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Linklaters Challenge

Linklaters has been acknowledged as a legal IT market leader for some years. Investment in great platforms allows information to be shared globally, facilitating cross-jurisdictional legal services and collaboration.

As with any business, they are looking to drive cost efficiencies across systems and processes.

Linklaters is dependent on SAP to support its day to day business so it is of paramount importance that it can implement upgrades and new releases of SAP quickly, efficiently and reliably.

Linklaters has always taken testing seriously. However, the size and complexity of their SAP system left insufficient time for thorough end-to-end testing within SAP and the systems that interface with it, resulting in potential risk to the business.

The automation of SAP testing has brought huge improvements. There is less manual work and effort, resulting in a more cost effective process and an improved service to the Business.

Automation Basis

Linklaters engaged TSG to develop a solution based on a number of imperatives for continued success with SAP:

- Reduce the risk of failure to support the business after change
- Reduce the cost and time of testing change and new releases
- Reduce the total cost of ownership of SAP
- Increase business confidence

TSG's challenge was to build a sustainable test process and deliver a reusable automated regression pack with high coverage that would identify any and all unexpected test results to give Linklaters the confidence that changes to their SAP system were risk free – prior to implementation.

Outcome

Linklaters has benefitted substantially from automating SAP to the point where:

- Business confidence in the quality of SAP upgrades and changes has increased
- SAP can be fully tested with high coverage at a fraction of the original cost
- A return on investment was achieved in fewer than 4 test regression cycles

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way"

John C. Maxwell, 1947

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Will Hitchcock of
Linklaters

"The Automation programme has been a real success for us at Linklaters, and we are now able to test changes and releases of SAP in a fraction of the time and cost that we used to do. The programme, which completed on time and within budget, is now an integral part of our SAP operations that has seen error rates, into production, reduce by 73%. We've met all of our objectives and as a result the programme has given us increased confidence, strengthened our relationship with the business and provided full return on our investment, plus a benefit of £125k in under a year".

How it was achieved

With efficiencies and cost saving in mind, a test automation project was commissioned to significantly increase the use of automated testing across the SAP system. Using a three-stage model, TSG designed an approach that maximised investment and continually proved and demonstrated the solution against agreed objectives as development progressed.

Baseline, schedule and cost

Worked with the SAP Functional Consultants to identify and categorize the complexity and risk profiles of each of the SAP components that made up key Linklaters business processes. This analysis helped prioritise and nail down the profile and timeline of the overall project.

Prove the basis

Developed a reusable set of manual test cases and materials to prove the business processes were correctly mapped, together with a set of predictable results. This activity provided surety that a complete test pack was available. This could then be used to validate whether the test case was a candidate for automation or not, depending on the ROI.

Automate the solution

Converted the reusable test pack into a series of scripts using externalised data to achieve high coverage and reduce the error-prone, manual test verification process. These scripts check and highlight errors only when an unexpected result is found.

Demonstrate the result

SAP regression testing and result verification can now be run on a timed schedule or on-demand, and full coverage of the test scripts can be completed in a day.

Added Value

In addition to meeting the key objectives set by Linklaters for this challenging project, a number of added value benefits have resulted, including:

- The automated regression pack runs as part of BAU to assert that no unexpected changes have taken place
- The component based solution has provided a basis for test automation on other projects
- Business confidence in the quality and timeliness of the delivery of SAP changes has increased
- Reduced reliance on business and technical engagement in testing and to prove results.