A Major IT Transformation Project, Delivered On Time, To Plan And Within Budget

Ten10

Client: A large international bank

Industry: Capital Markets

Technologies: HTML 5

Ten10 Services: Quality And Test Strategy Consultancy, Managed Test Services: Functional Testing

The client is a French multinational banking and financial services company with a global outlook and divisions supporting a range of services including: global transaction banking, local and international retail banking, financial services, corporate and investment banking, private banking, asset management and securities
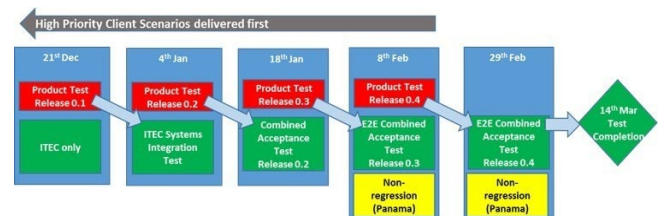
The Project

The client was integrating the services of a US-based clearinghouse; a major transformation project that required infrastructure to support end-to-end delivery of fund settlement through FIX messaging via NVision and Gloss a real-time, multi-currency, transaction processing engine that processes messages that have been reformatted by NVision. The project involved two consultancies, each of whom were delivering different aspects of the solution.

Ten10 was asked to review the delivery and to provide a testing strategy that would accelerate delivery, as well as to provide a test manager and test scheduler to ensure the delivery and the day-to-day management of the execution kept within the planned timelines.

What We Did

A test strategy needed to be developed and deployed that would bring the go-live of the project forward by six months. This was to be achieved by moving the development process from the legacy waterfall methodology to an Agile methodology, integrating testing into an iterative development process to enable faster delivery of results.

To achieve this, Ten10 split the project into five drops of functional delivery (instead of one big build at the end), allowing the solution to be delivered in a sequential nature.

Success Story

Ten10 applied a rigorous test management approach; ensuring that each tester, from each third party, understood the functionality they were testing, as well as setting daily execution targets to ensure the project ran to time. As well as a complete change in delivery methodology to accelerate change, Ten10 also implemented several other initiatives to accelerate delivery and ensure a high degree of test governance was in place:

- We implemented an iterative, risk-based approach to ensure that functionality was delivered sequentially during iterative drops so that testing could be completed in line with how end users would utilise the system.

- We recommended that input messages from the clearing agent were stubbed during the early part of testing, which removed the dependency of waiting for the clearing agent's development to be completed.

- Daily test reporting was set up to effectively monitor the progress against plan and to provide the client sponsor with complete visibility and transparency of the project and any issues. This led testing to be the main driver behind daily stand-ups.

- An end-to-end defect management approach was defined to ensure that defects were correctly raised and that in-turn, fixes were provided by developers in a structured manner.

- We ensured that the project sponsor reviewed and signed off the test scope in order to provide a full audit trail.

Through comprehensive management of the external QA parties, detailed progress review and escalation as needed, the project was delivered in the timelines detailed in Ten10's test strategy, as specified to the client.

Challenges

There were several challenges that needed to be considered with this project. Firstly, there was the need to work with two external consultancy firms, both of which were based in Paris and were responsible for the execution of the product.

The geographical challenges were overcome by initially establishing a morning test call (to allocate tasks) and an evening test call (to review progress).

Towards the end of the project, Ten10 set up a war room and made it mandatory for a project manager from each site to be in London so escalation could be resolved in a timely and efficient manner.

Secondly, the administrative overheads associated with compliance in the financial services sector required daily monitoring and reporting. Whilst this was not a test task, due to the strong reporting framework that the test manager had implemented, he was asked to step in and own reporting of the compliance backlog to ensure these were addressed prior to go-live.

Finally, there was also the need to deliver a test strategy that would rescue a project which was already running four months late. Once the strategy was delivered, we had to win the trust of the other consultancies and develop a 'one team, one dream' mentality. Through the effective communication mentioned previously, taking full ownership of the test deliverables and ensuring a no-blame culture was in place, the teams worked autonomously but collaboratively which allowed the milestone to be met.

"This was *the only major IT transformation project at the bank which was delivered on time, to plan and within budget"* Client

Benefits

The project was delivered within the timeline outlined in Ten10s test strategy. This brought the go-live forward six months from what had previously been estimated by the external third parties. This allowed the benefit of integration to one of the largest US clearing agents to be enjoyed sooner than expected and thus the associated uplift in trades.