



Major Health Science Center Experiences 25 Percent Increase in System Development Efficiency Using Stat® for PeopleSoft

The Challenge

A major health science center's Administrative Technology Department had established a manual change management system for versioning and change control of its critical PeopleSoft systems. These applications included FMS, HRMS and student information systems. Due to the complexity of constantly changing applications and systems, the center's previous process of manually managing application change proved to be very inefficient and error prone, as developers were not communicating effectively. This made it difficult to implement updates, patches and fixes and to avoid overwriting customized code.

"Manual change management workflow and communication throughout a 26-floor building and nine schools scattered across a three-mile radius definitely posed a challenge for us," said a systems administrator in the Administrative Technology group. "We wanted to eliminate the current change management system that required people to complete 12-page forms and manually route them for physical sign-offs."

Due to the lack of communication during projects, developers frequently overwrote one another's code, forcing the team to rely on backups to recover prior code.

"Several developers were working on the same module simultaneously, inadvertently overwriting one another's code. And then it would take time to identify and correct the overwritten code," said the systems administrator. "We also received pressure from auditors to standardize and more effectively manage our system changes. And upper management was concerned about the inability to identify when and what changes were made to a system."

In general, the systems administration team lacked visibility and control over development team code management activities, performance and productivity.

"We needed a tool that featured automatic versioning of internal objects with the ability to report on system activity and maintain an audit trail. Basically, we wanted a tool that would automate, streamline and replace the entire cumbersome manual change management process," said the systems administrator.

The Quest Solution

The health science center was required to conduct an open bid proposal and define requirements for a change management tool.

"We reviewed other change management products; however, the initial demonstration of Quest's Stat® for PeopleSoft proved it to be the only software able to version control the internal objects. That alone was a major justification for the purchase," said the systems administrator.

Stat's versioning feature prevents developers from inadvertently overwriting one another's code or losing changes. And because all PeopleSoft objects and flat files are versioned and stored indefinitely in the Stat repository, developers can easily review prior changes, isolate system problems and roll back to a prior version in any environment.

Stat enables the center's system administrators to track the entire lifecycle of a change management package including workflow e-mail notification to system users, which was another important feature. Stat also provides the ability to maintain and manage large volume of code throughput and creates an automatic documentation audit trail. This creates increased accountability during all phases of a PeopleSoft deployment including implementation, production support, migrations and upgrades.

"With Stat, our developers are able to actually move and manage more code through the system, without needing to increase our staff. As a result, our team is able to focus more on important projects rather than on repairing code. It's certainly made my job easier. Stat has resolved all of our change management issues, fit into our business process design and provided the features we needed in a versioning change management tool."

- Systems Administrator,
Administrative Technology, Major Health
Science Center

Overview

Headquarters

Houston, Texas

Critical Needs

Automatic versioning and change management tool for its PeopleSoft applications to eliminate a labor-intensive and inefficient manual change control process.

Solution

Stat for PeopleSoft

Results

A major health science center reduced code rework activities by 10 percent and increased overall team efficiency and time-savings by 25 percent.

"Stat's object versioning capability allows us to automatically compile external modules as they are migrated through the workflow. And that really sealed the deal for us," the systems administrator stated.

"Stat's ability to compare a single piece of code across two different domains, to synchronize all of the locations, was also a welcome feature. With Stat, we can keep copies stored on various servers in sync when an object is moved, and automatically execute and verify FTP moves, which saves us a lot of time and prevents unnecessary database refreshes," said the systems administrator.

The Bottom Line

Since implementing Stat for its PeopleSoft FMS application several years ago, the health science center has experienced a significant decrease in resources allocated to code rework due to the loss of code or other developers overwriting one another's code. The health center also realized a 25 percent increase in efficiency and time-savings in the overall code lifecycle itself.

In the past, the health center was forced to shutdown a critical system responsible for managing the center's payroll for approximately 24 hours to execute a complete database restore – adversely impacting approximately 6,000 health center employees during the time of outage. With Stat, deleted or modified objects and files can be easily recovered or rolled back to a prior version without performing a database restore, which can save hours of potential downtime.

"With Stat, our developers are able to actually move and manage more code through the system, without needing to increase our staff. As a result, our team is able to focus more on important projects rather than on repairing code," the systems administrator said. "It's certainly made my job easier. Stat has resolved all of our change management issues, fit into our business process design and provided the features we needed in a versioning change management tool," concluded the systems administrator.

The health center's developers also use Toad™ for Oracle, Spotlight® for WebLogic and Quest Central® for Oracle, with plans to investigate Toad™ for DB2 and Spotlight® for DB2.

The systems administrator interviewed is responsible for Stat configuration and updates. The team also consists of two DBAs and five application managers who serve as liaisons between functional users and the IT department.

About Quest

Quest Software, Inc. delivers innovative products that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases and windows. Through a deep expertise in IT operations and a continued focus on what works best, Quest helps more than 18,000 customers worldwide meet higher expectations for enterprise IT. Quest Software can be found in offices around the globe and at www.quest.com.