

Business Process Acceleration within Oracle E-Business Suite

Content

Executive Summary3

Solutions Overview4

Script-less Development Environment.....6

Application Process Integration7

Oracle E-Business Suite Extension (OAE)8

Business Process Acceleration for Oracle E-Business Suite9

Business Process Acceleration for Oracle Financials9

Process Optimization and Load Balancing13

Intelligent Process and Work-Load Balancing13

Use of a Reporting Instance14

The UC4 platform: Application Process Integration.....14

Intelligent Service Automation Within, Around, and Beyond14

Executive Summary

The Oracle E-Business Suite is an extensive set of business applications for managing important business processes across your organization. This suite of complex business applications requires extensive business and application process integration. Oracle Applications are designed to empower the business user to take accountability of the business process and resulting data. As a result, employees using Oracle E-Business applications must perform a dual role of understanding the business process and the underlying supporting application tasks. Many times these application tasks are critical to the business process but are usually cumbersome and manual in nature. Manual tasks lend themselves to risk: data entry errors, errors in processing, and delays in processing. Additionally, when organizations change business processes or acquire new operating units, they are faced with complex change management issues from a business and IT perspective.

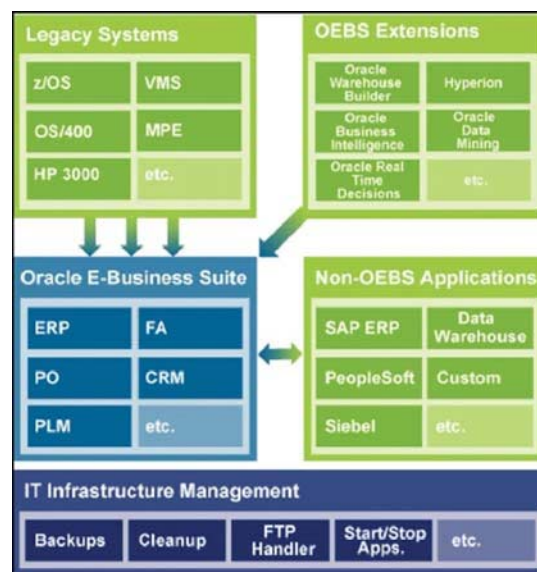


Figure a. Oracle E-Business Suite relationship to the enterprise.

UC4 Software provides an advanced solution for the Oracle E-Business Suite that streamlines business processes, reduces implementation time, and provides true enterprise process management within, around, and beyond the Oracle E-Business Suite.

This white paper will examine how to significantly increase your Oracle Applications ROI and describes how the UC4 platform enhances processing within the Oracle E-Business Suite.

Improve your ROI for the Oracle E-Business Suite by:

- Simplifying complex IT infrastructure.
- Providing visibility, management, and control of business processes.
- Mitigating risk by controlling your most mission critical business processes.
- Providing business with the agility to respond to a dynamic market.

This white paper details the UC4 Software solutions that can be applied to the challenges businesses face in an Oracle E-Business Suite environment and shows why UC4 Software is the best solution.

There are many common Oracle E-Business Suite challenges addressed by the UC4 platform:

- The Care and Feeding of Critical Processes
 - Finance Period Close
 - Payroll
 - Invoicing
 - Project Accounting
 - Manufacturing
- AR Web Lock Box
- Multi Org Environments
- Oracle Multi Currency Environments
- Mass Allocations
- MRP Processing
- Financial Statement Generation (FSG)
- Reporting Instance
- Payroll Processing
- Project Accounting
- Concurrent Request Load Balancing

Solutions Overview

Business departments often rely on multiple applications that can require multiple operating system platforms and databases. This heterogeneous environment creates a cumbersome challenge for the IT department and business users. To optimize business processing, your applications should operate according to the current business conditions and with as little manual intervention as possible. As a true enterprise process management solution, the UC4 platform can manage these applications in a cohesive and controlled manner to deliver further efficiency gains and increased effectiveness.

- The goals for the optimized organizations are:
- Automate applications in real time
- Reduce the amount of manual input
- Eliminate avoidable delays
- Reduce customized coding
- Ensure accurate processing
- Maximize the investment in IT infrastructure and applications

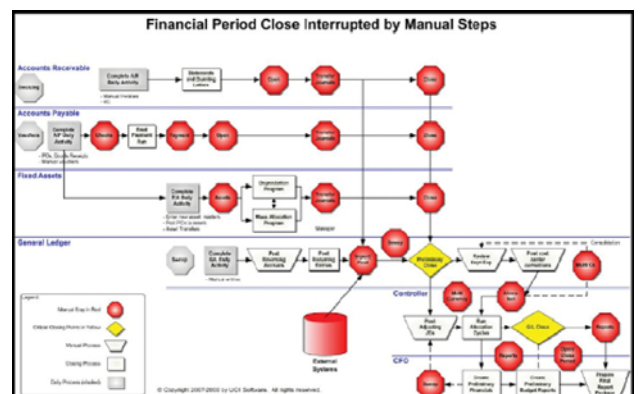


Figure b. Oracle E-Business Suite Financial Period Close. Each stop sign represents a manual touch point.

UC4 Software offers expertise and software to:

- Automate application business processes
- Coordinate processing across:
 - Departments
 - Applications
 - Databases
 - Servers
- Feed data into the process
- React to business and data events
- Prevent and control errors
- Resolve workload issues
- Enhance output delivery

The UC4 platform automates processing at all layers of the Oracle E-Business application to assist in accomplishing your goals. It can execute processes at the operating system, database, application API, and web service layer across disparate operating systems and databases. When applied to the Oracle E-Business Suite it can execute Concurrent Requests, non-standard Current Requests, provided API's, custom SQL that can eliminate manual form entry, and delivered or custom BPEL processing.

In Oracle E-Business Suite processes, manual input is the most common point of failure and the biggest culprit for delays. Oracle users commonly enter incorrect values in Concurrent Program parameters, resulting in incorrect processing or report outputs. The UC4 platform can create dynamic parameter inputs based on business rules defined by your organization. This streamlines IT business processes that require no manual intervention and improves competitive advantage. The dynamic parameters can come from the Oracle E-Business Suite, non-Oracle applications, or flat data files.

These features contribute to the ability of the UC4 platform to automate the decision making process.

The UC4 platform is unique in its methodology providing:

- "Script-Less" approach to defining steps.
- Application Connectors for over 100 applications and tools managing the necessary cross application communication.
- Event driven conditional logic for business rules.
- Dynamic parameter definition.

The UC4 Consulting Services team has unique expertise and experience in automating business processes. They can take applications, such as Oracle E-Business Suite, and automate tasks that were once assumed to require manual input. This removes the end user from low value, error prone tasks and creates automated background process.

The UC4 platform focuses on automating:

- Within ERP applications such as Oracle E-Business Suite, PeopleSoft, J.D. Edwards, or SAP.
- Around ERP applications including Hyperion, Oracle Data Warehouse, Siebel, reporting, IT utilities, and housekeeping tools.

- Beyond ERP Applications to control vertical solutions such as Oracle Retail, Oracle Utilities Customer Care and Billing, and other industry specific applications.

The result is a single application automation policy and ultimately accelerated business processes.

Script-less Development Environment

The UC4 platform greatly reduces and many times eliminates the need for developers to write shell, bat, or PERL scripts to implement automation, enabling you to deliver new projects more quickly.

Module and chain building provides an online point-and-click interface to run your programs and automations, similar to Visio diagramming. We have taken existing coded automations and reduced the original scripts by more than 90%, which results in lower IT development and maintenance costs.

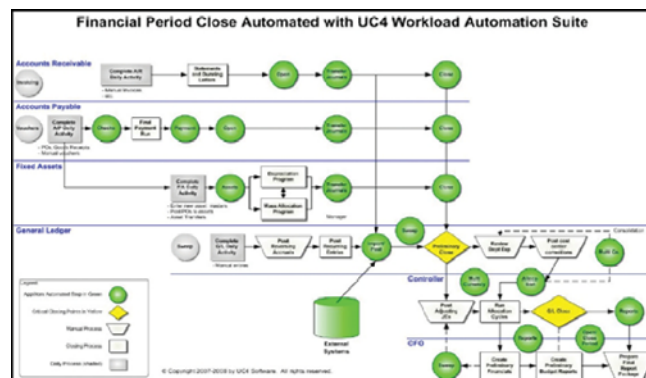


Figure c. Oracle E-Business Suite Financial Period Close.
Each green sign represents the automation of a manual step

In fact, this functionality can be extended to the entire development environment to reduce scripting in all projects. The UC4 platform manages dependencies, thread logic, parameter passing and validation, and abort and restart logic, leaving the development team to concentrate on business function improvements, react to business changes, and align IT with business goals.

All standard output is captured and all log files generated are tracked. A simple mouse click is all that is required to view the results of your applications, without having to log into Oracle E-Business Suite.

The UC4 platform export and import facility further reduces coding changes for environmental variables such as database logins, printers, and libraries. These and many other objects can be remapped when moving modules and chains into a new environment, eliminating potentially erroneous code changes and reducing the time to deliver new applications.

Future maintenance or changes to processes are easy to manage. New modules can be inserted and old ones switched off or deleted. The environment enables a self-documenting approach that provides the insights required to remediate issues rapidly. Processing management and alteration can take place much more efficiently.

By using the UC4 platform interfaces, extensions, and connectors, you can build very complex processes without having to repeat the coding effort normally associated with scripting. The object oriented methodology-write once and use many times-provides a key tool for rapid development of IT processes and integrated applications resulting in accelerated and controlled business processes. Your IT organization will have the ability to react at business speed by minimizing development and testing cycles.

Business Process Acceleration for Oracle E-Business Suite

UC4 Software specializes in application automation. The UC4 platform provides a series of Business Process Acceleration solutions for Oracle E-Business Suite that successfully reduce the time needed to complete key business processes.

The solutions are a combination of software, application knowledge, and best practices. The UC4 platform solutions also provide efficient distribution of back ground and real time processes to control and maximize Oracle throughput in coordination with hardware capacity, resulting in improved production performance.

Large and medium size organizations will benefit significantly from using the UC4 platform to:

- Reduce the cost of implementation
- Accelerate critical business processes
- Manage the impact on hardware infrastructure
- Greatly simplify the operations environment
- Provide cross application process integration that so often requires custom coding
- Allow business and IT resources to focus on higher value tasks

The UC4 platform delivers faster, more accurate, and more flexible business processing for Oracle E-Business suite.

Current UC4 platform Oracle customers include many major corporations and institutions such as SUN Microsystems, Cummins Engine, California Institute of Technology, Warner Music Group, Shell Oil, Best Western, Siemens, Cummins Engine, Toshiba America Information Systems, Fluke Corporation, Lucent Technologies, DoubleClick, Symantec, Online Resources, Family Dollar, and Society of Automotive Engineers.

Using UC4 business process acceleration solutions, the Society of Automotive Engineers have reduced their period close from 4 days to 8 hours.

Business Process Acceleration for Oracle Financials

The UC4 platform solution for Oracle Financials includes the Oracle Applications Extension, a series of UC4 developed modules, and the expertise of UC4 consulting services. The solution controls all Oracle processing and automates tasks that are normally associated with manual input.

For example, the end-of-period close is a key business process that is non-negotiable. It must be performed accurately and timely in order for the business to make decisions based on its output. This process includes manual input to Oracle Forms in order to drive Non-Standard Request Sets (Non-SRS). This task alone exposes the process to manual errors, unnecessary delays, and conflicts accessing processing resources. In many global organizations coordination of these tasks is highly manual and inefficient. Only the UC4 platform can provide the expertise and the tools to eliminate the manual input and therefore provide a more efficient and effective business process. The UC4 platform runs the Concurrent Request when it is ready to be run.

General ledger import and post process

The General Ledger Import process is the process that imports and validates transactions transferred from Oracle Applications sub-ledger applications like Oracle Payables, Oracle Receivables or third party application.

When a transfer is made from these applications the data is stored in a temporary Oracle General Ledger Table (GL_INTERFACE). To run an Import, a user must log into Oracle Applications and select a responsibility that allows them to run this process. They must then navigate to the appropriate form and select an import for a particular source. Once selected the form kicks off a Concurrent Request named GLLEZL. This process will execute and complete. Upon completion the user must then view the report generated to validate if the process was successful or not. This process does not have to ABORT for it to be an unsuccessful execution.

The process may ERROR out for many reasons (for example, Accounting Period not open, Unbalanced Entries, or Invalid Currency). When the process completes with a SUCCESS status the next step is to execute a Posting for the imported journal batch. To execute a Posting the user again must navigate to the appropriate form and select the imported transactions for Posting and monitor the Concurrent Request until completion.

The UC4 platform provides an automated process to complete the above cycle without any end user involvement. Built-in business rules ensure the process runs when it is most appropriate. Many companies would like to institute best practices to regularly run this process. Unfortunately, there aren't enough staff resources or time to run this very manual process on a daily basis.

With the UC4 platform many hours are saved freeing staff to attend to other higher value business tasks. Accountants can focus on accounting issues rather than the care and feeding of the application. The UC4 platform allows these activities to be scheduled outside of normal working hours since no monitoring is needed. If a process aborts, the UC4 platform will notify the appropriate person or system and the appropriate recovery action can be automatically or manually performed.

GL Open and Close Period Process

General Ledger Period Open and Close is used to journalize transactions of an organization for specific periods of time other than the current accounting date. This accounting procedure is critical to the timely and accurate financial reporting of the business. Oracle Financial Applications were created to help organizations keep track of these transactions in a world-class database.

The Oracle Define Calendar form must be set up with General Ledger Calendar including date parameters for any period requiring a status change. A user must then manually log into an application form, choose the period to open/close, and submit the transaction changes as needed.

The UC4 platform automates the entire process of General Ledger Period Open and Close virtually eliminating manual intervention. When the steps required before a period is opened or closed have been automated in the UC4 platform the coordination between jobs, which would otherwise need to be done manually, proceeds quickly, painlessly, and without error.

Oracle Financials AR Transfer Process

The AR Transfer process is a Non-SRS Concurrent Request which means the process is initiated from an Oracle Form. The form performs specific tasks in the background before it executes the Transfer process. The Concurrent Request name for this module is ARGLTP. The UC4 platform has automated this process by breaking down the forms functions and recreating the same actions in a pre-process to ARGLTP called ARGLTP_SETUP.

By using the UC4 platform to initiate a receivables transfer process, you eliminate another manual process. The process can then be automated instead of being driven manually.

When you combine this functionality with General Ledger Import and Post you automate the entire sequence of a critical financial business process.

These processes will be completed earlier since no actual person has to verify that each step has processed correctly. The UC4 platform will perform the validation and with its conditional logic will take the appropriate course of action in event of an error.

Receivables and Payables Period Open and Close

Almost identical to the GL Open and Close process described earlier, A/R and A/P Period Open and Close procedures require manual efforts that can be avoided.

The UC4 platform automates the entire A/R Period Open and Close enabling an organization to conserve valuable time, reduces manual effort, and manages human and technology resources. The UC4 platform manages every step of the business process virtually eliminating manual intervention. By having the solution in place you literally eliminate the guesswork out of the equation.

Purchasing Period Open and Close

Almost identical to the A/R and A/P Period Open and Close processes described above, Purchasing Open and Close Period procedures require similar manual input that can be avoided by automating the process.

Inventory Period Open and Close

As with the other Open/Close Period problems the Oracle Define Calendar form must be set up with Inventory calendar including date parameters for any period that requires a status change. A user must then manually log into an application form, choose the period to open/close, and commit the transaction changes as needed for a particular Organization.

The UC4 platform automates the entire process of Inventory Period Open and Close enabling an organization to conserve valuable time, reduce manual effort, and manage human and technology resources.

Every step of the business process is scheduled through the UC4 platform. Manual intervention, with its inherent delays, errors, and inaccuracies are eliminated.

Receivables Lockbox

The AR lockbox allows you to submit your lockbox transmission processes and transfer payment information. The 'Process Lockboxes' program transfers payments received by your bank to Oracle Receivables.

After completing this form, an Oracle Concurrent Request called ARLPLB is requested in Concurrent Manager. With the UC4 Software solution for managing the AR Web Lockbox, ARLPLB processes are driven automatically.

Oracle Multi-Org and Multi-Currency

To address the requirement of distributed companies trading in different countries and trading in different currencies, Oracle has created the multi-organization and multi-currency solution.

Multi-Org is the method of dividing a company into multiple organizations that can be tracked as individual financial entities. Each Org is represented by a unique Responsibility. When an OEBS user logs in, he or she selects a responsibility to work under which in turn determines the appropriate ORG_ID. Each ORG will have to run the same set of processes and reports. To facilitate financial reporting IT users can create report sets which can often times be a tedious and manually intensive process. While custom code can be created to launch these reports, they need to be run as Concurrent Requests and cannot be run dynamically without user intervention. Additionally, output viewing is restricted to that specific organization. Users have to switch responsibilities to launch and view each organizations concurrent programs and reports.

The UC4 platform simplifies complex Multi-Org processing with its “write once, use many times” methodology. The UC4 platform passes individual ORG_IDs and Responsibilities as parameters into a single chain accelerating processing, ensuring consistency, and automatically accommodating changes to the number of Orgs. With its object-based approach, adding a new report simply involves adding one new UC4 platform module in a defined business process. The UC4 platform will automatically process it for each Org available without any required manual intervention. This approach allows for you to easily scale your business process as your organization grows.

Managing an organization with multiple sets of books and with multiple currencies has issues in terms of cost of implementation, operation, and maintenance. Most financial processes such as creating multiple sets of books require that a request is controlled and submitted for each set of books (and therefore for each associated currency). This can be a time consuming and error prone process.

The UC4 platform can provide a higher level of automation and control. The whole process can be defined and managed in different ways:

- Individual processes can be created for each organization (and currency) and each individual chain can be started upon user request.
- Alternatively, the UC4 platform allows you to create one single process, which will execute a Concurrent Request for each and every ORG. New instances of the same process will be dynamically created (by looking in hr.all_organization). In a similar way all processes for all other orgs can be dynamically generated when one request is submitted.

Oracle Mass Allocations

Mass Allocations is the process by which costs or revenues from one source are attributed to or against multiple sources. Mass Allocations is initiated from a form and cannot be launched as part of a Request Set. The UC4 platform provides the ability to incorporate this process as part of a process and can follow other automations like GL Import and Post.

The UC4 platform automates the entire Mass Allocations (MA) process. As each higher-level allocation completes, the UC4 platform automatically nests successive allocations and ensures that your business rules are maintained. The UC4 platform manages these complex hierarchies, restarts failed or aborted processes without user intervention, and can send notifications via email or pager informing administrators or end users of processing status. The UC4 platform also saves you the time and energy associated with attempting to create your own custom solutions. The UC4 platform MA solution exists separately from Oracle E-Business Suite and is not impacted by changes in the E-Business Suite environment, something customized solutions cannot claim.

The UC4 platform value lies in its ability to automate and accelerate complex business processing for the disparate applications of your enterprise. One UC4 client has automated a Mass Allocation process that contains 26 levels of allocations.

Financial Statement Generator (FSG)

The Financial Statement Generator (FSG) is a standard tool that can be used to build customized financial reports from General Ledger data. Examples of financial statements are a standard telephone bill or an expenditure report. The basic definition is any report that can be expressed as a series of categories along the left-hand side (e.g.: departments) with columns along the top (e.g.: quarters or months).

The UC4 platform automates FSG creation, adds restart capability, and allows multiple reports to be run simultaneously. Running FSG's without the UC4 platform is tedious, allows only single reporting runs, provides no restart capability, and no alert mechanism if processes fail. The UC4 platform can restart FSG runs at the point of failure, and distribute multiple reports to multiple groups and/or multiple printers across the enterprise.

Some customers have created FSG reports within the Mass Allocations posting process for revenue or expense reporting prior to an end-of-month close. The UC4 platform can distribute FSG's to any group, printer, e-mail or a Web server allowing executives to access financial data quicker and more accurately. The UC4 platform can decrease the FSG processing cycle time and report printing/distribution time as much as 20 to 40 percent.

Material Requirements Planning (MRP) Process

The MRP (Materials Requirements Planning) process helps purchasing departments place orders, plan delivery schedules, and analyze inventory. Successfully planning these requirements is a complex task. An MRP process can consist of many Concurrent Requests. When these requests are launched via Concurrent Manager the parent request spawns many child processes. At this point they all become individual processes with no apparent links. Many Oracle users are relegated to manually tracking these relationships using an Excel spreadsheet.

The UC4 platform has created a solution to track the child processes spawned off by the parent process. By allowing the UC4 platform to submit the parent process you now have the ability to track all the child processes and notify if any have failed.

There are two methods the UC4 platform uses to track the child processes:

- Capture all MRP processes: You now add more functionality to the MRP process by allowing the customer to see all the processes in the UC4 platform Backlog. This also allows the customer to restart a process if it has failed right from UC4 platform instead of from Concurrent Manager.
- Capture the child processes spawned. This solution was created with Sun Microsystems.

Process Optimization and Load Balancing

As well as automating Oracle E-Business Suite processes the UC4 platform provides an efficient way to control distribution or optimization of Concurrent Request processing. The UC4 platform does not provide a way to reduce the resources required for processing for a given Concurrent Request, but it can provide a dynamic control of the numbers initiated based on its intelligent queuing mechanism, its event based initiation, and knowledge of operating system resource levels.

Intelligent Process and Work-Load Balancing

Traditional automation tools allow IT operators to set up a throughput level for their own environment and differentiate between batch and real time windows in order to reduce conflict between batch processes and end user driven processes. Unfortunately this does not provide an intelligent way of distributing computing resources. It is only a way to prevent jobs from running at specific times whether the computing system is busy or not.

The UC4 platform does not have the restrictive concept of 24 or 48-hour batch windows. It allows processes to be run when it is most appropriate based on a time or event driven processing logic. The UC4 platform dynamic queuing mechanism allows the automatic distribution and handling of computer resources to maintain overall system performance.

The UC4 platform advanced queuing mechanism can control the load placed on computing resources. Queues control the number of jobs that can be executed at any given time. Each queue is controlled separately, with a Monitor queue controlling the total number of jobs that can be processed through the UC4 platform. Queues can be prioritized, so jobs assigned to a high priority queue will execute before jobs assigned to a lower priority queue.

Based on its job definition a process is assigned to a specific queue and assigned a priority. This ensures that high priority jobs are processed in a timely manner. In the same way ad-hoc requests from users can be directed to lower priority queues so they do not interfere with date and time initiated production Concurrent Requests.

The UC4 platform can be set up to use a custom interface to monitor the Oracle Concurrent Requests or to work with other system performance analysis tools in order to dynamically increase or decrease throughput. UC4 platform customers have used dynamic processing control to make better use of their computing environment while maintaining an excellent service level for their business user clients.

Use of a Reporting Instance

The UC4 solution can be set up to interface with a separate Oracle E-Business Suite reporting instance. This configuration allows users to submit a Concurrent Request that would normally be run by a production Concurrent Manager. The UC4 platform traps the Concurrent Request and executes the process on a separate reporting instance.

With this solution, an end user does not need to log on to a separate Oracle instance. The UC4 platform will capture the user-submitted request which is marked to be captured and submit the Concurrent Request on a reporting instance.

The Concurrent Request will appear to be running in the production instance but in actuality it will be running on the reporting instance. Once the job completes or fails on the reporting instance the Production record in FND_CONCURRENT_REQUEST will be updated.

The Concurrent Request on the Production Concurrent Manager will not be executed. Instead the job will remain in PENDING status until the processing is completed on the reporting instance. The request will be updated with the knowledge that the process was executed in a reporting instance after it is completed.

Companies who implement a reporting instance primarily do so to alleviate the Concurrent Request load on a production instance. By running reports on a reporting instance the processing on the production instance is left to real time business transactions.

The UC4 platform: Application Process Integration

Due to the application centric nature of the UC4 platform, its close integration with Oracle E-Business Suite, and the ease with which other interfaces can be created, many business processes can be optimized or automated. With the use of connectors and extensions the UC4 platform can integrate your Oracle E-Business Suite environment with any other application processes (financial reporting, back-ups, other ERP systems) including market leading application packages (e.g., Oracle Retail, Siebel, Business Objects, Cognos, Veritas, Legato, and many others). The UC4 platform also can span the UNIX, Windows, Linux, OS/400, VMS, z/OS, Tandem, etc environments within those processes.

Intelligent Service Automation Within, Around, and Beyond

You purchased Oracle E-Business Suite to streamline your administrative functions and make them more efficient. This was critical if your organization was going to remain competitive in these challenging times. By gaining visibility, management, and control of all processing within, around, and beyond Oracle E-Business Suite with the UC4 platform parallel processing, automated parameter entry, advanced error checking, enhanced conditional logic, and notifications, you will eliminate data entry errors, shorten the batch processing cycle, and free staff to work on other projects.

Now it's time to take the next step and further improve your ROI by improving the efficiency of your business processing and centralizing automation across all applications in your enterprise. If you are just beginning an Oracle E-Business Suite implementation, you want to streamline the implementation process.

The UC4 platform is the clear choice. It is a true enterprise automation platform that is fully integrated with Oracle E-Business Suite, enhancing Oracle E-Business Suite in the critical areas. It also provides a development environment that can significantly shorten implementation time.

About UC4 Software

UC4 Software is the leading provider of intelligent service automation solutions that enable organizations to connect IT service delivery with business demand. Combining real-time intelligence with just-in-time execution ensures customers can automate processes that traverse on-premises, virtualized and cloud computing platforms at low risk and cost. In excess of 1600 organizations worldwide trust in UC4 to automate the mission-critical IT systems that drive their business operations. Visit www.uc4.com for more information.

Contact UC4 Software

In the US at (877) 464-7300 (toll-free)

In Europe at +43 2233 77880