

**Dressing System i for Retail Success:  
Express Choose QSystem Monitor and QMessage Monitor from CCSS**

**April 9, 2010 – QMessage Monitor (QMM) and QSystem Monitor (QSM)**, leading message and performance management solutions from CCSS have been selected by fashion-forward retailer, Express. Maintaining a stable and hardworking System i environment, Express relies on a 570 model across 2 LPARs to support their demanding 24/7 applications and meet the challenges of logistics, financial, product allocation and point of sale processes for more than 20,000 associates and 550 stores across the US. With more than \$1.8 billion in sales, the company has built a successful empire by interpreting essential styles, trends and must-have items for their customers. Innovation is at the heart of the company's strategy, so it's not surprising that it extends to their systems management approach as well.

At Express, there is such a critical dependence between the systems environment and the company's core operations that the value of system availability can never be underestimated. Andrew Bracken, IT Operations Manager for Express explains, "Our complete logistics, fulfillment and financial procedures depend on our iSeries availability. We could potentially lose millions should we incur a massive outage and every associate at the home office would be affected." The selection of QSM and QMM significantly reduces the chance that these types of unplanned downtime events occur and, at the same time, helps the team of 10 who manage the system maximize efficiency in both their routine tasks and those specific to retail requirements.

The operation of any retail company is a careful and constantly evolving exercise in forward planning. From anticipating fashion trends to stock replenishment on the shop floor, the process is highly organized and timing is critical. Significant challenges can include simply finding a large enough batch window for regular maintenance associated with patching, upgrades, PTFs and so on, as System Managers are acutely aware that even planned downtime translates to a loss in productivity. The team at Express uses the rich functionality of both QSM and QMM to coordinate their tasks according to the best possible timing and maintain system performance. Bracken says, "CCSS provides the eyes and visibility into our environment for the awareness we need to ensure we maintain a robust environment. I pull monthly reports on performance that allow us to proactively monitor the system and prepare for necessary maintenance. It prevents reactivity."

The team at Express use QMM to escalate priority system messages to their team via a number of communication devices (pager, email, cell phone etc) and strive for a 1 minute

resolution on their most urgent messages. QMM monitors all batch events and is integrated with their batch scheduler, Control-M. A proactive response to urgent system messages is critical for the team during out-of-hours operations when batch processing occurs. Without QMM, the team says it would struggle to be proactive to problems that occur in sequential processes. Bracken explains that Express runs a standard waterfall batch stream and problems with a specific job that fails or loops has an immediate impact and/or delay effect on all batch processing – from logistics and sales figures to sales associates goals and performance strategy. QMM ensures the team is informed of real-time threats to batch processing including jobs that fail, are waiting for a response and FTP errors.

In addition to the historical analysis and forecasting, reporting and fast problem identification Express currently utilize in QSystem Monitor, the software also gives real-time visibility to managers who need to monitor disk, jobs, applications and network components, all of which could impact system performance. When issues do occur, QMessage Monitor ensures they are brought to the immediate attention of the team regardless of shift-patterns or time of day. The combination gives Express the power to anticipate system trends and any vulnerable areas before problems have a chance to impact business, “Without CCSS, Express would not be able to function cleanly and efficiently in our environment,” says Bracken.

For more information on CCSS and their products, please visit:

<http://www.ccssltd.com/products/>

## **ENDS**

### **About CCSS**

CCSS develops, supports and markets IBM i (on Power Systems & System i servers) performance monitoring and reporting, message management and remote management solutions. An Advanced IBM Business Partner, CCSS develops powerful solutions to support some of the world's most demanding IBM i environments across many industries including insurance, banking, pharmaceutical and manufacturing. Existing customers that rely on CCSS's feature-rich solutions include leading organizations such as Volvo, Mattel, Newell-Rubbermaid, The Royal Bank of Scotland, and Siemens Healthcare.

CCSS is headquartered in Gillingham, Kent, UK with key regional headquarters in Raleigh, North Carolina, USA and Bonn, Germany together with a global agent network spanning Austria, Portugal, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden.

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