

XEBIALABS AND CONTROL-M: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



I recently came across an interesting article on cio.com titled What is a chief automation officer?. This title has been mentioned in a few conferences I attended a couple of years ago but this was the first article I saw that attempted to describe the role. According to the article a key deliverable for a Chief Automation Officer (CAO) is to oversee enterprise process automation as a whole and focus on underpinning all automation attempts with the right technology across the company. It remains to be seen how many companies will adopt a CAO role but I do think that one reason for the emergence of this role is the need for automation everywhere and the subsequent exponential growth of automation tools used across the enterprise.

I spend time with a lot of Control-M customers and many of them are seeking clarification on the use cases for many of the available automation tools. The number of automation tools available today seems to be about the same as the number of stars in the observable universe, making it impossible to categorize and compare even a fraction of the tools in one blog. I will focus on one question that has come up recently from our customers. What's the difference between XebiaLabs and Control-M? Where and when should both products be used? A point to note is that XebiaLabs is now part of [DigitalLai](#) after merging with Collabnet VersionOne and Arxan.

Customer View

A good place to start any categorization is to see how the customers are using the tools.

Rabobank, a featured customer on the XebiaLabs [website](#) describes their use case as follows

"XebiaLabs enables us to deploy our applications more often, more reliably, and more predictably. It helps us to significantly improve our time to market in multiple critical areas."

Another success story on XebiaLab's [website](#) is Air-France KLM.

"Air France-KLM chose XL Deploy, an Application Release Automation solution from XebiaLabs. XL Deploy automates and accelerates Java and .NET deployments in cloud and middleware environments, such as IBM WebSphere, Oracle WebLogic, and JBoss.

The ability for developers to support around 200 Java deployments a week in a "self service" model has clear benefits for Air France-KLM, according to Bosch. We must be able to deploy the EAR files for a project as well as configure other middleware systems such as web servers, security proxies, and XML firewalls. For us, the ability to do this across different products in an integrated manner is a huge advantage."

Reading these and many other success stories on the XebiaLabs website it is no surprise that customers are using their solutions to simplify the challenge of configuring and deploying applications across a diverse and complex infrastructure because that is exactly how XebiaLabs describes their products. Their [main focus](#) is on three areas Release Orchestration, Deployment Automation and DevOps Intelligence to measure and optimize [DevOps](#) performance.

Let's look at how Control-M customers describe their use of the product.

Todd Lightner from the Hershey Company describes in this [blog](#) how Hershey's is using Control-M to help keep inventory stocked at stores. Included below is his description of their use case.

"The data center operations group runs thousands of jobs each day. These jobs manage the digital interactions that are necessary to run our business—not just manufacturing, supply planning, supply chain, warehousing, and distribution but also finance, payroll, costing, human resources, marketing, and sales. We handle many of these functions within our complex SAP® environment. BMC's Control-M solution automates most of these jobs and processes. It kick-starts them, monitors progress, and sends out alerts if issues arise. So, when anyone asks me what Control-M does at The Hershey Company, I tell them that it literally runs our business. It's one of our five most critical applications."

A [case study](#) of Raymond James Financial on BMC's website describes their use as follows

"Control-M manages jobs across complex interdependencies among hundreds of applications that access the company's data warehouse and consolidated data store. Nightly processing ensures that senior management and financial advisors have the data they need to help clients with investment decisions.

Audit report preparation, which previously took two to three weeks, now only takes a few hours"

Again, no surprise that Control-M customers describe their use cases focused on automation and orchestration of workflows for business applications because that's what Control-M has been designed for. Description of Control-M from BMC's [website](#):

"Control-M simplifies application workflow orchestration. It makes it easy to define, schedule, manage and monitor workflows, ensuring visibility and reliability, and improving SLAs."

Analyst View

Gartner covers XebiaLabs under the Application Release Orchestration Category. The latest magic quadrant for this category is available on XebiaLab's [website](#).

Control-M has historically been covered under the Workload Automation category by Gartner and

EMA. The most recent report on Workload Automation is by EMA and can be found on the BMC's [website](#).

Summary

Products offered by XebiaLabs are focused on automation the DevOps toolchain where it automates the various steps in the software development lifecycle such as code, build, test, release. All stages that are covered before an application reaches production.

Once applications are in production one of the critical functions is automation and orchestration of application workflows that are directly involved in the delivery of the business services such as billing, payroll, business intelligence reporting, prediction and recommendation applications that are driven by machine learning and artificial intelligence algorithms. Control-M's focus over the last 20 years has been to provide a single point of control for automating workflows of applications that deliver these business services.

The number of automation tools is only expected to grow as companies accelerate digital transformation efforts so it will be more important than ever to have clarity on the problem that needs to be solved and then choosing the right solution.