Case Study

France Telecom Classifies Time Machine® as a Necessity for Ongoing App Development and Data Simulation Requirements

About Solution-Soft

Solution-Soft is the leading provider of Intelligent Data Optimization (IDO) solutions, which address the urgent need for management of business-critical applications and data. IDO solutions facilitate application deployment, automated data compression, secured data transfer and migration that optimize cost, availability, scalability, and performance. The flag-ship Time Machine product is a proven solution for enterprises to ensure mission critical applications such as ERP and CRM are delivered on-time and within budget. Solution-Soft works closely with top-tiered consultant partners around the world in all industry to achieve clients' business objectives with ultimate ROI. Founded in 1993, Solution-Soft is privately held and based in Silicon Valley, CA, USA.

About France Telecom

France Telecom provides fixed-line and wireless voice and data services, as well as cable TV and corporate and wholesale telecom services to over 100 million customers around the globe.

France Telecom has been using Time Machine for their Accounts Receivable (AR) development and test environment since 1999. This environment consists of 10 Hewlett Packard UNIX servers each with 1 to 4 processors that they use for continued development of their AR invoicing system.

About Ares

Ares is France's leading player in terms of mid- and large-sized server sales, maintenance and consulting, and works alongside most French manufacturers and publishers. Through close commercial and technical relationships with its various partners, Ares ensures the coherence of the architectures it recommends in UNIX, Windows and LINUX environments. As the group's commercial driving force, the ISO 9002-certified Architectures & Infrastructures Business line advises users in their choice of computer resources (hardware and software) as well as performing the installation and implementation.

Challenge: Date and Time Testing

After their initial AR Invoicing solution development and rollout, France Telecom needed to perform time sensitive tests to certify their critical Accounts Receivable system would perform accurately at each end of month, end of quarter, end of fiscal year and end of calendar year event. This meant changing the system date between tests to simulate the date changes into the future.

The process of changing the development system date required bringing down all date sensitive processes within their development system. Only when these processes were stopped could they change the system date. Once the system date changed, they would then bring the various application and database servers back up, and restart the numerous accounting modules.

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France Telecom's Problem

This cumbersome date change process meant all application testing and development work stopped whenever they needed to perform the next set of application date testing. Additionally, only one time sensitive process could be tested at a time, which meant a significant delay in the deployment timetable.

They briefly considered implementing multiple duplicate environments to accelerate their time testing process but this meant a tremendous capital investment in hardware, software licenses, and IT resources. Neither of these alternatives was an acceptable solution. To help solve this problem, France Telecom turned to their long-time consulting solution provider, Ares.

The Time Machine Solution

Ares knew from numerous prior engagements with other customers that Solution-Soft's Time Machine could provide France Telecom with the ability to run multiple time offsets based on user logins within a single system. This meant that within a single environment, one developer could test processes for end of fiscal year accuracy while another developer could simultaneously complete testing the same processes a quarter into the future, while yet a third developer could continue to develop and modify other parts of the application in the current time.

With a dozen developers working on individual parts of the project, the cost to purchase the required number of complete environments would have been astronomical.

Using Time Machine, they are able to perform each of these tasks in as many different times and dates as needed all within a single application development environment.

"Because of this unique ability, France Telecom has saved hundreds of thousands of euros in development man-hours, hardware, and software-licensing costs," said Jean-Yves Martin, Commercial Group Director, Ares.

After completion of their initial deployment, France Telecom classified Time Machine as a strategic and long-term, must-have product for ongoing application development and data simulation requirements.

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