

Overview

A \$10 billion global healthcare products manufacturer with more than 30 plants worldwide.

Background

For this particular engagement, the healthcare client was in the process of upgrading its BPCS software to version 8.3 at more than 30 plants worldwide, plants which used multiple existing versions of the application. The material requirements planning (MRP) systems would require 100% automated testing of the finished migration. In addition to the testing, sufficient evidence needed to be generated to document the upgrade's success, and to ensure that data was properly migrated from old to new versions of the system – without compromising the integrity of the data.

Migration Challenges

Early analysis by the company estimated that the labor used in traditional manual sampling techniques would require more than a year's worth of work for one person. This involves the testing of each unique version upgrade, as well as required testing to capture site-specific data-level and procedural errors.

Although manual sampling is an accepted industry practice, the client was concerned about the "acceptable level of error" required to define the sampling approach, as "no error" was the business goal. BPCS runs on an AS/400 with DB2, so any solution utilized for the upgrade had to support this architecture. Because there were hundreds of tables to be migrated, the chosen solution needed to be configured efficiently. Lastly, the upgrade impacted more than 30 of the company's plants, requiring the process to be completed with minimal downtime.

The client soon realized that it could not complete such a complicated undertaking with resources at hand. Additionally, because error was of paramount concern, the company knew that it would need to complete the upgrade process under the guidance of experts who had done similar migrations in the past. As a result, the company turned to Valiance to add a critical support element to its efforts.

Valiance Solution

Once engaged, Valiance and the client completed a Proof of Concept (POC) to verify that TRUcompare's automated data migration testing would meet each requirement. Within a week, Valiance and its POC were able to assure the client that TRUcompare could be configured efficiently; that the testing of millions of records could be done in a few hours and TRUcompare's

support for databases could be extended to include AS/400DB2. Following the POC results, Valiance was hired to run the migration and testing at each of its 30+ manufacturing plants.

Results

The support from TRUcompare and Valiance's team of skilled migration experts proved extremely valuable for the client. One of the immediate benefits was a significant reduction in required site labor. TRUcompare configurations that supported the more than 100 tables were completed in one person-week. In total, it took only 10 person-days to complete the configuration, execution and validation for each new upgrade version. The figure sank to an average of five person-days for site-level test execution and validation once the configuration was in place. Altogether, that reduction of labor was about 70% below the client's original estimate. This drastic drop was due in part to TRUcompare's ability to automate testing for 100% of the data, with no manual sampling required. TRUcompare's performance was more than sufficient using up to five virtual machine instances as required.



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About Valiance Partners

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