

British Airways

British Airways manages software development with Micro Focus® software.

Overview

As part of its support services, BA has an extensive system of applications for managing its flight operations. These are based on a variety of platforms, from IBM mainframes through UNIX and Linux to Windows. The IT team is responsible for the development and management of these applications across each platform.

Challenge

As part of its technology strategy at the time, the IT management team at BA decided to move away from an internally developed software change management system for its critical mainframe applications. This would allow the application development team to concentrate on support and development work that

“With ChangeMan ZMF, we can easily control the process by which software gets moved through the stages of testing and audit into production....ChangeMan ZMF helps us to keep them running as efficiently as possible.

JIM DIXON

Infrastructure Engineer
British Airways

directly supported business operations, rather than on support tools.

Jim Dixon, Infrastructure Engineer at BA explained: “The decision was taken to migrate over to a commercial product for managing and tracking development. As part of this, the IT team at BA referenced IT analyst firm Gartner to identify appropriate solutions that would meet the firm’s needs around tracking activity, auditing changes and automating a repeatable process to install into Production.”

This project included managing development of applications that were critical to BA’s operations across the finance, engineering, flight operations and back-office functions in the most efficient and cost effective manner. These programs included the registered take-off and weight system, which checks the weight of all planes that are flying out. Information from this is then automatically fed into the applications that manage allocation of fuel to each plane, fuel costing and charging. The software programs involved are therefore responsible for helping BA’s operations, finance and flight teams be as cost effective as possible.

Solution

Based on the airline’s criteria, BA chose Micro Focus® ChangeMan ZMF as its platform for managing application development on its



At a Glance

■ Industry

Aerospace & Defense

■ Location

United Kingdom

■ Challenge

The IT management team decided to move from an internally developed software change management system for its critical mainframe applications to a commercial product for change management.

■ Solution

Use ChangeMan ZMF system to take over responsibility for managing application delivery across 38 applications.

■ Results

- + Managed software change management processes for critical applications including finance, fuel management and back-office functions
- + Provided auditing and management of development process across testing, user acceptance and production

mainframe software. The original implementation project was completed and responsibility for tracking the key applications development was shifted over from the existing internal tool to ChangeMan ZMF.

“ChangeMan ZMF acts as our repository for production applications, as well as maintaining a log of all events that take place around development. It provides us with control over who does what for each program,” commented Dixon. “As part of the whole process for updating some of our core software and applications, ChangeMan ZMF plays a central role.”

Since deployment, the ChangeMan ZMF system has taken over responsibility for managing application delivery across 38 applications. It provides a full process for all work carried out around development. This begins with product developments and code changes that are initiated in response to business requirements. Once the development work is completed, testing is carried out.

This is split into two sections. The first is testing to ensure that there are no problems or bugs introduced within the new software update. This is followed by User Acceptance Testing

to check that the software continues to meet employee requirements around usability. Once these two stages are completed, the update is moved through to audit.

“This last stage before production lets us check the overall package that has been put together with no inconsistencies to other programs in Production and the team lead can ensure that everything has been carried out properly. If the team lead has been involved within prior coding and testing processes and their own work would require approval, then ChangeMan ZMF automatically flags this and a second approval contact must be used,” explained Dixon.

BA's mainframe applications connect into a variety of other software, from other mainframe applications through to software that runs on UNIX, Linux and Windows. As the information output from the mainframe apps is related to business-critical processes within BA, this makes the software update and tracking procedure essential to keeping systems across the IT software infrastructure running smoothly.

“The applications that we run to measure, apportion and track fuel usage assists our business planning and performance data, so

making sure these systems are fully tested ahead of new updates being rolled into production is essential. ChangeMan ZMF helps us to achieve this,” said Dixon.

Results

ChangeMan ZMF has kept pace with BA's own development of applications. BA has migrated to newer versions of Micro Focus ChangeMan as they have become available, as well as moving more of its software change management projects over to the solution.

“Our development covering the mainframe applications is about 80 people, though it can scale up to 120 when larger projects come through. As we need to add more resources into the development teams, ChangeMan ZMF ensures that we can continue to keep track of assets and changes made,” commented Dixon. “Over the past 15 years since we made the decision to go with Serena (now part of Micro Focus), we have continued to rely on ChangeMan ZMF for our software change management requirements as it meets the needs we have as a business and as an IT function.”

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