Overview
Rigorous testing helps OLM Systems deliver great software. Adopting an Agile development environment with performance testing at its core has made it even better.

Challenge
OLM Systems is the leading independent provider of software and consultancy services to the care sector. It delivers core applications through its Universal Services Platform to more than 100 clients.

The diverse nature of the differing IT infrastructures requires OLM to undertake extensive platform, performance and volume testing as part of the software development process.

Solution
OLM Systems decided on Silk Performer after reviewing alternative solutions. “We selected Silk Performer for its functionality and the level of support that we would expect. New to this particular solution, I took full advantage of the wealth of information and support available online—as well as directly from Borland (now part of Micro Focus)—to help me get up to speed with it. This was a great help.”

With Silk Performer now integrated into the Agile development methodology, tests on new functionality can be conducted during Agile sprints and combined with existing functionality to ensure new features do not introduce adverse effects.

Looking to an Agile development methodology, OLM Systems wanted a testing solution that would form an integral part of its platform.

Richard Pollard, OLM Performance Test Analyst, explains why: “Our performance testing only took place in the final stage of the development process, making it difficult to solve performance bottlenecks. It was clear that we needed to include testing as an integral part of the process to enhance the quality of our solutions.”

Results
+ Decreased support calls by 64 percent
+ Increased customer satisfaction by 90 percent
+ Introduced Agile development with integral testing
+ Increased application reliability

At a Glance
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<th>Computer Services</th>
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“We selected Silk Performer for its functionality and the level of support.”

RICHARD POLLARD
Performance Test Analyst
OLM Systems Ltd.
All testing is done online, using a web-based interface, and conducted at the end of the development sprint to confirm previous findings. Development teams can now respond more efficiently to change requests—and identify performance implications related to a requested new feature—much earlier in the process by subjecting newly developed code to a suite of tests during agile sprints.

Richard finds one feature particularly helpful: “Server Monitoring is invaluable. When tests run slow, we automatically correlate data with load test results to see what is causing a particular performance problem.”

The CareFirst application, which delivers social care case management for adult and children’s services, has undergone three releases since Richard introduced Silk Performer. OLM has noticed increased application reliability and almost no performance issues.

In addition, the team can now run repeatable tests against the application in different versions of supported database technology to certify its performance in different environments.

**Results**

Regular surveys show that 90 percent of its customers are now ‘pleased’ or ‘extremely pleased’ with the quality of the OLM solutions. More importantly, a 64 percent reduction in support calls proves that OLM customers are getting higher-quality applications. OLM Systems is more responsive to customer demands, and a better understanding of performance impacts has improved the quality of the final products.

Richard concludes: “Our improved products are helping us build stronger customer relationships and enhance our reputation in the marketplace.”

Because a ‘caring’ environment demands care in application development, too.