

Pick n Pay

Retailer enhances visibility, traceability, quality, release velocity and test automation across platforms and devices with ValueEdge.



Who is Pick n Pay

Headquartered in Cape Town, Pick n Pay is a leading retailer that operates over 1,650 stores in 7 countries on the African continent. While new stores are opened every month, online shopping is an increasingly popular channel for Pick n Pay customers.

Challenge

E-commerce is booming in South Africa. For leading retailers like Pick n Pay, the surging popularity of online shopping offers a tremendous opportunity for the company to boost growth and increase market share.

Pick n Pay is no stranger to e-commerce innovation. The retailer already offers online and mobile shopping as well as click-and-collect services at its brick-and-mortar stores. To power these services and support the smooth

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running of its store network, Pick n Pay uses a wide range of best-of-breed information systems, including CRM, ERP, Enterprise Warehouse Management (EWM), and Point of Sales Data Transfer and Audit (POSDTA) solutions from SAP.

Keeping these mission-critical applications working 24/7 is an essential ingredient for providing an excellent customer experience. To achieve around-the-clock availability, Pick n Pay regularly tests these applications using a test automation tool based on OpenText™ solutions, integrated with Jira to enable effective tracking of issues and defects.

Leon van Niekerk, SQA Manager at Pick n Pay, says: “Our initial engagement with OpenText slashed our release cycles for retail solutions from five weeks to just two weeks—enabling 3,000 weekly tests across 9 main solution areas, including key capabilities such as disaster recovery. We found that working with OpenText really empowered us to put our mobile apps through their paces in realistic user scenarios, contributing to outstanding experience for customers.”

With customer appetite for new online and mobile shopping services continuing to grow, Pick n Pay set out an ambitious plan to launch a new range of digital offerings. To



At a Glance

Industry

Retail

Location

Cape Town, South Africa

Challenge

The demand for new digital services placed testing and development workflows under additional pressure.

Products and Services

ValueEdge Agile
ValueEdge Quality

Success Highlights

- + Supports DevOps and waterfall in one solution
- + Accelerates time to market while boosting quality
- + Paves the way for future enhancements

take convenience to new heights, the retailer looked to develop an “ASAP” service that offers ultra-fast home grocery deliveries within as little as 60 minutes. Successfully launching this new service and others would place additional pressure on Pick n Pay’s test automation capabilities, and the retailer set out to ensure that these systems could keep pace and help it drive continuous innovation.

“We saw a clear opportunity to make our existing digital storefront even faster and easier for customers to use both online and on mobile,” comments van Niekerk. “To enable our digital transformation in this and other areas, we started to adopt a DevOps strategy, which meant that we needed to refresh our existing tools for managing software development and testing.”

The company’s three key goals were to roll out new releases faster, to release with no manual testing, and to enhance visibility of the results of its test cases. In the longer term, the objective is to shift from a waterfall approach to a DevOps methodology, allowing increased agility and greater responsiveness to new business imperatives.

“One of the primary goals was to make it easier for the senior management teams to see the results of our test cases faster and in greater detail,” comments van Niekerk. “To accelerate the transformation and enable smarter decision-making around software development, we decided to build on our existing OpenText solutions.”

Solution

With support from VicIT, Pick n Pay adopted OpenText™ ALM Octane, (later seamlessly upgraded to OpenText™ ValueEdge) to improve testing visibility and traceability, accelerate delivery, boost output quality and help it embrace agile and DevOps practices.

Targeting Enhanced Visibility, Traceability and Velocity

Deployed as a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution, ValueEdge provides testing and development teams with a rich array of new automation testing, quality control and monitoring tools—supporting faster, even more data-driven development.

“We use enterprise solutions from SAP to drive our business, so it makes sense for us to choose enterprise-class solutions from OpenText to support our application development and testing,” says van Niekerk. “We see ValueEdge as a strategic platform for Pick n Pay, enabling us to overlay DevOps practices on top of our existing automation capabilities.”

Working with trusted partner VicIT and OpenText, the retailer assessed its existing processes and identified the changes required to enable the new approach. VicIT helped Pick n Pay to ensure that it could migrate its existing test cases from its previous OpenText solution (formerly called Micro Focus ALM/QC) to OpenText ALM Octane delivered as SaaS.

“The support we received from VicIT was extremely valuable,” recalls van Niekerk. “VicIT handled the lion’s share of the implementation work for us, which enabled us to continue business-as-usual development activities throughout the project. Selecting a SaaS solution helped us to achieve a seamless go-live. In just one weekend, we migrated our existing test cases to ALM Octane, and within three months all our e-commerce test cases were in production.”

Rapid Access to New AI-Powered Capabilities

When OpenText acquired Micro Focus, it seamlessly extended the SaaS version of ALM Octane to include a full suite of value stream

management capabilities, effectively upgrading all existing users to OpenText ValueEdge. Pick n Pay thereby gained access to a wide range of additional features and powerful functionality—including AI-driven workflow analytics, enhanced process integration and automatic performance monitoring.

Today, automated test cases are managed in ValueEdge, which enables Pick n Pay to provide all stakeholders with a single view for manual and automated tests: including what’s been tested, what’s passed, and what’s failed.

“In the past, we tested code manually, and automated testing was only available at the end of a release cycle,” states van Niekerk. “Now we’re bringing automation into the process earlier. When developers start creating local branches of code, we pull them into local automated tests and start to create the appropriate automated test scripts. When developers are ready to pull the releases from our Bamboo continuous integration and deployment tool, we run automated smoke tests to reveal any simple—but potentially severe—failures. The result is that now we can automate both regression and functional testing, which dramatically reduces the need for manual testing and code revision further downstream in the process.”

By ensuring stories and front-end development tasks are always synchronized between ValueEdge and Jira, Pick n Pay enables senior stakeholders to access all the test data they need to see from Jira, reducing friction in the reporting process. Van Niekerk adds: “The tight mapping between the two platforms also offers us a potentially valuable opportunity to move all project and issue tracking functions to OpenText ValueEdge in the future.”

Results

By supporting Pick n Pay’s transition to a true DevOps approach, ValueEdge accelerates

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time to market, increases quality and visibility, while also opening up new avenues for further workflow enhancements and product development.

Supports DevOps and Waterfall in One Solution

With ValueEdge, Pick n Pay can transition from waterfall to DevOps methodologies and support both practices in the same solution, while also improving quality, speed and testing visibility.

“We know that full DevOps is a far-reaching philosophy that takes time to achieve. We wanted to start with the lowest-hanging fruit to build the confidence of the business in DevOps,” says van Niekerk. “After four months of work and very strong support from our senior management, we’ve now fully adopted DevOps methodologies within testing. Achieving full DevOps across all workflows continues to be our long-term goal, but we are already seeing powerful benefits around processes standardization and simplification.”

Accelerates Time to Market while Boosting Quality

With ValueEdge at the heart of its automated testing processes, Pick n Pay is enhancing its ability to identify defects in code before applications get as far as the QA environment. By catching defects earlier in the process, the company saves considerable downstream time, effort and money. The solution is also helping the company to increase the frequency of its release cycles: from two weeks in the past

to around once a week today. In the months ahead, Pick n Pay plans to leverage ValueEdge to identify wasted time during development and testing cycles automatically—helping teams to work even more productively. Crucially, faster and higher-quality development is helping Pick n Pay to expand its thriving digital channels and stay ahead of rivals.

“Today, we’re already starting to pick up defects at the local development stage, which means we’re spending less time in QA and achieving shorter cycle times overall,” confirms van Niekerk. “Thanks to OpenText solutions, we can now maintain better visibility across projects, departments, and methodologies than ever before. This is particularly important for applications where we engage external development resources. Our testing and development teams are now able to work together much more effectively: they can see while we’re building the test cases, how we’re going to test, what we’re looking for, how the automation will work, which contributes to better deliverables and a shorter time to market.”

Paves the Way for Future Enhancements

In the months ahead, Pick n Pay plans to explore the embedded AI functionality in ValueEdge to identify test types that may have been missed out from development cycles and accurately predict estimated time to market for new digital services. Both new features promise to help Pick n Pay increase quality and efficiency across testing and development workflows.

“We believe that it’s imperative to test from end-to-end, especially the places where your applications integrate with one another and

with the other components in your environment,” states van Niekerk. “With OpenText solutions, it’s easy to achieve that because they are technology-agnostic. With many other vendors, you’re restricted to testing a particular sub-set of components.”

Van Niekerk concludes: “One of the best things about working with OpenText is how versatile their offerings are—we’ve never encountered a problem that we couldn’t find a solution for. In fact, their user base is so large that there’s a high chance someone will have experienced and solved the challenge already—the community and the support are outstanding.”

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