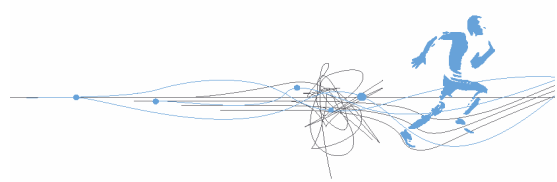




CRM ALLIANCE



CRM Alliance Scheduler

- Frequently Asked Questions -

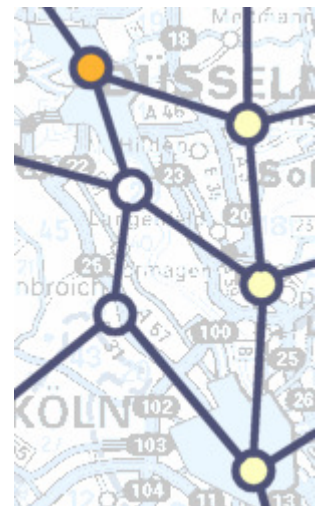
Combining field resource planning with efficient geographical optimization algorithms and visual planning components, CRM Alliance Scheduler provides an open, reliable and fast solution for mission critical field service applications.

Q: I already use back-office planning but without exact geographical information. What is your estimation of the cost savings I can expect?

A: We experience at least 10-20 % savings on travel time and travel distance.

Q: Can CRM Alliance Scheduler optimize across resources, i.e. does it consider assigning a task to a different resource to decrease overall costs?

A: Yes. CRM Alliance Scheduler uses a concept called "Territories". A territory can represent a geographical or a certain group of resources. During optimization, CRM Alliance Scheduler can reassign a task to another resource in the same territory, if the overall cost is lower.



Q: Which criteria does CRM Alliance Scheduler base its assignments on? How does CRM Alliance Scheduler make its choices?

A: CRM Alliance Scheduler considers response time/service level agreements, skills, opening hours, resource availability, travel time, travel distance and maximum capacity (weight /volume).

Q: Does it run on Windows?

A: Yes. CRM Alliance Scheduler is entirely built in Java. It therefore runs on a variety of platforms including Windows, Linux, Solaris, HP-UX. See <http://java-virtual-machine.net/other.html> for an extensive list of available Java runtime environments.

Q: Does it run on Linux?

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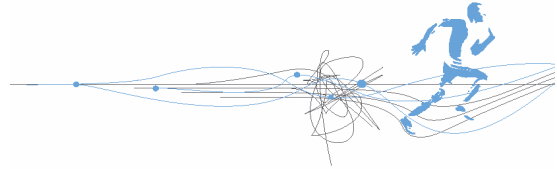
Q: I want to use CRM Alliance Scheduler as a background process once a day. Is this possible?

A: Yes. You can run CRM Alliance Scheduler in batch mode on a single machine or use a J2EE application server to calculate and optimize plans concurrently in a scalable environment.

Q: What is the average implementation duration?



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A: Usually, the implementation consists of three portions: interface building, training and parameterization which takes between one to three weeks overall.

Q: Can I make a snapshot of a current plan and work on it without corrupting production data?

A: Yes. You may save a plan in an independent XML file and reuse that file for what-if scenarios to even further optimize plans and learn from the past.

Q: Can I use CRM Alliance Scheduler to re-evaluate territories or districts?

A: Yes. You can take a snapshot of an existing plan and reassign all visits of a certain period to the available resources without the “use Territories” option. This will give you a new optimized set of districts. You can re-apply this procedure from time to time, reconsidering changes in your list of customers.

Q: Can I visualize one or more trips?

A: Yes. Apart from a simple drawing during visual planning, showing the locations and the links between the stops of a trip, you may visualize a set of trips on a detailed geographical map, showing the days in various colors and allowing to zoom into certain regions.

Q: How accurate is the geographical localization of an address? Which fields do I need to provide?

A: Accuracy is configurable. The map can work with street ranges, thus allowing an accuracy of around 20m. The localization of addresses can be done automatically by CRM Alliance Scheduler or upfront by using the Geocoder utility that matches an address table and stores the GPS coordinates in a separate or same table.

Q: How can I integrate CRM Alliance Scheduler into my back-office system?

A: By default, CRM Alliance Scheduler uses XML and SQL interfaces. Depending on the infrastructure, different interface scenarios are possible for read and write. For example, CRM Alliance Scheduler may read information from a SQL database and write the planning to an XML file. By applying a XSL stylesheet, the result of the planning may be transformed into a format that is readable by the ERP XML Gateway. Furthermore, CRM Alliance Scheduler can be easily adapted to ASCII and API interfaces.

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