EMA Radar™ Report for Workload Automation and Orchestration 2023

Stonebranch Vendor Profile

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Intelligent Automation

EMA RADAR™

stonebranch

2023 VALUE LEADER *EMA*

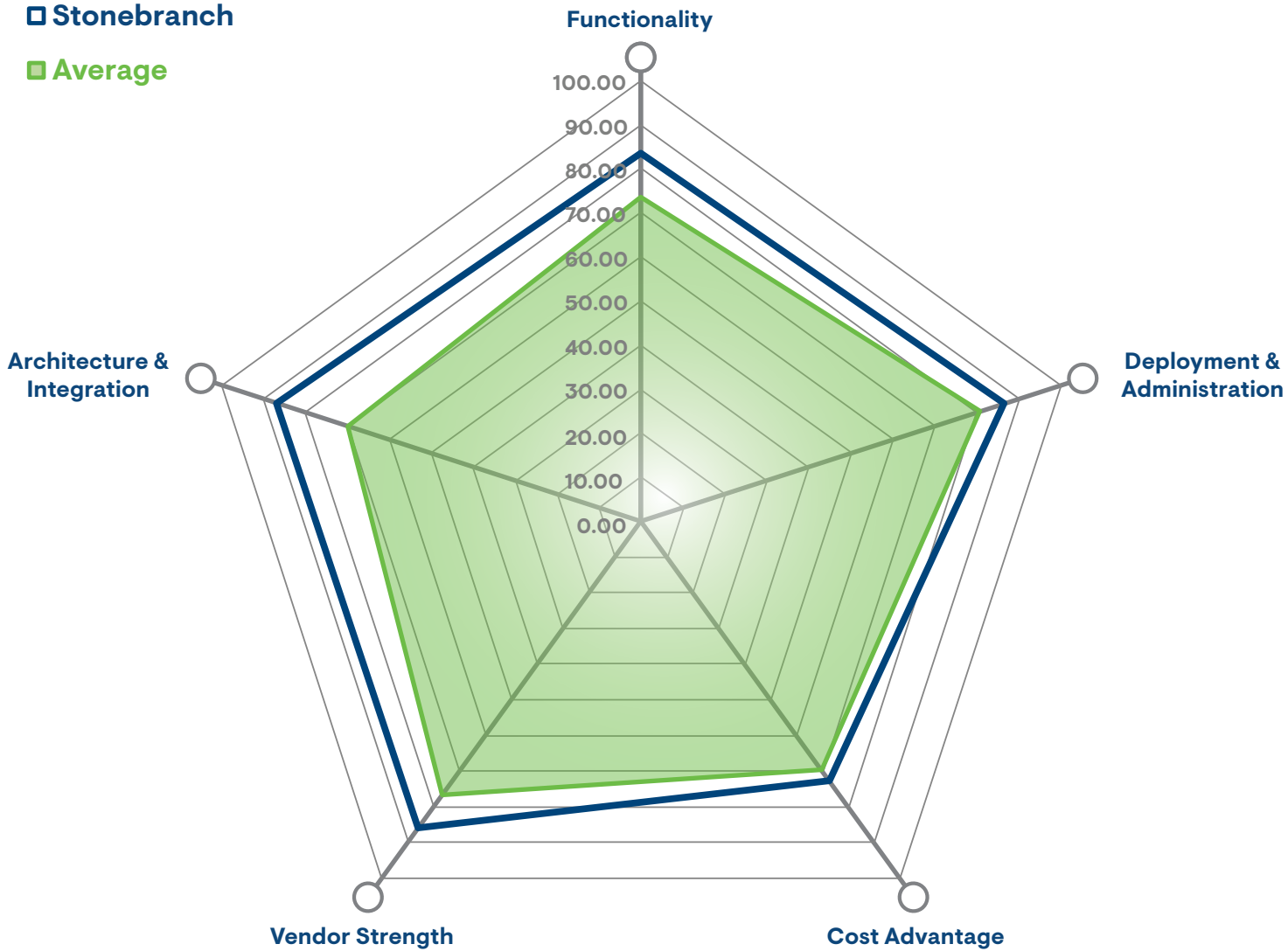**STONEBRANCH**
Workload Automation and
Orchestration 2023

Overview

Stonebranch is once again a Value Leader. Stonebranch's Universal Automation Center (UAC) is comprised of the Universal Controller (UC), Universal Agent (UA), Universal Data Mover (UDM), and Universal Data Mover Gateway (UDMG). Key features include event-driven automation, workflow orchestration, self-service automation with customized access controls, infrastructure management, data pipeline automation, secure data transfer, and analytics with customizable views. The UAC's solutions encompass job automation, infrastructure automation, DevOps integration, data pipeline orchestration, file transfers, and mainframe modernization.

Stonebranch's software is simple, modern, and secure. Using its universal workload automation software, enterprises can seamlessly orchestrate workloads and data across technology stacks and ecosystems. Stonebranch delivers an entirely web-based application for managing and monitoring workloads and processes in real time based on events within the modern enterprise. Their workload automation engine is available either as a service (WLAaaS) or on-premises. Stonebranch's agent technology is vendor-agnostic due to its ability to work with any other scheduling engine on the market. In addition to being universal, these agents run on any platform or application, on a mainframe, or a distributed or cloud environment. The agent also includes native managed file transfer functionality.

Stonebranch was founded in 1999 and is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. With points of contact and support throughout the Americas, Europe, and Asia, Stonebranch serves some of the world's largest financial, manufacturing, health care, travel, transportation, energy, and technology institutions. The company builds dynamic IT automation solutions that transform business IT environments from simple IT task automation into sophisticated, real-time business service automation.

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Architecture

Universal Controller's architecture is simple to implement and maintain, supports commodity hardware and infrastructure, and scales to support large workload automation environments. Stonebranch technology is built upon a highly portable architecture with built-in fault tolerance and failover capabilities. The Universal Controller runs in an Apache Tomcat web application container supporting all operating systems with a Java runtime. It relies on a relational database. The Universal Agents are connected via a middleware message service called OMS, which provides fault-tolerant communication between the controller and agents. Stonebranch Universal Agent allows full functional automation for all key operating systems, regardless of the engines being used. Embedded in the Universal Agent architecture, Universal Data Mover can operate as an integral part of the Universal Automation Center solution or independently as a stand-alone managed file transfer component supported by a secure, regulatorily compliant peer-to-peer protocol based on TCP/IP and TLS.

UAC Architecture

Key Features Summary

Same Application for SaaS and On-Premises Deployments

With 100% web-based access, Stonebranch delivers the exact same solution functionality whether an enterprise chooses SaaS or on-premises deployment. The Universal Automation Center (UAC) is accessible worldwide through any web browser, catering to diverse teams, outsourced operations, and virtual collaboration. This approach avoids the need for onsite installations or specific client configurations.

Self-Service Automation (Integration Architecture)

Stonebranch has taken an open source-based approach for providing both upstream and downstream integrations to any application that controls UAC or that UAC controls to enable both IT and non-IT end users to leverage automation. Self-service options are available directly from within the UAC platform, or via tools end users leverage every day – like ServiceNow (help desk or service catalog), Visual Studio (dev), Microsoft Teams, and Slack.

DevOps Lifecycle Management/ Jobs-as-Code

The Universal Automation Center (UAC) offers automatic version control and workload object promotion between Universal Controller instances. It maintains version history, simplifies user control, and supports direct object promotion within the UI. UAC's "release automation" streamlines landscape handover, reducing production errors. Jobs-as-Code (JaC) is also provided, managing job configurations alongside application code in JSON or YAML format. This approach enables seamless control, testing, and integration, aligning job configurations with application development processes.

Complete Hybrid Managed File/ Data Transfer

Real-time hybrid IT automation and managed file transfers (MFT) for diverse environments, including cloud, mainframe, and distributed systems. It allows seamless integration of MFT tasks into workflows, automating and orchestrating transfers between various systems and cloud platforms. This includes direct transfers between different cloud technologies without intermediate storage.

Limitless Integrations

The Universal Integration Platform within the UAC facilitates seamless integration across platforms, from mainframe to cloud. Alongside prepackaged integrations, the Integration Hub offers on-demand access to pre-created integrations. Users can also create custom integrations using templates and comprehensive documentation the platform provides. This empowers users to tailor integrations to their specific needs.

Horizontal Scalability

Universal Automation Center offers horizontal scalability through its internal architecture. In a recent performance test on Stonebranch's hosted-SaaS system using AWS, distributing the workload evenly across 3 OMS servers enabled the successful execution of 2.95 million transactions or jobs per day without encountering any problems.

Webhook Event Automation

UAC supports webhooks for event communication in modern applications and infrastructure. Inbound webhooks trigger external event automation, while outbound ones integrate with monitoring tools. This unique capability avoids constant API polling, enabling real-time workflow triggering from third-party tools. UAC monitors system events, facilitating seamless actions without polling.

Dynamic Decision Intelligence

Universal Controller offers dynamic scheduling in addition to traditional time-based and event-based options. This dynamic approach uses variables, run criteria, and conditional paths to adapt a single schedule as business needs evolve. For instance, processing customer data feeds through a single "trigger" can trigger a customized "workflow" based on customer and data feed details. This scalability benefits workflow efficiency, reduces changes across customers, and simplifies new customer integration.

Orchestration for Data Pipelines, Infrastructure Operations, and DevOps

UAC serves as a comprehensive platform for orchestrating any kind of automation process by embedding existing scheduling and automation solutions, like Ansible, AirFlow, Terraform, and others, to provide a single source of truth for all automated activities.

B2B File Transfers

Universal Data Mover Gateway (UDMG) provides secure file transfers with external partners with support for multiple protocols (FTP, FTPS, SFTP, HTTP, HTTPS), with secure options for ad hoc transfers. The tool enables swift recall of audit trails, enforcing IT policies and ensuring compliance with performance, risk, audit, and security guidelines.

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Evaluation Summary

Deployment & Administration	
Ease of Deployment	
Deployment Time/Effort	Outstanding
Conversion Facilities	Outstanding
Job Discovery and Import	Strong
Staff Training	Outstanding
Support & Services	
Customer Support	Outstanding
Professional Services	Outstanding
Ease of Administration	
Console Ease of Use	Outstanding
Upgrade Process	Strong
Test Environments	Outstanding
Automation of Management	Strong

Cost Advantage	
Flexibility of Pricing Model	Outstanding
Pricing Scenarios	$$
SaaS Availability	Outstanding

Architecture & Integration	
Architecture	
Business Focus	Outstanding
Scalability	Strong
Dynamic Workload Placement	Outstanding
Breadth of Platform Support (including agentless)	Outstanding
Breadth of Application & Database Support	Outstanding
Disaster Protection	Outstanding
Containerized Workloads	Outstanding
Container Deployment	Outstanding
Mainframe Support	Strong
Shared Server/Multi-Team Support	Strong
Integration & Interoperability	
Comprehensive API	Outstanding
Cloud Integration	Outstanding
CMDB Integration	Outstanding
ITPA Integration	Solid
Infrastructure Configuration and Observability	Outstanding
MFT Integration	Outstanding
Data Pipeline Integration	Outstanding
Communication/Collaboration Integration	Outstanding
Heterogeneity Across Environments	Outstanding
DevOps Support	Outstanding
MLOps Support	Strong

| Functionality	
Features	
Automation Design Flexibility	Outstanding
End-to-End Monitoring	Outstanding
Compliance Management	Strong
Triggering	Outstanding
Self-Service Portal	Outstanding
Forecasting, Analytics, Reporting	Strong
Alerting	Solid
Security	Outstanding
What-If Scenarios	Strong
Conditional Logic and Auto-Remediation	Strong
Logging and Auditability	Outstanding
Business User Features	Outstanding
Big Data Support	Outstanding
RPA Orchestration	Solid
Ease of Use	
Simplicity of GUI	Outstanding
SLA and Policy Awareness	Outstanding
Root Cause Analysis	Strong
Mobile Device Support	Outstanding
Language Support	Solid
Available Help Resources	Outstanding

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Vendor Strength	
Vision	Outstanding
Strategy	Outstanding
Financial Strength	Strong
Research and Development	Outstanding
Partnerships and Channel	Outstanding
Market Credibility	Strong
Geographic Coverage	Outstanding

Active Clients
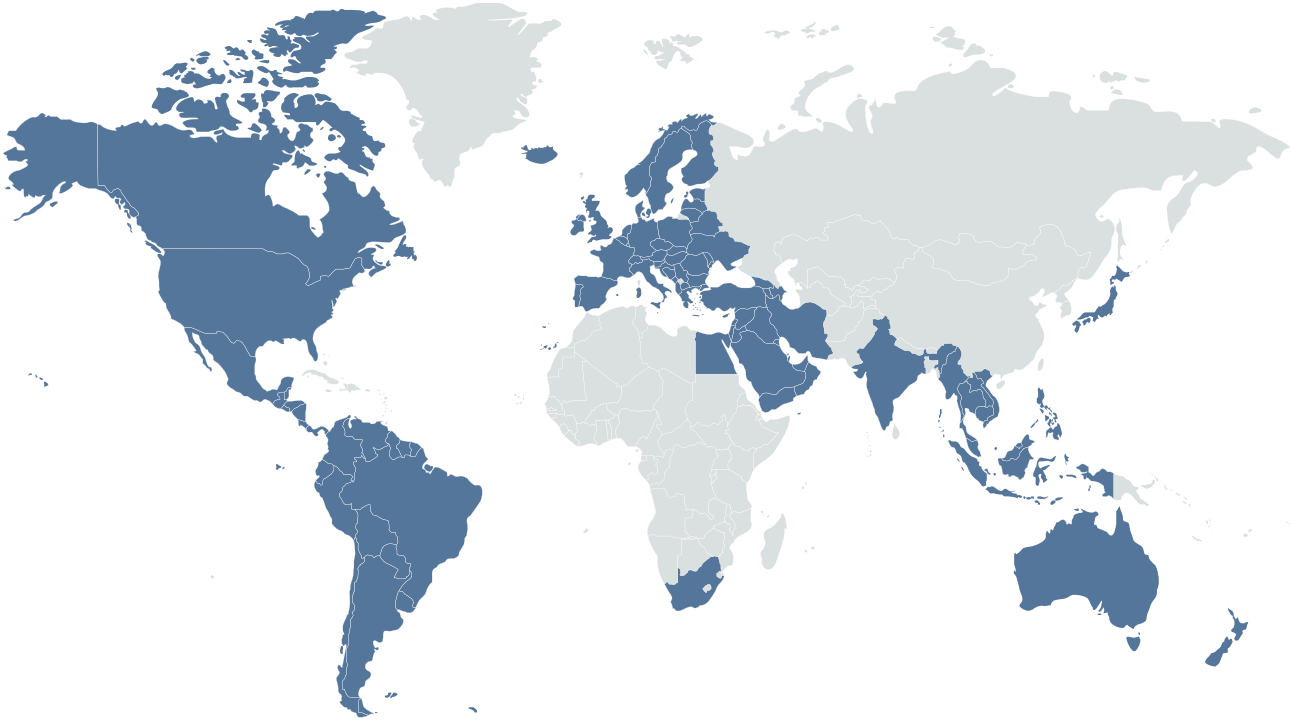
Product Available In:

English

Number of Customers:

👤👤👤👤◑ +

👤 = 100   👤 = 1000

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Favorite Features From Customer Interviews

Single, easy-to-use, web-based GUI to manage and monitor all automated processes.

The REST APIs are my favorite because they are very powerful.

I like that it is lightweight, but has depth.

I like the flexibility. There is a lot you can do. It is night and day compared to our prior tool. There are automation capabilities for so many processes.

The dashboard and reporting capabilities for business folk make my 'pros' list.

Stonebranch adds credibility in the eyes of IT customers.

These are the simplest agents to work with.

We throw a lot at it from a resiliency perspective and it stays up, reducing maintenance costs significantly.

We were able to manage 90% of the transition ourselves because the technology is so easy to use.

The adaptability and stability are my absolute favorite.