Pearson Plc.

StarTeam® provides a fully integrated software development process, improving productivity and saving time.

Overview

Pearson is the world's learning company, with 35,000 employees across 70 countries worldwide. Its unique insight and world-class expertise comes from a long history of working closely with teachers, learners, researchers, authors, and thought leaders. Its products and services are used by millions of teachers and learners around the world every day.

Challenge

Among Pearson's wide portfolio of products are PCAT and MAT. PCAT is a specialized test that helps identify qualified applicants to pharmacy colleges. It measures general academic ability and scientific knowledge necessary to start pharmaceutical education. The Miller Analogies Test (MAT) measures the ability to recognize relationships between ideas, fluency in the English language, and general knowledge of the humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, and social sciences. It represents an excellent option for candidates applying to any of the hundreds of graduate programs that accept MAT scores for admission.

Both programs have been around for decades and Lara Gillespie, PSE Technical Project Manager for Pearson, has looked after the software base for over 15 years. Central to this process was Micro Focus® StarTeam, as Gillespie explains: "With programs of this age, when problems occur, it is very likely they have happened before. Thankfully we have a rich central repository in StarTeam, which makes it easy for us to go back and review older code versions and search for issues to work out a possible solution."

She adds: "When Pearson, like all companies, sought cost-saving measures and we were facing the prospect of losing StarTeam, this was a big problem for me, and our small agile team. Other Pearson divisions were using different tools, such as SharePoint, Bitbucket, and JIRA, and we were encouraged to follow suit. To me, the logic of migrating 15 years of development history to a suite of tools which were not even integrated when all I need was already in StarTeam did not make sense, and we put together a business case to maintain StarTeam."

> **"StarTeam has been absolutely vital in maintaining the integrity and life-long history of two key Pearson programs."**

LARA GILLESPIE
PSE Technical Project Manager
Pearson Plc.

At a Glance

■ Industry
Publishing

■ Location
USA

■ Challenge
Maintaining decades old software programs through a small and agile development team while avoiding any rework or wasted effort.

■ Solution
Use StarTeam to provide a consolidated view with a central repository.

■ Results
+ Effective linkage between code and change requests
+ Full legal compliance
+ Improved team collaboration
+ Easy version control

Solution

With monthly software releases, version control is vital. Using StarTeam, Gillespie and her team use the extendable repository to track and manage change to a wide range of digital development assets, such as source-files, change requests, defects, tasks, requirements, and discussions. Gillespie says: "Our developers are in different locations and StarTeam gives us the visibility to easily work alongside each other without overriding changes. All files are kept in one location and we all look at the same view. We love that we can link change requests to code changes. When we do a new code build we use StarTeam build labels to indicate which change requests are covered in the new build. That way, we can easily generate a report that tells us exactly which changes need to be tested before putting the new build into production."

With nearly 43,000 change requests managed through StarTeam over the last 15 years, this linkage with the code base is essential.

Gillespie also sees the StarTeam impact from a management perspective: "Every software product is assigned a project in StarTeam and when we move to a new version, this represents a StarTeam sub view. So, if we are on version 7 of a release and we identify a code problem, it is very easy to go back through the previous code versions and design documents and work out the source of the problem. Without StarTeam we could spend a month trying to work out where an error might have crept in. Thanks to its organized nature, this takes minutes using StarTeam. The environment we operate in is highly regulated and transparency of information is key to us, so having a single source of the truth is important."

Results

By presenting a solid business case and cost justification Gillespie and her team are keeping StarTeam. Gillespie: "StarTeam is a consolidated solution where we store our design documents, change requests, defects, test cases, and source code. We find what we need when we need it and save hours of rework. Only by doing this through StarTeam can we be as lean and agile as we are."

Gillespie concludes: "StarTeam has been absolutely vital in maintaining the integrity and life-long history of two key Pearson programs. Micro Focus has been a great partner to us throughout this process. Competitive pricing and flexible thinking has brought us to the point where we are once again looking forward to the future together."

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