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Testing mapped to Ordnance Survey requirements



Company Overview

Ordnance Survey is Great Britain's national mapping authority. Government, businesses and individuals rely on the service they provide to collect, maintain and distribute the most accurate and up-to-date geographic information of England, Scotland and Wales.

Ordnance Survey is a self-financing Executive Agency responsible to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) who generate revenue through licensing intellectual property rights under Crown copyright. They do this directly with customers and via more than 260 private-sector partners. Ordnance Survey have invested heavily in attracting valued add partners to deliver customer-led solutions to meet market demand.

They also provide free and unrestricted access to a large range of mapping via OS OpenData™ and OS OpenSpace®. The two services help underpin a range of applications, promote government transparency and encourage greater take up of Graphical Information Systems. The aim of the services, alongside their innovative network GeoVation, is to stimulate digital innovation in the reuse of data to develop applications and solutions, drive new markets and unlock new potential for jobs in existing and new technologies.

Project Overview

As part of an ongoing programme to introduce Agile software development principles, Ordnance Survey initiated a new approach to testing to deliver efficiency savings in the business, improve throughput and productivity within IS and ensure consistently-tested and better quality SAP releases in the future.

Particular issues centred on the amount of business resource needed to test applications and the requirement to minimise the risk of critical incidents being discovered post go-live. Each SAP release required a significant amount of resource from the business in order to perform User Acceptance Testing (UAT); a large part of which consisted of running repetitive regression testing. Even then, testing sometimes failed to expose issues in the live SAP environment due to data inconsistencies between environments and a lack of adequate controls. As SAP becomes more integrated with key business systems, the risk of reputational damage becomes ever greater.

Ordnance Survey decided to introduce automated testing into the management of their computer systems projects and Business As Usual (BAU) processes. To facilitate this, they invested in the SAP Best Practice Testing Toolset; TAO, BPT, QTP and aligned this with their existing assets; SOL MAN 7.1 and Quality Center. They selected Experior to assist with the development of the internal skills and processes required to take ownership of the new toolset and to make best use of their investment in SAP testing tools going forward.

Why Experior

Businesses depend on software and the need to improve, expand and integrate systems is increasing every year.

Organisations such as Ordnance Survey are under immense pressure from their respective partners, legislative bodies and global customers to meet ever increasing compliance standards. As the level of complexity and the rate of change increase, they are often accompanied by shrinking timescales and budgets. This can lead to a reduction in quality, increasing an organisation's exposure to risk associated with any software change, implementation, development and integration.

Experior is an independent testing company - whose proven methodology, strategic partnerships and collaborative approach are industry benchmarks for the delivery of testing services with clear and tangible benefits. Over the last few years, Government and public sector organisations have strived to improve all aspects of the way in which they interact with the public and this has driven the need for their operations to be run as efficiently as possible. Through innovative consulting, service and solutions, Experior enable public service organisations to deliver increased and improved services while containing costs—driving value for citizens and stakeholders alike.

Experior Solution

After consultation with the team at Ordnance Survey, Experior carried out two distinct phases of work

- Test Automation Toolset Implementation; and
- Acceleration Plan – The delivery of test automation scripts

Both of these phases were supported by on site knowledge transfer to the Ordnance Survey IS team and training documentation.

Toolset

SAP Test Acceleration and Optimisation (TAO)

HP Business Process Testing (BPT)

SAP Quick Test Professional (QTP)

Aligned with existing assets; SOL MAN 7.1 and HP Quality Center (QC).

Implementation

Phase 1 – Test Automation Toolset Implementation

Phase 1 was used as a 'proof of concept' and a key initial deliverable was the automated testing of one end-to-end business process that was then demonstrated to the Ordnance Survey team and shown to be working. The HP Quality Centre test tool was already in use at Ordnance Survey. The Experior team installed the additional validated in-scope toolsets onto Ordnance Survey identified hardware and aligned the existing toolsets to the newly installed tools in readiness for automation to commence.

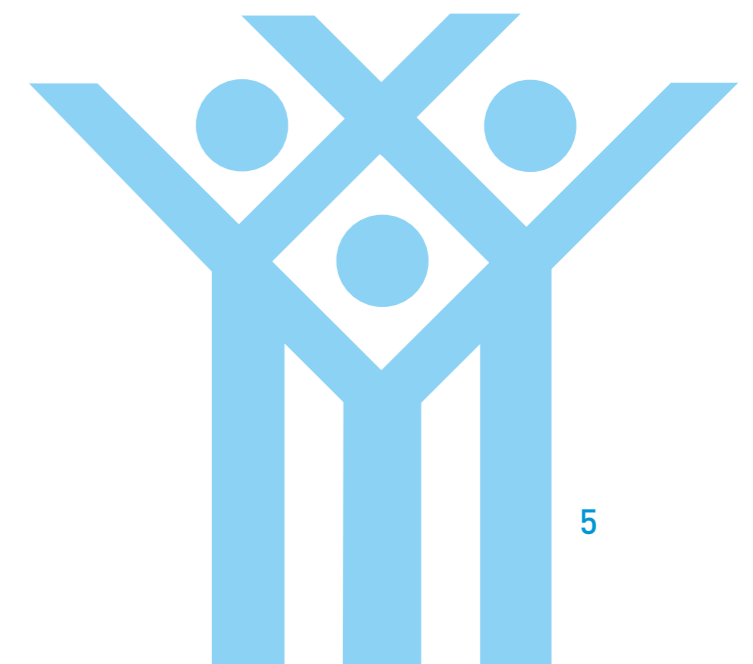
Ordnance Survey produced an initial list of 25-30 business processes. Working with Experior, the project team went on to analyse business priority/criticality and coverage, identifying 15 of these processes for which automated test scripts would be created in the next phase of work. Due to the large scope of the project, the final number of business processes delivered was 11.

Finally, for this element of the work, the Experior team created a Toolset Administration Guide, defining and documenting the automation process to be created and best practice operation.

Phase 2 – Acceleration Plan

The Experior team went on to build and execute the automated scripts for the 11 identified SAP end-to-end business process, including execution metrics. Experior then demonstrated the operation of the automated test scripts to the wider IT community at Ordnance Survey. The presentation was well received and the time-saving made possible by this approach was clear to see.

Following the completion of the 11 end-to-end test scenarios, Experior then ran a week-long training course for the Ordnance Survey project team to train them in creating their own test automation scripts. In the five weeks following the training course, the Ordnance Survey team completed a further five end-to-end automated test scripts, with the Experior consultants providing knowledge transfer to ensure the Ordnance Survey team would be self-sufficient upon completion.



Benefits

As a direct result of this work the Ordnance Survey IS team hope to increase their productivity, allowing SAP release cycles to go live up to two weeks earlier than planned. Additionally, regression testing effort will also be significantly reduced. In summary, this has resulted in the Ordnance Survey IT team being able to provide one additional SAP release per annum for the business.

The automated regression pack created during the Experior engagement enables defects to be identified sooner, as well as freeing up the Ordnance Survey business users to focus on the new functionality being delivered.

IS and business resources used more effectively

- Released key resource from test execution activities enabling them to add value elsewhere, e.g. working on new areas of development, testing new functionality.
- Best practice template for test script automation created.
- Internal resource developed to maintain and lead better test programmes without relying on external expertise.
- IS team gained a detailed understanding of the testing tools in use at Ordnance Survey, enhancing their reputation with business users.

Value and confidence delivered to the business

- Value delivered to the business quicker and/or more requirements delivered in each release.
- Greater business confidence prior to 'Go Live' and fewer defects post 'Go Live'.
- Efficiency and productivity saving enhancements delivered.
- Improved data security and brand protection.
- Reputational damage minimised through the implementation of better governance and data management tools and processes.

Future plans

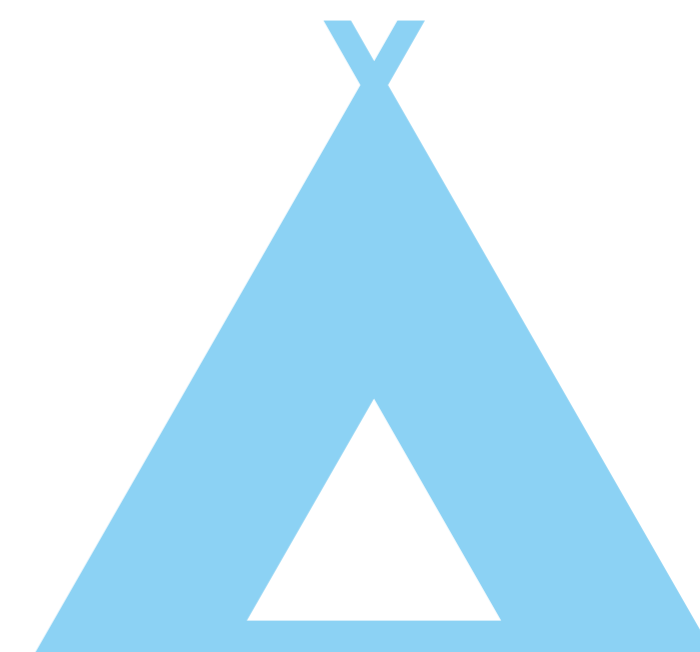
Whilst the initial programme of work has been focused on automation - providing an efficient and effective means to create and maintain testing collateral through TAO and BPT - it has also shaped the foundations for the introduction of BPCA (Business Process Change Analyser) at a later stage.

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