



Time Machine® helps Zurich Reduce Testing Phase of Pensions Application and Meet Critical Legislation Deadlines

Quote

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Mark Cameron,
IT Project Manager

About Zurich

Zurich is one of the world’s leading insurance groups, and one of the few to operate on a global basis. Its mission is to help its customers understand and protect themselves from risk. With about 60,000 employees serving customers in more than 170 countries, Zurich aspires to become the best global insurer as measured by its shareholders, customers and employees. Zurich helps individuals, small and medium-sized companies and global corporations around the world understand and protect themselves from risk by offering a wide range of insurance products, solutions and advisory services.

Challenge: Testing Critical Corporate Pensions Application under Deadline

Since 2004, Zurich has entrusted Time Machine software as the de facto solution for testing their myriad of applications supporting corporate pensions. This included the web based Group Defined Contributions system, and the desktop based Pensions Workflow, document imaging and accounts applications. In 2012, one of the most important and largest applications Zurich needed to deploy and heavily test was their “Corporate Pensions Administration System” as part of a major upgrade. The Corporate Pensions project and application’s sole purpose is to aid companies in facilitating their employee pension programs to meet changing government regulations. The application provides the ability to create policies, adjust rates, manage accounts, and perform various transactions throughout the whole lifecycle of a company’s pension scheme. Critically the application is available for use over the internet by employer and employee clients.

The deployment of this complicated pension system requires performing numerous functional tests, specifically the aging of data to allow thorough end-to-end testing for all triggers. Additionally future dates are required to simulate the various transactions & processes which then get verified through regression testing. Testing a system for the full lifecycle of a pension clearly requires a way to simulate a lifecycle of many years in a very much shorter timescale. Unfortunately, performing these tests in real time was not a possible solution due to the critical & shortened deadlines set up by the new U.K. Legislation, which enforced a must have implementation date.

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.

The flag-ship Time Machine product is a proven solution for enterprises to ensure mission critical applications are delivered on time and within budget. Solution-Soft works closely with consultant and strategic partners around the world in all industries to achieve clients' business objectives with ultimate ROI.

Founded in 1993, Solution-Soft is privately held and based in Silicon Valley, CA, USA.

Contact

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Zurich's Corporate Pensions project got a resurgence with the U.K. legislation called "Auto-enrollment", which was a newly introduced government law that required all employers to enroll their workers into a qualifying pension scheme. The goal of which is to encourage retirement savings for employees by automatically configuring a pension plan for them. This "Auto-enrollment" launched October 2012 and is a monthly staged deployment as each month companies of defined size are deployed into the program until 2017 when all companies are compliant. Due to Zurich's complex pension application paired with short and legally binding legislative deadlines, there was no solution available besides using Time Machine to test their application.

Time Machine Solution

Using Time Machine, Zurich's team has the ability to rapidly age their data, enabling them to satisfy their needs of testing end to end sessions of their application and thus dramatically shorten their testing cycle. Also Time Machine's ability to change time/date instantaneously allowed Zurich the flexibility to move time backward and forward to perform their regression tests more efficiently, easily, and quickly. The testers simply created simulated dates in the future using Time Machine for their batch jobs and data. Then throughout the testing phase, the pension application would run through processes with the newly aged data and testers would create separate virtual clocks to perform regression tests. Multiple testers can test different virtual clocks concurrently in the same environment and virtual clocks can be set easily on-the-fly to the future or to the past without the need to shut down or restart the data base or applications.

Without Time Machine, Zurich would not been able to test, validate, and deploy their pension application in the incredibly shortened test periods from government legislation.

According to Mark Cameron, Zurich's IT Project Manager
"Without Time Machine, we would not be able to test quick enough to meet our critical deadlines. Time Machine reduced our test cycle by 3-4 times and reduced our testing costs by threefold."

With Time Machine, Zurich's teams are able to efficiently and accurately test their pension processes to comply with government regulations and meet the legislative deadlines of the U.K.'s new "Auto-Enrollment" policy, along with experiencing significant cost savings. As a result, Time Machine allowed Zurich to dramatically reduce their testing times, manpower, & system resource requirements by 3-4 times thereby saving themselves thousands of dollars in deployment costs along with legal costs as they were able to meet their legally binding legislative deadlines.