

# EMA RADAR for Workload Automation (WLA): Q4 2017



Advanced Systems Concepts, Inc.  
(ASCI) Profile

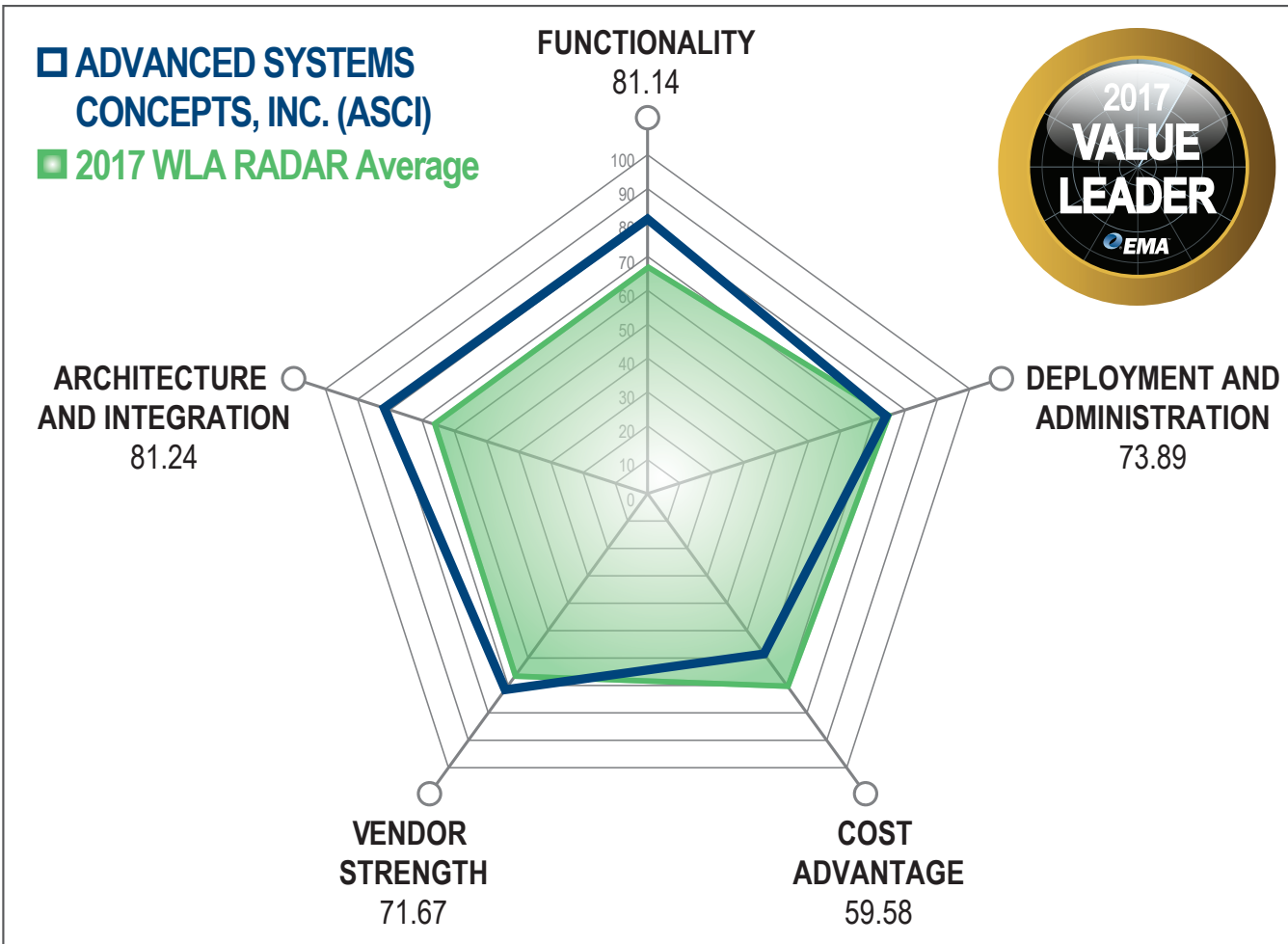
An Enterprise Management Associates Radar Report

Written by Dan Twing

## OVERVIEW

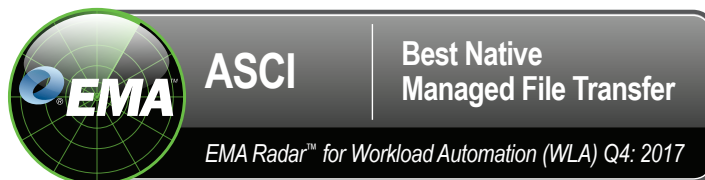


- **ADVANCED SYSTEMS CONCEPTS, INC. (ASCI)**
- **2017 WLA RADAR Average**



Advanced Systems Concepts, Inc. (ASCI) ActiveBatch is once again a Value Leader. The product's Integrated Jobs Library offers hundreds of prebuilt job steps, and the Service Library extends this power with strong API accessibility. ActiveBatch recently improved the deep integration with leading business intelligence and big data vendors, databases, and business apps, including a new HDFS Event Automation Trigger. ActiveBatch also added improvements to the Managed File Transfer capabilities, including an FTP Event Trigger, a new MFT User Account Object, and new Job Steps that eliminate the need for scripting. The standout feature for EMA is still the automated provisioning and de-provisioning of virtual and cloud-based resources, based on historical and predictive analytics with Smart Queue and Managed Queue tools. Built-in extensions supporting VMware, Amazon EC2, Microsoft Azure, and System Center Virtual Machine Manager make ActiveBatch a strong choice for anyone relying on hybrid or multi-cloud to optimize resource usage.

Founded in 1981 in Hoboken and currently headquartered in Morristown, New Jersey, Advanced Systems Concepts, Inc. (ASCI) is a privately-held software firm with a line of multiple enterprise software products, including ActiveBatch workload automation, XLNT command and scripting language, and RemoteSHADOW disaster recovery products for Unix and OpenVMS. EMA reviewed ActiveBatch version 11 for this report.



## ARCHITECTURE

ActiveBatch makes use of a dynamic, event-driven architecture to effectively manage and automate business and IT processes based on near real-time requirements (see Figure C).

ActiveBatch puts users in control of file transfers with cross-platform and cross-application scheduling, automation, alerting, and auditing capabilities. With ActiveBatch, users can move scheduled transfers of any size based on workflow, operations rules, and corporate policy. Workflows can be triggered based on incoming files, including via an integrated FTP Event Trigger. Files can be encrypted and transferred securely using a variety of protocols, including FTP, SFTP, FTPS, MFT, SSL, SSH, Web Tunneling, and more, as well as support for OpenPGP. ActiveBatch includes hundreds of production-ready actions for common file system operations like MoveFile, CopyFile, For-Each-File, IfFile, adding directions, renaming files with date and time stamps, and more. Built-in checks can determine whether or not files are successfully transferred (where supported by the FTP server). Content is included for connecting and disconnecting, creating or changing remote directories, downloading or uploading files with filters based on file size and/or relative or absolute time, listing files, moving files, and deleting files. The MFT User Account Object securely stores keys, host IP, protocol and encryption types, restart options, and other reusable information, and can be associated with one or multiple file transfer workflows. EMA believes that modern, enterprise-class workload automation tools are the most logical place to manage and control repetitive workflows, including file transfers, and ActiveBatch provides a best-in-class MFT capability.

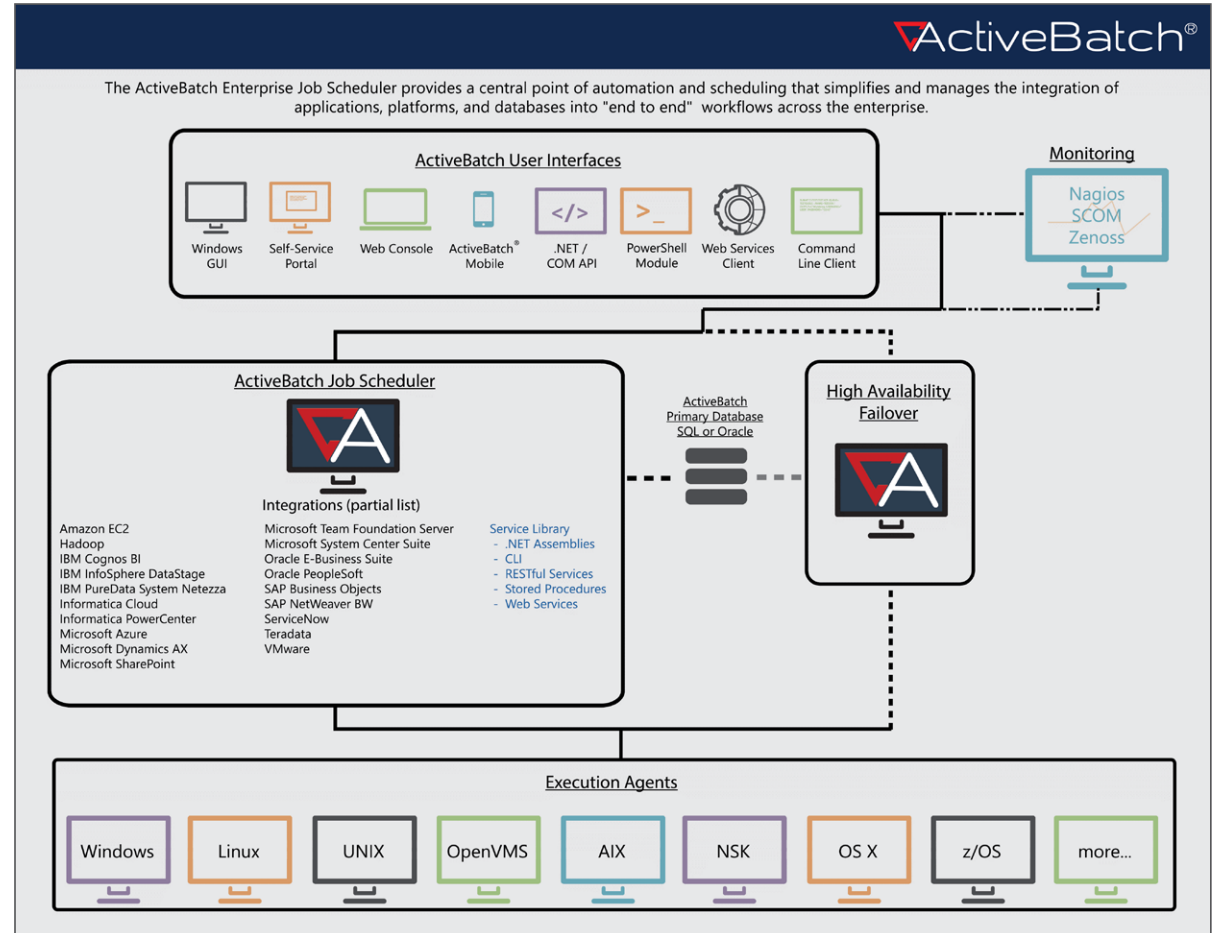


Figure C. ActiveBatch Architecture



## KEY FEATURES SUMMARY

### *Workflow Development and Optimization Tools*

ActiveBatch provides a flexible, real-time, graphical display and dynamic development environment with Map View. Map View is a centralized, 360-degree interface that allows users to build, design, modify, schedule, optimize, simulate, and trigger workflows all from a single pane. An Integrated Jobs Library provides drag and drop access to hundreds of prebuilt integrations. Workflow Optimizer graphically presents completions times, while Simulation Mode simulates a workflow to test logic.

### *Dynamic, Event-Driven Automation*

ActiveBatch supports a wide array of events, including application integrations, email, files, message queues, databases, etc.

### *Flexible Job Scheduling*

ActiveBatch supports both trigger-based and constraint-based scheduling. Trigger-based includes extensive calendar features. Constraint-based breaks from time-specific scheduling and allows jobs to start when constraints are met, and can support rolling start of business day across time zones.

### *Reference Objects and Variables*

Jobs can be defined as templates for easy maintenance and global changes. Reference Templates can include variables to share data with other jobs or objects, and provide more reusability compared to hard-coded values.

### *Managed File Transfer and Hadoop/Big Data Integration*

ActiveBatch includes predefined Managed File Transfer (MFT) job steps, support for a variety of file transfer protocols, advanced file filtering, parallel file transfer functionality, FTP file trigger, and built-in reliability checks made for effective MFT. Integration for the Hadoop Ecosystem (including Pig, Hive, HBase, HDFS, Sqoop, MapReduce, Spark, Oozie, and more). This integration includes prebuilt content (ActiveBatch Job Steps) for assembly into big data workflows, as well as an HDFS File Trigger.

### *Just-in-Time Resource Provisioning for Cloud and Virtual Systems*

Managed Queue and Smart Queue tools provide a way for organizations to intelligently automate the provisioning and de-provisioning of resources across virtual and cloud systems. Machine Load View provides operations teams with a better understanding and accounting of how users utilize their systems and resources.

### *Policy-Driven Governance*

Organizations are provided with a single, authoritative source to know exactly what's running and when, with the ability to easily control and monitor the behavior and security of workflows. Check-out/Check-in functionality allows multiple developers to simultaneously work on the same objects. Change sets allow users to track, associate, and identify multiple object changes over time as part of a single Check-In, or rollback multiple changes at one time. Change Management allows rollback, restore, and audit groups of changes. Revision History provides comparison between revisions.

### *Customizable Alerting And Monitoring*

ActiveBatch supports over 60 different alerts across all object types (jobs, plans, queues, scheduler, etc.), and supplies alert objects that are used to notify users and operations when a specified condition is raised. Each alert is deliverable, using 12 different delivery methods that include email, JMS, Microsoft Message Queues, SMS text, Twitter, SNMP, Skype, Office Communicator, Twitter, and more. This group includes monitoring and alerting workflows whose completions are tied to a Service-Level Agreement (SLA) or business policy.

### *SLA Integration and Support*

SLA Monitor allows specific attention to SLA-marked objects, with emphasis on providing insight toward whether the SLA is expected to be met or breached. When a workflow reaches a defined critical stage, ActiveBatch can trigger supporting actions and jobs to help remediate the issue.

### *Variety of User and Programmatic Interfaces*

The variety of interfaces includes thick Admin clients, full Web Consoles, Self-Service Portals for Help Desk and business users, and Mobile support, as well as full inbound and outbound Web Services API.





## EVALUATION SUMMARY

### ARCHITECTURE & INTEGRATION

ARCHITECTURE	
Business Focus	Outstanding
Scalability	Outstanding
Dynamic Workload Placement	Strong
Breadth of Platform Support (incl. agentless)	Strong
Breadth of Application & Database Support	Strong
Disaster Protection	Outstanding
Container Deployment	Outstanding
INTEGRATION/INTEROPERABILITY	
Comprehensive API	Outstanding
Cloud Integration	Solid
CMDB Integration	Limited
ITPA Integration	Solid
Capacity Management Integration	Outstanding
MFT Integration	Outstanding
Heterogeneity Across Environments	Strong
Developers Schedule in Code (DevOps)	Solid

### FUNCTIONALITY

FEATURES	
End-to-End Monitoring	Outstanding
Compliance Management	Strong
Triggering	Strong
Self-Service Portal	Strong
Forecasting, Analytics, & Reporting	Outstanding
Alerting	Solid
Security	Solid
What-If Scenarios	Solid
Conditional Logic & Auto Remediation	Strong
Logging/Auditability	Strong
Big Data Support	Strong
EASE OF USE	
Simplicity of GUI	Outstanding
SLA & Policy Awareness	Outstanding
Root Cause Analysis	Strong
Mobile Device Support	Strong
Language Support	Limited
Available Help Resources	Outstanding

## EVALUATION SUMMARY

### DEPLOYMENT & ADMINISTRATION

#### EASE OF DEPLOYMENT

Deployment Time/Effort	Outstanding
Conversion Facilities	Solid
Job Discovery & Import	Solid
Staff Training	Strong

#### SUPPORT AND SERVICES

Customer Support	Strong
Professional Services	Outstanding

#### EASE OF ADMINISTRATION

Console Ease of Use	Strong
Upgrade Process	Solid
Test Environments	None
Automation of Management	Outstanding

### COST ADVANTAGE

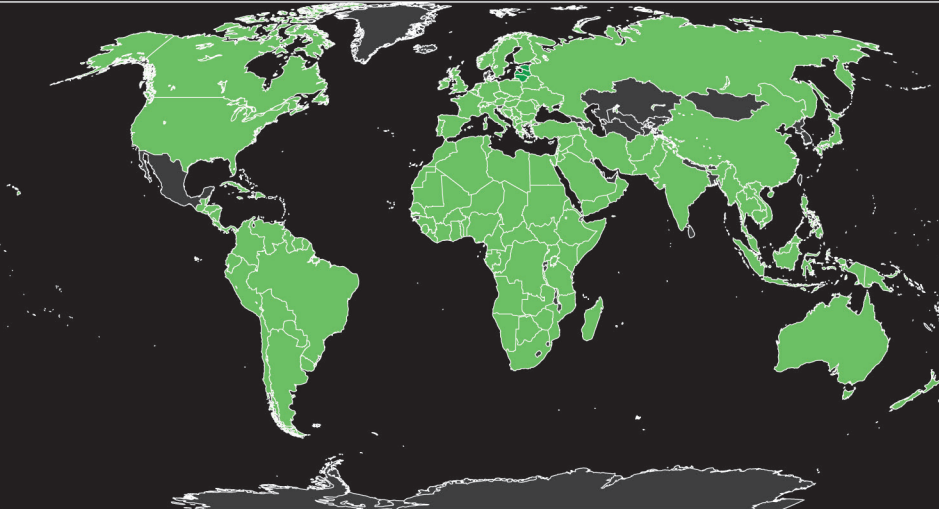
Flexibility of Licensing Model	Strong
Pricing Scenarios	\$\$\$
SaaS Availability	None

### VENDOR STRENGTH

Vision	Outstanding
Strategy	Strong
Financial Strength	Strong
Research & Development	Solid
Partnerships/Channel	Solid
Market Credibility	Strong
Geographic Coverage	Strong

# VENDOR PROFILE: ADVANCED SYSTEMS CONCEPTS, INC. (ASCI)

## CUSTOMER LOCATIONS



## NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS = 100



## Languages Available: English

ActiveBatch supports usage of world language and non-English characters in the naming of ActiveBatch Objects, within Job Log files, within documentation and commenting fields, etc. (where input by the user).

## FAVORITE FEATURES MENTIONED IN CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS:

*"Anyone who cannot get value out of this product at this price point is certainly doing something wrong."*

*"My favorite features are the Email and File Triggers."*

*"Whenever I ask a question, the answer is 'Yes, ActiveBatch can do it!'"*

*"Alerts are very useful—both Email and Text."*

*"The Reference Jobs function is a favorite feature. Using a Master Job for setup, you can change the master and all those that reference it change."*

*"We take advantage of load balancing and round robin."*

*"The integration with Active Directory is simple and effective."*



## About Enterprise Management Associates, Inc.

Founded in 1996, Enterprise Management Associates (EMA) is a leading industry analyst firm that provides deep insight across the full spectrum of IT and data management technologies. EMA analysts leverage a unique combination of practical experience, insight into industry best practices, and in-depth knowledge of current and planned vendor solutions to help EMA's clients achieve their goals. Learn more about EMA research, analysis, and consulting services for enterprise line of business users, IT professionals, and IT vendors at [www.enterprisemanagement.com](http://www.enterprisemanagement.com) or [blogs.enterprisemanagement.com](http://blogs.enterprisemanagement.com). You can also follow EMA on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

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