

Our First Issue!

Welcome to our premiere edition of Change Action News. This newsletter will be periodically published to provide Action Software's customers with the latest information on:

- the most recent versions and releases of Change Action;
- the latest features and enhancements included in the Change Action product;
- Action Software's products and services.

We will also be including a Tips & Techniques corner in which Change Action users can get technical tips and suggestions for some of the more creative and productive uses of the product.

Along with this newsletter we have included a Change Action Customer Profile Survey. This survey has been distributed so that we can get an updated profile of Change Action's installed client base, and to ensure that we have accurate product and contact information for your company.

This information will assist Action Software in better servicing your installation, as well as providing us with valuable information on what features and services we should be including in future releases of any Action Software products. All information provided to us will be held in strictest confidence.

What's the Latest?

The latest release of Change Action is version 5.05, which became generally available on July 4, 1997.

This release includes all of the features and enhancements provided in Change Action Versions 5.00 through 5.04, along with some new and exciting Automated Change Distribution functions.

The following is a brief description of just some of the new features and enhancements that have been included in versions 5.00 through 5.05 of Change Action.

Version 5.00

This version included general availability of the LULU (LU to LU) Communications component. The Info/Management component was also upgraded to support the new LULU component, which allows data centers to centralize and consolidate change request processes across multiple systems or sites.

A new Change Request command "Q" (Quick Change) was included to quickly create change requests from the List of Change Requests panel.

Also, users can create change requests directly in ISPF EDIT

without having to logon to Change Action using a new "MZCR Q" command, as long as the Change Action datasets are already allocated to the user's TSO session.

A QuickCompare option was added to the Compare Utility, which compares datasets across Changeplexes. QuickCompare uses CRC (Cyclical Redundancy Check) values to determine whether the files are different or not. An additional feature, the Data Equivalent Members option, was also added that allows support staff to find members with the same data file contents, but different member names across systems or sites.

Version 5.01

Change Action's Reference Tracking component was updated to maintain a complete list of users who referenced each defined dataset, along with the most recent reference date, SMFid, and total count showing the number of times referenced from a specific machine.

The Change Requests option was modified to allow users to mark a change request as a perpetual change request, by specifying "MAX" in the To-Date field.

Dynamic Dataset Definition Monitoring was included which allows support staff to monitor APF, LINK, and LPA lists in memory so that changes made to datasets in these lists can be automatically tracked even when the lists are changed dynamically.

Version 5.02

Change Action field and selection masking options have been expanded to include less than (<xxx), greater than (>yyy), and in range (aaa:ddd).

The Info/Management Interface was updated to process records filed in Info/Management by user written applications that use the Info/Management API. *(continued on page 2)*

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(What's the Latest - continued)

The Info/Management Interface also supports dates beyond the year 2000, and uses the date conversion routine specified in the Info/Management session parameters member.

Version 5.03

In a change request, a user can now specify datasets and members containing the jobs to be used to make changes instead of specifying the datasets and members to be changed. Change Action will automatically associate changes made by these jobs with the change request.

The Reference Tracking by Members option was included which allows support staff to track references to member names, regardless of which dataset or type of dataset they are in.

The Compare Utility was updated to support full compares of datasets or files across Changeplexes.

A new SCAN Template function was added which allows users to define a standard set of SCAN selection options and parameters which can be saved and reused.

In the Reports option, an override option has been added which allows pre-defined report options to be overridden temporarily.

Version 5.04

The Change Distribution component has been included which allows the users to automatically transmit changes to other sites, or between images at a single site which does not have shared DASD.

Change Action support for direct access (DSORG=DA) datasets has been included. Note that if backups are desired for DA format datasets, the full dataset name must be defined to Change Action.

ATTENTION MVS/XA USERS

Change Action Version 5.04 is the last release that is warranted to run on MVS/XA. Future Change Action releases will take advantage of MVS/ESA features whenever it is appropriate.

Action Software International will continue to provide corrective service for Version 5.04. If your installation is still running MVS/XA, please contact your Action Software International representative to obtain a Version 5.04 tape.

Version 5.05

Change Action's scheduling option can now be used to submit file transmission jobs for change distribution functions. If the scheduling option is not used, transmission jobs are scheduled every 10 minutes automatically.

In the Change Request option, users can now specify an unlimited list of member names for a given dataset included in the change request. The Member Name field on the Change Request - List of Changes panel (option DS) now contains the characters "MEMBERS", which indicates that a list of member names has been included. *This option requires that all systems that share the Change Action database are using Version 5.05 or higher.*

The Change Action Info/Management Interface now supports all external date formats provided in Info/Management Version 6.3.

Future Releases

Action Software continually improves and enhances Change Action to provide more features and functionality that help you manage your MVS systems more effectively.

We also continually respond to changes requested by our user community of over 250 installations, and involve them directly in the definition of requirements and user beta testing.

If you have some new requirements that may also be of interest to other Change Action users, let us know.

Info/Management Interface

Is your installation using IBM's Info/Management product to perform Change Management functions? If you are, you should consider using Action Software's Change Action Info/Management interface to actively control changes in your installation, without having to introduce completely new change management processes or procedures.

Action Software realizes that over the years, several IBM installations have developed and implemented change management methodologies based on the IBM Info/Management product.

However, these change management processes can only provide high level and best guess information as to what was going to be changed, by whom, and when.

The Change Action Info/Management interface delivers an active change management and control process, which allows the MVS installation's management to ensure that all required change requests have been created and approved, using installation defined Info/Management based procedures and panel flows, prior to allowing any actual change to be made to the datasets or members.

This interface also allows the data center to capitalize on Change Action's ability to track, control, and report on all changes that have occurred, and associate them back to the original change request.

If a change to a resource was made under the authority of an approved Info/Management change record, the corresponding record number will be reflected in all of Change Action's online facilities and reports.

TIME TO UPGRADE

Support for Change Action versions up to and including 4.10 will be withdrawn effective October 1, 1997.

To upgrade to the current version of Change Action, and to take advantage of all of the new features and enhancements that are included in Change Action Version 5.05, contact your Action Software representative to order your upgrade tape.

Multiple modes of operation are provided which allow the site to define exactly which system is the prime repository for change request information and change approval processes, either Info/Management or Change Action.

The Change Action Info/Management interface supports four modes of operation: *basic*; *standard*; *reverse*; and *hybrid*. In *basic* mode, users create, update, and approve changes in Info/Management. In *standard* mode, all of the *basic* mode functions are included, plus Change Action updates the Info/Management records automatically with change status information whenever a change is made. In *reverse* mode, users create change requests in Change Action and read only records are automatically entered into Info/Management. In *hybrid* mode, users create change records in Change Action and matching records are created in Info/Management for approval processing.

The Info/Management interface also includes full Changeplex support in all operating modes.

When used in conjunction with Change Action's Change Request Options, which specify if a change request is required to update a given dataset or member and if approval is required to make the change, the installation can ensure that all management defined procedures have been met before Change Action will allow the actual change to be made.

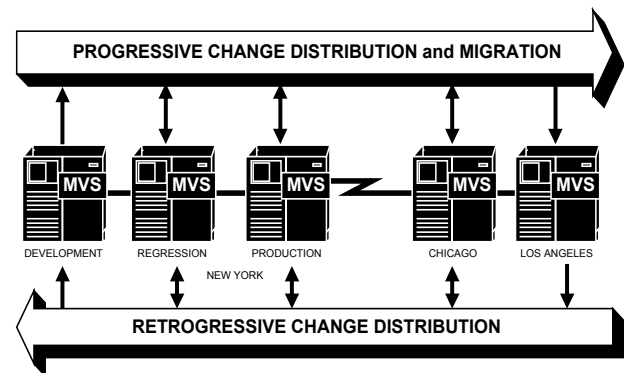
The features included in the Change Action Info/Management interface enable the installation to realize the benefits of an active change control system using Info/Management without having to sacrifice their investment in existing processes.

For more detailed information about the Change Action Info/Management interface, contact Action Software International and ask for the Info/Management Interface Planning & Installation Guide.

Forward/Backward Change Migration

All too often, installations that have multiple system or site configurations have difficulty in ensuring that changes applied to one system or environment are retrofitted or applied to other dependent systems.

The Forward/Backward Merge Changes feature shows the user exactly what is different on which system, and allows them to choose which changes need to be migrated and promoted forward or retrofitted backwards.



Fully and seamlessly integrated with all other Change Action components, differences between files on different systems can be instantly determined, and the exact contents of the changes can be viewed dynamically online. Change Action dynamically displays the status of changes across all systems or sites to the user.

Differences in dataset or member content are viewed directly online using a simple "C" line command to invoke the Compare Utility. Selected changes can be migrated forward, or retrofitted backwards.

```

C/Action -----Forward/Backward Merge Changes----- Row 1 of 25
COMMAND =>                                           SCROLL => PAGE
                                                    97.044  97/02/13 14:22

Input DSN      => SYS3.STAGE.PARMLIB
Merge Type    = BACKWARD
Select DSN    =>
Select Status => * (enter E or X or *)
DSN to log Excludes => WILL NOT BE LOGGED, IF DSN NOT PROVIDED
LCmd          DEVELOP  REGRESS  NEWYORK  CHICAGO  LOSANGEL  Status
-----
.... SYS1.PARMLIB
.... ADYSET00          19JAN96
.... ASCHPM00         15JAN96          11JAN96    23JAN96  EXCL
.... BLSCCT          11JAN96          18JAN96  EXCL
.... COMMND00        14JAN96          17JAN96    16JAN96  EXCL
.... IKJTSO00        18JAN96          22JAN96  EXCL
.... SMFPRM01        22JAN96          19JAN96  XMIT
.... SYS2.CTLDCDS
.... MZCBLKA         19JAN96    15JAN96    11JAN96    16JAN96    22JAN96  EXCL
.... MZCCHR1         25JAN96  XMIT
  
```

Change Action's Change Distribution Component can be used to automatically distribute and propagate changes to other systems or sites whenever a change has been made, or on demand whenever a change is required on another system or site.

This powerful facility simplifies the task of tracking, monitoring, and implementing changes across multiple systems or sites.

Reference Tracking

Have you ever wondered if someone is still using selected PDS datasets, product libraries, or specific members of a dataset?

Change Action's Reference Tracking Component can provide you with the answers you're looking for. Change Action's Reference Tracking Component can track and record references to members of partitioned datasets which are accessed from TSO, batch jobs, started tasks, or other programs.

Tracking options are easily defined to Change Action and are completely dynamic and instantaneous.

Information provided by the Reference Tracking Component includes:

- the number of days that reference tracking has been active;
- date on which the member was last referenced;
- userid (i.e., RACF, ACF2, Top Secret) of the user that referenced the member;
- task name of the batch job or started task which accessed the member;
- task type of the reference access, either batch, TSO, or started task;
- name of the program used to reference the member;
- number of times the member has been referenced.

(continued on page 4)

(Reference Tracking - continued)

With Change Action's Reference Tracking Component, your installation can quickly and easily determine which members in which PDS datasets *are* or *are not* used.

This feature will allow management and support personnel to easily determine which members for which system or product libraries are currently being used in their environment.

This feature can also provide baseline information for the MVS installation to identify, monitor, and recover valuable DASD and backup media space by identifying redundant PDS libraries or members.

If you are not already using Change Action's Reference Tracking Component, you should consider what this feature could do for your MVS installation.

Tips & Techniques

This column is included to provide Change Action users with a forum for technical questions regarding Change Action's features and options.

If you have any questions, or require any specific information about Change Action which may be of interest to you or other Change Action customers, phone us, fax us, or write us your questions, and we will include selected entries in future editions of Change Action News.

Q: *I have lost an important PDS dataset, and my last backup was 2 days old. How can I restore all of the changes that have been made since then?*

A: If the Dataset Options for the dataset includes having Change Action take a backup whenever a change is made, you can restore the members that have changed since the dataset was last backed up by doing the following.

1. Restore the PDS from your last backup tape or file.
2. In Change Action, from the Datasets Changed panel, select the PDS for which the changed members need to be restored.
3. On the command line on the Members Changed panel, type "SEL" to display the Selection Criteria panel. On this panel, enter the "From Date" and "From Time" since the last PDS backup was taken, and press END.
4. Change Action will return a list of members that have been modified since the date specified. From this panel, you can also exclude members from being restored by placing an "X" in the line command field for the member name.
5. Finally, on the command line type REST, and Change Action will display the restore options for the selected members.
6. Then press ENTER and the restore job will be automatically submitted, and all of the changes that have been made to the PDS since your last backup will be recovered.

Change Action and Year 2000

Change Action has always been internally Year 2000 compliant. All dates are stored in the Change Action database in a format that can even be used beyond the year 9999.

All date comparisons, sorts, and calculations are performed using this internal date format, and will produce the correct results well beyond the year 2000.

At present, Change Action externally represents dates using a 2-digit year, but all date values are converted to the internal format before being stored in the Change Action database.

The external date format used in Change Action uses January 1, 1980, as the boundary point, where 80 represents the year 1980, and 79 represents the year 2079.

An upcoming release of Change Action will provide an option to have year values displayed in either 2-digit or 4-digit format, however internal processing will remain the same.

Our next issue of Change Action News will include an article on how Change Action can help you manage and control changes for Year 2000 conversion projects.

We Are Listening!

Many of the features and enhancements which have been incorporated into the Change Action product since 1988 have been the direct result of suggestions or requests from users.

If you have some ideas let us know, we are listening. We can be reached at:

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