreground or background. XMIT allows you to send any data or an entire PDS. BINARY should only be used for very large fixed block datasets. Note that an email can be sent to Action Software at the same time (SMTP must be installed)

Use of this facility requires that OS/390 FTP be installed and configured. FTP must be able to send data via the Internet. For additional information review the HELP or contact Action Software.

Change Request Templates

Change Action Version 5.10 introduced Change Request Templates. These templates are skeleton Change Requests that can be used to create new Change Requests. This new feature was introduced to allow you to implement your own process for making changes. The following brief description shows how you can take advantage of this new feature.

- > Use primary command T from the List of Change Requests panel to see the "List of Change Request Templates" panel.
- > To create a new Template, use primary command NEW from the List of Change Request Templates panel. Follow the same process as creating a regular Change Request.
- > While at least one entry must be provided in the dataset list for a regular Change Request, you do not have to provide any dataset/member in a Template.
- > The SUMM panel for a Template does not have a Proposed Date/Time. These are filled in (based upon options at the OID level) when a new Change Request is created from a Template.
- > To create a new Change Request from a Template, use line command NEW from the List of Change Request Templates panel.
- > As an option, a Template can be approved. The approval status will be retained when creating a new Change Request from the Template.

User Panels / Fields - Change Requests

For installations that want to maintain additional information with their Change Requests for specific site dependant purposes, Change Action provides a facility to support User Defined Panels and Fields within the Change Request process. This feature allows users to define an unlimited number of User Fields to be used under Change Requests.

The User Panels/Fields facility allows a Change Action site to develop one or more ISPF panels and incorporate any fields from existing forms on these panels. As an alternative the User Fields can be displayed in a table format (instead of the user panels) for providing data for a Change Request. The data provided in the User Fields is stored with the Change Request. This facility allows existing site specific change management information to be easily incorporated into the Change Action system.

The User Panels/Fields facility has been developed with the following objectives:

- > Allow a Change Action site to develop one or more ISPF panels and incorporate all their fields from their existing forms on these panels.
- > Allow a unique set of user panels per OID.

> Users who create/update Change Action's Change Request will use the User Panels to provide the necessary information.

> The information provided on user panels will be stored with the Change Request when it is saved. Any user may view this information by selecting the Change Request.

Implementation instructions for the User Panels/Fields facility are covered in the Change Action Administration Guide. If you require assistance with the development of User Panels contact Action Software.

SVCUPDTE Tracking

The Change Action SVC update interface allows you to track all changes made to the system SVC and ESR tables, including those made using the OS/390 SVCUPDTE facility and those made by code that directly changes the SVC table. This facility helps you to understand the dynamic changes made to an OS/390 system where there are a large number of products from multiple vendors. The facility can be very useful for problem resolution. The SVC table updates are recorded in the Change Action database and can be viewed using the Change Action ISPF dialog.

To view the information, display the Datasets Changed panel (option D) and select dataset name .SVC-UPDATE for a member list. Each member name contains an SVC number. Select a member to see every stat record. A stat record is created every time the SVC or ESR table is updated. Use line command B (browse) to see the details of a particular SVC update.

The SVC update interface tracks changes even if the Change Action started task is not active. The information collected about the SVC updates is recorded in the Change Action database when the Change Action started task is started.

The Change Action SVCUPDTE interface is installed by a subsystem initialization routine. To activate this interface the following steps must be performed:

- > Catalog the Change Action load library in your system's master catalog.
- > Add the Change Action load library to your system's link list.
- > Add MZCA as a subsystem to the system's list of subsystems.

The subsystem initialization routine will install the Change Action SVCUPDTE interface the next time the system is IPLed. For further information contact Action Software International.

USS Action Beta!

USS Action is a separately chargeable product available for beta release starting with Change Action release 6.05 (due out this fall).

USS Action will track changes to Hierarchical File System (HFS) files under the OS/390 USS (UNIX System Services) system.

The product will look very similar to Change Action except that dataset and member will be replaced by directory and file name.

The first phase of this product release will record changed data, statistics, and allow compare, reporting, and restoration of HFS format files.

The next phase will concentrate on the controls and reference tracking functionality of managing and controlling HFS files in an OS/390 USS systems environment.

If you would like to participate in the beta test for USS Action, contact your Action Software International representative.

Sites who participate in the beta testing will receive the following benefits.

- > The First Year License Fee will be waived (free).
- > Regardless of the List Price for the USS Action product, a base annual renewal fee of \$2000 per site for the second and subsequent years which would not be increased by more than 10% in any year.

Tips & Techniques

If **improving communication about changes** within your support groups and teams is an important issue, or you need at least one other member of your group to know what you are changing, use the option to send a message to selected user(s) when a dataset is changed. The feature can be very useful where changes made to key, critical, or shared datasets need to be quickly and dynamically communicated to other team or group members.

It is possible that a dataset may be changed numerous times (eg changes to several members of a PDS). To avoid flooding a user with 'dataset changed' messages, one message per dataset is sent during an hour. The message will be sent via Email and/or TSO SEND command.

After receiving a message, a user may use Option D or SCAN Option from the Primary Selection panel to see all the changes.

A Change Action Global or OID Administrator (for owned OIDs) can activate this feature for each defined OID.

Use the following process to activate this feature by OID:

1. Create a Change Action User Group, and define the userids of the users that should receive the notification messages whenever the datasets are changed or modified;
2. Use option OID from the Primary Selection Panel for the list of defined OIDs;
3. For the selected OID, use the line command DES;
4. Use primary command OP to enter the 'Options to be used at OID Level only' to enable notification of the user group name;
5. Specify YES in the "Send message when dataset changed" field;

6. Provide the newly created User Group name (as created in step 1, or other previously existing User Group name) that should be sent messages whenever the datasets are changed;
7. Optionally, specify YES in the "Send messages for every unique user who changes" field. If you specify NO, then the message will be sent whenever a dataset is changed by the first user only during the hour period.

The message sent to the userids in the User Group will include the DSName/Volser and userid, along with the SMFid of the system on which the dataset was changed.

```
C/Act 6.05 ---Options to be used at OID Level only (1/4)-----
COMMAND =>

OWNER/RESOURCE ID= SYSMVS                                01.215 01/08/03 07:41

Dataset Options
=> YES      Send message when dataset under the above OID is changed.  5.08
=> MVSSUPP  User Group for sending "Dataset Changed" message.          5.08
=> NO      Send message for every unique user who changes                5.08

Hit LEFT or RIGHT Key for more options
```

Change Action Guides on CD in PDF

Since Change Action release 6.03, Action Software has distributed the Change Action and TestAction product guides in Portable Document Format (PDF) on CD. The CD contains a PDF index that facilitates a keyword search through all the guides to assist in locating specific Change Action topics. As well, the table of contents within each document provides for direct links to the selected page within the document. If you would like to receive a copy of the CD contact Action Software.

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