

Leverage Holiday Readiness: Prepare for Peak Commerce Season

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WebSphere® Support Technical Exchange



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Agenda

- Peak Day Pitfalls
- Smarter Commerce Holiday Readiness Program
- Risk Mitigation thru e-Support
- Working with IBM Support
- Lessons Learned from 2013 Holiday
- Holiday Readiness Program: Getting on Board





Peak Day Pitfalls



Don't be caught making these statements during the week of Black Friday!

"We just loaded all the new promotions from marketing last night, and now it takes 20 seconds to add to cart!"

"We only have 3 more defects to close out then we can push out our final release just in time for Thanksgiving rush!"

"There was a mandatory security fix pushed out in September? Can we still squeeze it in on time?"

"We had an outage on Monday, but didn't capture any javacores. What do we need in place for next time?"

"I'm relieved we got our massive new catalog on production now. At least we tested the old one already last month."

"Anyone else notice those Out-of-memory errors we've been getting for a while?"

"I just noticed our site is pretty slow.. We still have a few days till Thanksgiving, should we open a PMR?"





Smarter Commerce Holiday Readiness Program

- IBM taking a proactive approach to reach out to clients in preparation of peak days
- Success thru enhanced IBM collaboration partnered with proactive risk mitigation
- Internal and seamless collaboration across product and functional teams within Smarter Commerce solution, on client's behalf
 - → <u>Support, Services, AVP, Client Success, Sales and Client Reps, Lab Advocates</u>
- Internal IBM "watch list" of client who are perceived at risk
- Gather info in advance to learn about a client's history, business peaks, plans, preparation
 - Helps support react quickly with relevant background info to be on alert
- Share environment recommendations and operational best practices

Mitigate Risk

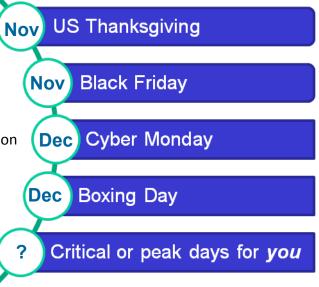
- Proactively reduce identified risk areas
- e-Support allows clients to be prepared, avoid problems
- Internal initiatives to prepare staff, continuously monitor

Timely Response

- Heightened awareness to key activities and timelines
- Re-enforced staffing availability throughout key dates
- Round the clock management coverage

Expedite Resolution

- Collaborate between internal focals across both product sets and functional units
- Share insights and understanding of client activities at regular internal checkpoints
- Pre-determined cross-product and cross-functional escalation paths

















Holiday Readiness – What is it really?



■ IBM Client Success Essentials - Holiday Readiness : https://ibm.biz/BdFs3D



"Holiday Readiness is a <u>communication partnership</u> of IBM and our clients taking proactive measures together to prepare for a peak holiday season. Our goal is to proactively ensure our clients have a successful peak revenue period, by providing a stable IBM retail solution and reacting quickly to any critical situation."

It is about the **Client** preparing ...

- Leverage e-support initiatives on bestpractices, lessons learned
 - Blogs, webcasts, Knowledge Center
- Learn fast and deep self-diagnosis techniques
- Share preparations, activities, risks with IBM
- Ensure recommended fixes and settings used

It is about **IBM** preparing ...

- Maintain internal watch-list of 'at-risk' clients
- Regular proactive communication across
 Support, Services, Sales, AVP, CSM, Execs
- Build deeper understanding of client environments, deployments, go-lives
- Contribute vast amounts of best-practices







Risk Mitigation thru e-Support: IBM Client Success Essentials

"Bringing together users of IBM Industry Solutions software to share, collaborate and connect with each other virtually"



IBM Client Success Essentials

Technical Exchange Webcasts

- Technical experts share their knowledge and answer your questions on a variety of topics for WebSphere Commerce, Sterling Order Management, etc
- Open-Mic's, Ask-the-Experts allow for more Q&A
- 7 Webcasts thus far in 2014 across Performance, Search, Dataload, and more
- Several more booked for 2H 2014

Support Blogs

- Go beyond the documentation to learn from Support
- Subject Matter Experts directly share best-practices, troubleshooting tips, lessons learned
 - → WebSphere Commerce
 - → Sterling Selling & Fulfillment

Proactive Notifications

- Regular notifications of new news, technotes,
 iFixes as well as important product flashes
- Will help keep you informed of new security bulletins
- Leverage social media or various other channels to stay connected to the community
 - → List of Available Subscriptions

Quarterly Newsletter

- Features the most requested documents as well as those identified as valuable in helping questions
- Highlights planning & maintenance with new fixes
- Helps educational needs with various knowledge bases

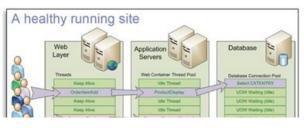
→ 2Q Newsletter



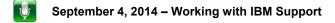


Risk Mitigation thru e-Support: Technical Exchange Webcasts

WebSphere Commerce Upcoming Live Webcasts and Replays: https://ibm.biz/BdFiXD









Experts from the WebSphere Commerce Development, Services and Support teams will join this Ask the Experts session to answer questions related to tuning, performance, and stability for WebSphere Commerce sites.

- August 29, 2013 WebSphere Commerce Performance
 - Experts from the WebSphere Commerce Development, Services and Support teams had a session to answer questions related to tuning, performance, and stability for WebSphere Commerce sites.
- August 14, 2013 WebSphere Commerce Introduction to Troubleshooting System Outages
 Introduce WebSphere Commerce administrators to different troubleshooting techniques for outages. At a high level the presentation demonstrates how administrators investigate, which relevant data to collect, and how the data can be analyzed.
- August 6, 2013 WebSphere Commerce Common Scenarios Affecting the Availability of a Site

 A high-level description of common causes that can affect the availability of a WebSphere Commerce site. It explores how each tier responds and provides tips and guidelines to identify the root cause.
- and guidelines to identify the root cause.

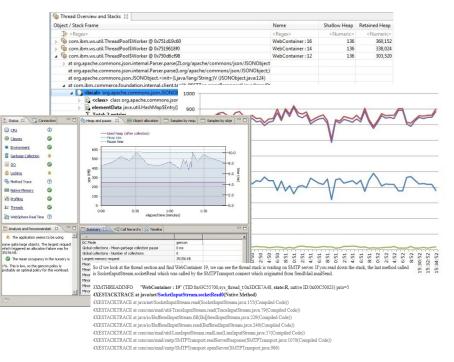
 June 28, 2012 Using WXS with WebSphere Commerce
- June 21, 2012 WebSphere Commerce Data Cache Overview and Configuration
 - Overview of configuration settings of Data cache for WebSphere DynaCache and eXtreme Scale to improve WebSphere Commerce performance and scalability



Risk Mitigation thru e-Support: Support Blogs

WebSphere Commerce Support Blog https://www-304.ibm.com/connections/blogs/wcs/







Performance: https://www-304.ibm.com/connections/blogs/wcs/tags/performance?lang=en_us

Troubleshooting: https://www-304.ibm.com/connections/blogs/wcs/tags/troubleshooting?lang=en_us

Out-of-Memory: https://www-304.ibm.com/connections/blogs/wcs/tags/oom?lang=en_us

DB2: https://www-304.ibm.com/connections/blogs/wcs/tags/db2?lang=en_us

Holiday Readiness: https://www-304.ibm.com/connections/blogs/wcs/tags/holidayreadiness?lang=en_us

ajax apar asset authentication barbara bottleneck businessaudit cache caching callaghan classloade cmc commerce confirm connection core coupon CSE database db2 debugging dojo doubleclick drs dynacache education email errington expired failover feature fep7 holidayreadiness ifix ihs install installmints instance interim inventory java javacores jit johnson jsessionid jsp large leak locking logging loss maintenance management mat monitoring mpmstats object 00M oracle outage outofmemory partnering password performance plugin pmr policy price profiling QUETY request rest rfe rule search security servicelogger session sal stagingprop support survey tracing traill troubleshooting tuning validate verbosego voldman warning WCS websphere webspherecommerce



Risk Mitigation thru e-Support: Proactive Notifications



Follow Twitter Account (@IBM_Commerce) to catch latest blogs, fixes, technotes



Ensure products are up to date with latest levels possible, plus any Recommended Fixes

Recommended fixes and settings for WebSphere Commerce Version 7

Recommended Blog - Recommended Search APARs Updated for FEP7

Recommended fixes and settings for Sterling Order and Warehouse Management Version 9.2

- Review published recommendations and best practices, including 'MustGather' documents
- Help minimize data capture and troubleshooting time in event of a crisis
 - MustGather Listing: "Read First for WebSphere Commerce 7.0" http://www.ibm.com/support/docview.wss?uid=swg21440712
 - Sterling Selling and Fulfillment Suite (SSFS) List of MustGathers http://www-01.ibm.com/support/docview.wss?uid=swg21673807
- Sign up for proactive notifications to stay on top of any critical updates or news from IBM Support
 - ✓ Commerce Flashes and Alerts
 - ✓ Quarterly Pro-active Commerce Newsletter
 - ✓ Support RSS Feeds
 - ✓ Follow Commerce on Twitter



Working with IBM Support: Expedite Problem Resolution

Partner with IBM for Effective Resolution

- Everyone who opens a PMR should have a unique userID in the Service Request tool
- Who will be the primary contact, when will they be working, what is the best way to contact them?



Describe the Business Impact of this problem to you, your business users, and shoppers

Include upcoming project deadlines, scheduled deployment, any lost data, failure to meet service level agreements

Utilizing L2/L3 Support:

- Support will join calls to discuss problem details, share our findings after reviewing the data
 - Provide problem details and data in PMR <u>prior</u> to requesting Support join bridge calls
- Support is most effective with data in hand, reviewing it offline (not on a bridge call)
 - Support will NOT remain on bridge after sharing findings. Support can return to answer explicit questions
 - Support will NOT join bridge during data capture or during solution implementation.

Know the problem details before opening a PMR

- What is the problem? what time did it happen? what scenario is captured in logs? Can it be reproduced?
- ☐ What maintenance is applied in the environment? (Fix pack, feature pack, interim fixes/APARs, HotFixes, etc.)
- ☐ What you have already done to try to troubleshoot or resolve the issue?
- Does it work on other environments? What is different between environments? (code/data/traffic/hardware)
- What changed? Any recent data loads, upgrades, promotions, or traffic increase that could contribute?
- ☐ Explain data sent to IBM. What was captured/scenario? timestamp of problem? how does IBM recreate?



Recommended Blogs: The more (details) the merrier! Jeepers (Scope) Creepers











Working with IBM Support: Give us a fighting chance!

- Quick diagnosis and recovery is critical when dealing with a production system outage, avoid costly subsequent outages
- Lack of data or context can hinder ability to troubleshoot a problem altogether (by you, us)

MustGathers and Data Collection:

- Review key Mustgathers in advance (specifically those around Crash, Hang, High CPU)
 - WebSphere Commerce performance problems with DB2 databases
 - Out of Memory MustGather
 - Performance, hang or high CPU MustGather
 - Crash MustGather
 - Some critical data requires modifying configs in advance (eg. Capturing system core dumps)
 - Pre-configure proper logging levels or diagnostics (eg. Load balancers, webserver access logs, mpmstats, DB snapshots)
 - Diagnostics may be intrusive, need to understand what can capture and when don't create a bigger problem!
 - Massive and unmaintained logs greatly increase FTP transfer time, IBM download time, Support parsing time (native_stderr.log, IHS access log, db2diag.log, etc)
 - Lack of pre-reviewed data can mean subsequent uploads (eg. logs do not contain the error)

Monitoring:

- Monitoring must be in place well in advance, and interpretation understood
 - How does traffic normally look like? Can you tell when something is abnormal? What is the baseline?
 - What traffic is normal? Can you tell when a crawler/bot is hitting you?
 - Can you tell what is happening at a network level? (eg.. Lost packets, clogging up the network, etc)
- Don't let 3rd party monitoring itself be what brings you down! Enable only what is necessary





Working with IBM Support: Give yourself a fighting chance!

Notifications and Alerts:

- Lack of system **notifications** leading to slower reaction time can cause you to miss window of opportunity
 - Failure to trigger a particular collection or command (ie. kill -3 to generate javacores) or logs roll over
 - Lack of archived or historical logs may lead you to miss capturing the issue

Commerce Maintenance Levels

- Being on old maintenance levels hurts our ability to troubleshoot, mitigate, or provide fixes or enhancements
 - For example, inventory contention, caching, have been improved greatly improved on recent FP/FEPs
 - You do not want to lose money in revenue or investment to diagnose and resolve already known issues!



Recommended fixes and settings for WebSphere Commerce Version 7

Database Maintenance

Maintaining the health of the database should not be an afterthought, maintain and purge!



Maintaining a WebSphere Commerce DB2 Database

Failover and Recovery

When a site is down, getting it back up should be top concern. Ensure failover and recovery options at all tiers, Application, Database, webserver, load balancer, plugin, network



Recommended Blog: Fail on your own terms: Plug-in failover options



Recommended Blog: Where is your WebSphere Commerce black box?





Lessons Learned from Holiday 2013

- 1. Adding **CPU** does not mean add more **webcontainer** threads
 - Common mistake to get more throughput causes contention or memory issues, consider additional JVMs
- 2. Don't overlook impact of **Inventory contention**, test with accurate promotions and expected shopper patterns

Recommended Blog - That's my product! Dealing with inventory contention

- Understand your database connections
 - The more connections to the DB server, the slower DB response, which in turn drives even more connections to the DB

Recommended Blog - Troubleshooting: Database connection pooling issues

Recommended Blog - Beware of the Connection storm

- 4. Don't max out **ulimit** with excessive SocketReads
- 5. The network is not to be overlooked
- 6. Shoppers will be impatient, be prepared for **multi-click** tendancies
 - Recommended Blog Locking Orders tables on multiclick
- Know who is hitting your site and what they are doing
 - Access logs are helpful, if set up right

Recommended Blog - Access Logging on Steriods!

Recommended Blog - mpmstats: The eye to the site

- 8. Proper configuration of **Dynacache invalidation** is critical
 - It is possible that if invalidations are misconfigured or untuned, the cost replication creates from light performance degradation, to a complete outage.



Recommended Blog - Avoiding invalidation overload after propagations



Recommended Blog - Dynacache/DRS Invalidations





Reference: Guidance to Isolate Root Cause of Outage

Site	Hea	itn:

- How do you know the site is down?
 - Alarms and monitors can measure in different ways
 - Monitor in the intranet or extranet? What is the monitor exactly measuring?
 - Can you access the website from your workstation?
- What is exactly slow in the site?
 - Are all pages slow or some in particular? (eg. catalog pages that are typically cached vs checkout pages)
 - Is whole page slow to render or a portion of it? (eg. HTML is fast but the images and other static content is slow)

Timing:

- Do the servers show the slowness only during peak hours?
- Does the problem go away during slow periods? (e.g. overnight.. Potential load issue?)
- Do the servers show the problem at regular intervals? (possible scheduled job?)
- Does the problem worsen over time? (possible leak?)

Server Scope:

- Are only certain servers affected?
 - If yes, what activity do those servers do that other servers don't? (e.g. scheduler, MQ, Web Services)
- Does the problem seem to "jump" from one server to the next?
 - When a problem (e.g. High CPU) is created by a Web request, once the server becomes unresponsive, the request could be failed over to the next server in the plugin-cfg.xml file, thus affecting another server

Recovery:

- Does it recovery on its own accord?
- Does a restart fix it? For how long? (ie. potential leak)





Reference: JVM Configurations to Consider

- There is no single tuning recommendation Support can provide, but there are various known pain points
- Several configurations that have proven to be major factors influencing site performance and stability
- Accurate, representative, and thorough performance testing is the only way to ensure you have the right configuration

JVM Considerations

- Heap size and Nursery size
- Garbage collector policy
 - Generational concurrent garbage collector, -Xgcpolicy:gencon.
 - To start specify a value for minimum to 20% of max heap. The maximum size should be 40% of max

Webcontainer thread pool Considerations

- The min and max should be equal to reduce the overhead of destroying and creating new threads. Generally speaking, 25 web container threads is a good starting point
- Ensure isGrowable is set to false to prevent native memory issues
- For multiple processors, start with 5 threads for each CPU.
 - For example: In a 4 CPU system, 20 Web Container threads should be used
- Increase max # of threads only if performance testing shows CPU utilization can handle additional concurrent workload

Connection Pool setting:

Use following equation to determine size of DataSource Connection Pool Size:

DataSource Connection Pool Size >= (# Of WebContainer Threads)

- + (# Of WC Scheduler Threads)
- + 1 (for WC Key Manager)
- + 1 (for WC Auditing)
- + (# of Parallel and Serial MQ listener threads)
- + (# of non-WebContainer Threads used by Custom Code





Holiday Readiness Program: Get on Board





- 1. Register to the IBM Industry Solutions Client Success Essentials Community
- 2. Review the Holiday Readiness documents in the Community
- 3. Share with IBM Account Team or Representative plans for holiday and activities throughout the year



- Products and Levels
- URLs Sites in production
- Most recent upgrade
- Levels ran for 2013 holiday season
- Production Code freeze date
- Peak traffic day(s) on site

- Parties engaged with client: (IBM Services, AVP, Hosting, BP)
- Any major issues over 2013 holiday season?
- Any major issues thus far in 2014, or current/potential roadblocks leading into 2014 holiday season?
- What specific preparations have been made for holiday? (testing, caching, performance improvements, etc)
- 4. Choose your PMR Severity based on your Business Impact:

Sev	Business Impact	Response Goal	Commerce Example
1	<u>Critical business impact -</u> this conditions requires an immediate solution	Witihn 2 hours	Unable to start production Commerce Server
2	Significant business impact - program is usable but severely limited	Within 2 business hours	Problems loading new products into catalog
3	<u>Some business impact</u> - program is usable but less significant features impacts	Within 2 business hours	Assistance with custom command implementation
4	Minimal business impact - problem causes little impact or reasonable workaround is in place	Within 2 business hours	How to plan for a migration

- 1. If any issue with IBM Support is becoming critical, call more attention to your problem using escalation path
 - 1. Contact the Support Analyst (via direct phone, email, or SR) and clarify the business impact of your problem
 - *Off-shift (24x7) Call 'IBM Software Support' number and ask to speak to the next available technician (http://www.ibm.com/planetwide/)
 - Raise the severity level of the problem (PMR)
 - Ask to speak to the Support Analyst's manager to gain prompt attention and management focus
 - * Off-shift (24x7) Call 'IBM Software Support' and ask to speak to the "Duty Manager"



Project Management Tips for Peak

Start now and leverage these project management tips to help increase the level of preparedness during peak traffic days

1. Confirm focals, update contact sheet

Focals for every key area, contact sheets and named backups

1. Define a support schedule

• Peak days start early and finish late. Create a shift schedule for 24x7 or peak-hour support coverage

1. Setup a communications plan

• How are all the parties kept up to date? Will there be regular status emails? Who is responsible for them? Who are the recipients? What frequency and content is required?

Document escalation criteria and procedures

• Educate your team supporting the site on the criteria and procedures for escalations. Also document the escalation procedures for when assistance from an external team is required (e.g. IBM support).

•Ensure activities by the business, performance and operation teams are in sync

1. Setup checkpoints with representatives from all teams to ensure there is full awareness and agreement on the activities. During peak days, this can be covered by the communications plan.

•Ensure the Runbook is up to date

1. Document all the activities required for the daily operation of the site. In addition to the points above, tech leads should validate the points of monitoring, alerts and diagnostic data collection, all of which are critical for peak





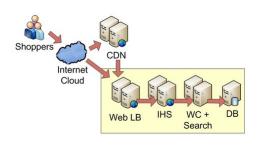


HELP! It's Black Friday and my site is down!

Engage Support if necessary, but worry about getting the site back up in parallel as primary concern

There will be only so much that can be done. Testing, preparation, and a play book are all imperative!

- 1.Stay Calm, follow your plan!
- 1.Get your site back up (restart or kill JVMs, rolling restarts if necessary)
- 1. Consider throttling for damage control, bring stability to overloaded site



"If the site can handle only 50% of the load it's receiving, or otherwise it completely fails/hangs, it is better to handle that 50% than to fail for everybody. For a site experiencing performance problems, such as 100% CPU, or when a 3rd party service is overloaded, throttling can help restore stability.

Throttling is used to offer temporary relief. A complete tuning exercise might be needed to allow the site to handle the complete load on a permanent basis. Also, before restricting site traffic, you should consider other options such as stopping certain marketing and promotional activity."—Andres Voldman

- 4. Capture logs that already exist on filesystem, and javacores and heapdumps
- •Call IBM Support to open a severity 1 PMR, with a realistic expectation of what can be done
- 1.Call IBM Support to speak to Duty Manager



Additional WebSphere Product Resources

- Learn about upcoming WebSphere Support Technical Exchange webcasts, and access previously recorded presentations at: http://www.ibm.com/software/websphere/support/supp_tech.html
- Discover the latest trends in WebSphere Technology and implementation, participate in technically-focused briefings, webcasts and podcasts at: http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/websphere/community/
- Join the Global WebSphere Community: http://www.websphereusergroup.org
- Access key product show-me demos and tutorials by visiting IBM Education Assistant: http://www.ibm.com/software/info/education/assistant
- View a webcast replay with step-by-step instructions for using the Service Request (SR) tool for submitting problems electronically: http://www.ibm.com/software/websphere/support/d2w.html
- Sign up to receive weekly technical My Notifications emails: http://www.ibm.com/software/support/einfo.html



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Questions and Answers

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Join the Client Success Essentials Community

Easily find important Support resources

- Connect with the Experts
 - Support Technical Exchanges
 - Ask the Experts Sessions
- **Product Support Newsletters**
- Blog & Forums
- Training videos, IEA modules
- **Event Readiness**
- Proactive Services Offerings
- Essential Links to key sites
 - IBM Support Portal
 - Client Success Portal
 - Fix Central

Welcome to the IBM Client Success Essentials Community!

This community brings together users of Smarter Cities, Smarter Commerce, Smarter Content and Smarter Workforce software to share, collaborate and connect with each other virtually. In this community, you'll find training videos, upcoming events, blogs, important web links, and more. Learn about our Client Success Mission.

Learn and Collaborate:

Find your product in the Product Directory









Smarter Cities

Smarter Commerce

Smarter Content (ECM)

Smarter Workforce

Leverage Customized Offerings:









Event Readiness

Holiday Readiness, End of Support Outreach, Custom Programs, Remote Installation Assistance

Accelerated Value Program

Helping clients accelerate product adoption and ROI of their IBM software

Proactive Notifications

Sign up for support updates

The following are available to clients, business partners, and IBM employees that have products in Smarter Cities, Smarter Commerce, Smarter Content, and Smarter Workforce. Click here to learn more



Proactive Services Offerings



http://ibm.biz/Client-Success-Essentials





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