



AEGON Asset Management UK Tracks and Recovers Missing WebSphere® MQ Messages With Cressida ReQuest™

Aegon objectives:

- *'We were aware that the WMQ Recovery log files contained all the required data to meet our objectives... but searching for a specific message and its related activity is a major task'*

Aegon comments:

- *'We proceeded to bring ReQuest in We found that the product capabilities do in fact cover all the key areas we were interested in'*
- *'ReQuest not only has found what we were looking for, it was able to help us better understand how WMQ Logs actually work'*

AEGON Asset Management UK is best known for its award winning expertise in fixed income investment along with a growing reputation in equity investments and a distinguished record in managing ethical funds.

AEGON Asset Management in the UK manages around £40 billion of assets on behalf of individuals, institutions and insurance companies. As a subsidiary of AEGON NV, it is part of one of the world's largest financial services groups, with total assets of over €374 billion. The financial backing of such a large parent provides stability and strength to their business.

IT Background

The core of the IT systems at AEGON Asset Management is a tightly integrated set of applications that utilize IBM's WebSphere® MQ messaging solution in a multi-vendor Unix and Windows based environment. A key part of this is the communication and processing of business information between AEGON Asset Management UK and its third party administrator, who handles its fund administration.

The Search

According to Ben Thomas, Technical Support Manager, *"We were aware that the WMQ Recovery log files contained all the required data to meet our objectives. It was one of our requirements that this data should be used in a proposed solution. The WMQ provided utility (dmpmqlog) offers a Windows only view into the logs but searching for a specific message and its related activity is a major task requiring major development and maintenance commitment."*

Direct access, analysis and use of the log files have the obvious advantage that WMQ is not burdened by other more intrusive approaches. Use of the readily available logs avoids any added overhead and also means there is no further requirement to collect and maintain additional historical data files.

The possibility of in-house development for log evaluation was looked into but AEGON decided against it due to development resource requirements and the lack of available log documentation. The search for a commercially available and viable solution led Ben Thomas to **ReQuest™** from Cressida Technology Ltd., a WebSphere® MQ Message Assurance solution provider with offices in several European locations and the United States.

The Solution

Cressida's **Request™ for WebSphere® MQ** is a powerful Message Tracking, Message Reporting, Message Replay, Point-in-Time Message Recovery and Auditing solution. **ReQuest™** uses unique filtering technology to analyze critical message activity information already contained in WMQ Logs.

ReQuest™ is non-intrusive; no application changes are needed for deployment and it provided AEGON Asset Management UK with exactly the features they required to support their Service Level Agreements.



**Aegon
comments:**

- *'Before ReQuest, we were using a hodgepodge of the WebSphere MQ Explorer and an unsupported home-grown log file utility and I was keen to see something a little more integrated and supported by a local software vendor'*

- *'The immediate availability and response of Cressida's technical team to help us .. was a factor in us concluding that we had the right tool and vendor support required'*

Thomas stated, "After the initial contacts were made and we were still considering the solution, a situation occurred that I felt required Cressida's tool quickly. We were midway through exactly the sort of thing that we needed it for. I thought it would be an excellent check by layering it over some upcoming testing work we were doing involving communication with our third party administrator. It meant that we could try the Replay facilities as well.

We proceeded to bring ReQuest in and installed it. We found that the product capabilities do in fact cover all the key areas we were interested in. As with all new tools in a given environment, we had some questions and issues that were all answered and addressed. The tests concluded to our satisfaction."

David McGregor, Infrastructure Analyst who has been working with ReQuest commented, "ReQuest not only has found what we were looking for, it was able to help us better understand how WMQ Logs actually work. It also gives us control over practically every fault situation by analyzing the available WMQ recovery logs. In addition, ReQuest is used for application errors and design analysis in our development and test environments."

Thomas added, "Before ReQuest, we were using a hodgepodge of the WebSphere MQ Explorer and an unsupported home-grown log file utility and I was keen to see something a little more integrated and supported by a local software vendor."

In conclusion Thomas noted, "I would also like to comment on Cressida's support responsiveness. The Cressida UK based team was in direct contact with us to ensure all things were in order. The immediate availability and response of Cressida's technical team to help us at critically needed times was a factor in us concluding that we had the right tool and vendor support required".

Summary

Cressida's **ReQuest™ for WebSphere MQ** provided AEGON Asset Management UK with a reliable, scalable, flexible solution to their requirement for a message tracking and recovery facility.

The most recent addition to Cressida WebSphere® MQ solutions is the User Configurable WMQ API processing product; **InQuest™ for WebSphere MQ**. InQuest offers unique user flexibility and control to intelligently select and filter WMQ message traffic and to perform automated authorized actions including Message Content Based Alerting, Standards Enforcement, Compliance Reporting, Replication and Message Tracking and Recovery functionality.