



Banking



Implementation of Risk Based Testing to deliver critical project

Company Background

The client is an international financial services organization that provides a comprehensive and integrated range of financial products and services. The group is structured around regional banking and wealth management operations, in addition to an international capital markets and institutional banking business.

Business Challenge

In the fast paced industry that is financial services, organizations must do all they can to remain competitive. Keeping up to date with technological advances is of paramount importance so that organizations continue to offer their customers the best solution available.

As such, the client wanted to upgrade its existing mortgage application with new features including the integration of a third party insurance system. This would ensure that the mortgages would be intrinsically linked to relevant insurance products, allowing the client to offer its customers a one-stop-shop. There was a real competitive advantage for the client to do this; hence it became a strategic initiative with senior business sponsorship.

Solution

The project itself was made of three distinct components; integration of a new 3rd party insurance application, implementation of a maintenance release and a complete Siebel upgrade. Each of these would provide a challenge individually, and it soon became clear that the integrated technical solution was not robust.

AppLabs was engaged to help the client understand what was causing the issues and how the client should approach mitigating the business risk that was being exposed.

Initially, AppLabs completed a smoke test against the integrated applications. This highlighted that an upgrade to the latest Siebel version of the application was failing to work with the current configuration of LDAP. As such, the Siebel upgrade was postponed as this was the least critical of the three components.

Despite this decision, the scope of the maintenance release had to change significantly to replace the fixes that would have been resolved by the Siebel upgrade. In making this decision, and following the clients' standard approach to testing, this would have meant the creation and scripting

of more test cases. The impact of this would have been to move the "Go Live" date which would have been a corporate disaster.

To overcome this, AppLabs recommended that the client implemented a Risk Based Testing approach in order to mitigate the risk of not being able to test all planned items in scope. AppLabs has a comprehensive and defined method of implementing Risk Based Testing, so changing policy to meet the business challenge was relatively seamless. Each test requirement was scored from a technical and business perspective. AppLabs consultants facilitated this exercise by working with the business and technology teams to ensure that the right risk profiling was carried out and agreed.

The business risk is multiplied with the technical risk, to give a risk rating score for each test requirement. Focus was placed on the high and medium level risks, and testing on low risk level test requirements was minimized or not tested at all (with the agreement of the key business stakeholders).

By the time the test environment was configured and ready for test execution (without the Siebel upgrade) all the preparatory work for implementing the Risk Based Testing had all been completed. The profiling of tests was carried out in such a way that the planned 1000 test cases, was reduced by 20% to 800 test cases – all of which were executed within the timeframe to meet the original implementation date.

Key Benefits

The improvement in the testing processes and move to Risk Based Testing resulted in true efficiencies. The approach resulted in a reduction of 360 man-days to the project – equating to a saving of £144,000 – representing 11% of the project's testing budget.

One of the other key factors was that the approach ensured the implementation hit the deadline date. Due to regulatory procedures there are definitive dates when any major IT initiatives can be implemented within the client environment. The impact of missing this date would have been an additional month's delay to the project – essentially impacting the bottom line, significantly increasing the project costs and damaging the client's brand. All of these were avoided due to the Risk Based Testing approach.