

THE FOUR TASKS OF ROBOT/CONSOLE

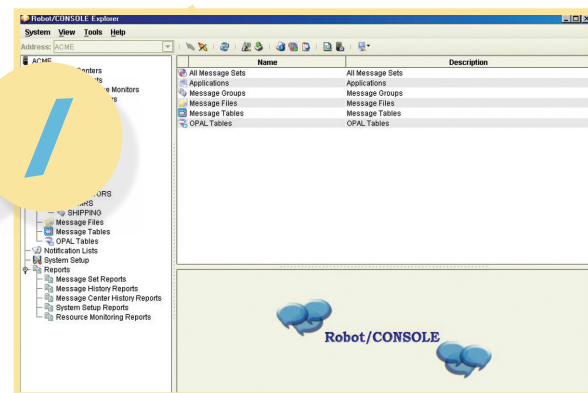
by Chuck Losinski

Over the last decade I've had the opportunity to use Robot/CONSOLE to help many of our customers automate the four critical tasks of monitoring their System i. These customers ranged from small one-system shops to huge organizations with dozens of partitions and systems. In each case, Robot/CONSOLE was so flexible and powerful it was able to perform the often dull, day-to-day tasks of manual monitoring and management. By taking over these tasks, Robot/CONSOLE reduced everyone's workload, saved them money, and provided them more quality time for other tasks that they enjoy.

Task #1—Automate Message Monitoring and Management

System i message monitoring can be tedious and nerve-wracking. An operator waits for a QSYSOPR break message, makes a decision based on the contents of the message, and then replies to the message. But, how many times did the operator not understand what the operating system was asking, or answer the message incorrectly? (For example, they entered C to continue...but C actually meant Cancel!) With Robot/CONSOLE, messages are handled the same way, every time, without error. And that means time and money saved.

But, automated message management is more than just answering a QSYSOPR inquiry message with a standard response. It also includes the process of scanning inquiry and informational messages for specific information, such



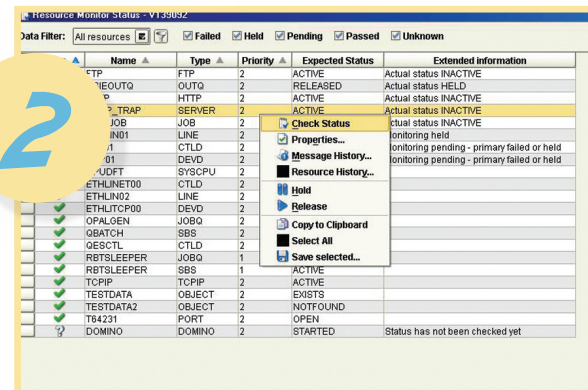
Fast point-and-click access for message management.

as a message ID, a library, or a filename, and taking action. Robot/CONSOLE can scan these messages and, based on the results of the scan, it can select an appropriate answer or route a message to a responsible party. This quick, automated response process helps solve problems fast and prevents small problems from getting bigger.

Message management also means fixing many problems automatically by helping the System i correct itself. For example, assume that the system sends the following message at three in the morning: CPF0907—Storage Threshold Exceeded. Robot/CONSOLE can review this message, start cleanup programs to free disk space, and notify the system administrator (if necessary).

Task #2—Automate Resource Monitoring

Another potentially mundane task that operators must perform is resource monitoring. Operators must regularly review a checklist of system resources—such as communication lines, devices, controllers, job queues, subsystems, and servers—to check their status. Sometimes a resource gets missed because the operator is overwhelmed or tired. Robot/CONSOLE can monitor system resources for an expected status as often as twelve times an hour. If the resource is not in its expected status, Robot/CONSOLE can execute a command to fix the problem and notify the system administrator. Later, after the situation is resolved, Robot/CONSOLE can notify them again.



Monitor system resources automatically.

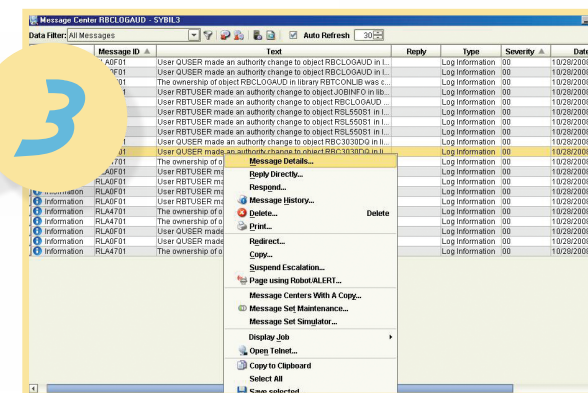
Task #3—Automate System Log Monitoring

The System i does not maintain a system log for FTP traffic, which can be critical data for today's security-conscious world. Even though you are very careful about authorizing FTP users and configuring object-level security, you may need to know when a file was delivered or sent, and by whom. Robot/CONSOLE can check each FTP command on the FTP server and produce messages that can be monitored, automated, or routed.

There are other System i logs, such as the system security audit journal (QAUDJRN) and the system history log (QHST), that you may want to monitor to escalate issues to the appropriate people. Robot/CONSOLE can extract the QAUDJRN entries related to authorization failures, system management tasks, service commands (such as the Start System Service Tools [STRSST] command), and security-related changes. And, Robot/CONSOLE can monitor for activity related to save and restore operations, or job starts and stops in the QHST log—information not found in the QSYSOPR message queue.

Task #4—Automate Notification Escalation

Robot/CONSOLE provides two powerful options for notification escalation: Robot/ALERT and Robot/NETWORK. Based on the work schedule, Robot/CONSOLE can determine



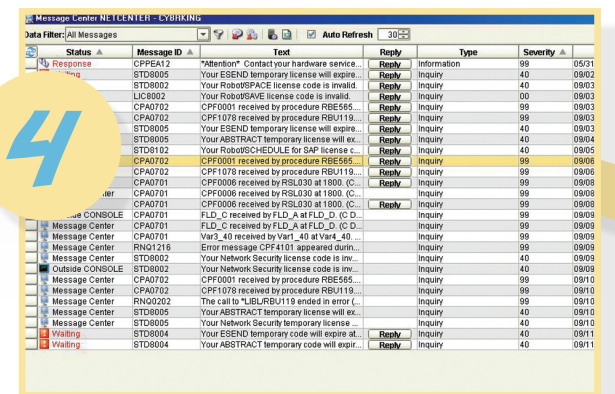
Monitor and work with system logs.

who should receive a message and use Robot/ALERT to automatically escalate the issue to one or more e-mail addresses, laptops, cell phones, pagers, or other devices.

If you manage multiple systems or logical partitions and must constantly look at different screens to monitor the messages on those systems, you need to look at Robot/NETWORK instead. By combining Robot/NETWORK with Robot/CONSOLE, you can manage all of your network monitoring from one location. And, because Robot/CONSOLE is on each System i server or partition that you want to monitor, you're notified in real-time, rather than waiting through the delay of intermittent system polling.

Robot/CONSOLE 5: The Easiest Automation Ever

Today, Robot/CONSOLE is better than ever. Version 5 offers a new graphical interface, enhanced resource monitoring, and improved reporting to make message, resource, and log monitoring, management, and notification easy—even across multiple systems. Even veteran Robot/CONSOLE users love the new version. There's never been a better time to have Robot/CONSOLE reduce your workload, save you money, and increase your quality time.



Escalate messages automatically across your network.