

Industry:
Hardware/Software

Organization:
Vibren Technologies, Inc.

Description:
Vibren Technologies is an advanced engineering and network solution provider affiliated with Japanese computer manufacturer NEC.

Business Problem:
Vibren needed to quickly deploy a multi-language version of its new choice in a defect and change tracking tool, Rational ClearQuest, to a developer and tester community scattered around the world.

Solution:
Rational ClearQuest,
Rational Services

Key Benefits:
Rational ClearQuest was deployed with Japanese and English language UI text field and database schemata
Deployment was successfully completed within a tight six-week time frame
Rational ClearQuest was configured to emulate the look and feel of the prior change tracking tool for seamless transition and acceptance by users

On-site training brought in-house administrators up to speed with ClearQuest in days

Custom modifications were quickly implemented for immediate improvements in defect and change tracking

QuickStart Service enabled Vibren to maximize its investment in Rational ClearQuest

Rational® software

Rational ClearQuest QuickStart Gives Vibren the Jump in Multi-Language Deployment of Change and Defect Tracking Solution

When you're faced with implementing a powerful new defect and change tracking tool on a world-wide basis in a short timeframe, with no margin for downtime, it helps to have someone smart on your side. Especially when that "someone" is the very company whose tool it is you're deploying.

Just ask Stefan Bourque, the lead database administrator for Vibren Technologies Inc. of Boxborough, MA, an advanced engineering and network solution provider affiliated with Japanese computer giant NEC.

Recently Bourque was tasked with selecting and implementing a defect and change tracking solution that could be readily utilized by Vibren's internationally based partners and vendors. The solution had to be Web-based for easy browser access by users regardless of location or platform and it needed to emulate the look and feel of an existing change management tool used by NEC in Japan and the U.S. Furthermore, the new tool had to be implemented, tested and globally deployed within a narrow six-week time window.

After careful evaluation of leading software tool vendors and their respective change management products, it soon became obvious to Vibren that their best choice was Rational® ClearQuest®. ClearQuest is the defect and change tracking solution from Rational Software®, the industry leader in software development tools.

Implementation Challenges

While Rational ClearQuest's extensive, customizable feature set was well matched to Vibren's needs, implementing the tool would involve several interesting challenges.

Chief among these challenges was the requirement for both English and Japanese language UI text fields and database schemata. The new defect and change tracking infrastructure would have to support up to 100 concurrent users on the Web and it needed to be accessible on a 24 x 7 basis. Accentuating these technical challenges was the short time in which ClearQuest would have to be installed, customized, tested and deployed for use in Japan and the U.S.

The QuickStart Solution

To solve these implementation challenges and other technical and training issues, Vibren turned to the Rational ClearQuest QuickStart service. The ClearQuest QuickStart is an implementation and training service designed to help Rational ClearQuest customers achieve maximum productivity and benefits from their new defect and change tracking tool.

The ClearQuest QuickStart consists of a well-defined set of activities and services performed by a highly skilled team of Rational technical representatives. The QuickStart team works on-site with the customer, assisting in every aspect of ClearQuest deployment through a structured approach consisting of clearly defined milestones, procedures and objectives. These milestones include addressing the customer's needs in administrator training, environment setup, change request model implementation, and end-user deployment.

About a month after end-user deployment, the Rational team performs a follow-up assessment to verify that the Rational ClearQuest deployment is meeting all the customer's needs.



Benefits from the Start

The Rational ClearQuest QuickStart began for Vibren on the day the company received the ClearQuest software. The initial activity was an in-depth three day training class taught by a Rational technical representative. "The first thing that was really good about the ClearQuest QuickStart was that Rational came on-site to help us install ClearQuest and set it up. They took us through the complete installation and the tool's entire feature set right in our own facility, so we were comfortable with ClearQuest from the start," remembers Bourque.

As part of these set-up procedures, the Rational QuickStart team designed and installed a working ClearQuest change request database that Vibren could put to work right away. "They gave us a functioning database that we could use immediately to capture and manage modification requests. It was a good launching point for everything else we wanted to do with ClearQuest," said Bourque.

QuickStart Team Solves Challenges

Concurrent usage by English- and Japanese-speaking developers and testers was among Vibren's most important performance criteria for ClearQuest. "The biggest challenge we faced with Vibren was that ClearQuest had to be two byte capable," explained Marty Stolz, Rational's senior software consultant who was on the QuickStart team at Vibren. "That meant that we had to allow foreign languages to be entered and saved into the system and the data had to be accessible in either Japanese or English."

Custom modifications to ClearQuest can be created through the tool's standard API by any programmer with experience and skills in VB Script or Perl. However such programmers are not always on staff and tight schedules don't often provide for training an in-house specialist in a new computer language.

To overcome these hurdles, the ClearQuest QuickStart team provides custom code assistance. "The custom code assistance was a major benefit we got from the QuickStart," said Bourque. "We absolutely needed to have a Rational expert here to do the programming because nobody knew VB Script well enough to make it happen within the short timeframe we were facing. The Rational technical representative got some complex database functions working in less than two hours, saving us an incredible amount of time."

These modifications were also incorporated in a series of staff training classes presented by the QuickStart team to Vibren's testers and programming staff. The team followed-up with Bourque on a regular basis over the next 30 days to answer questions and check that deployment was proceeding satisfactorily and on-schedule.

Achieving Real Results

Vibren's fast, successful implementation of Rational ClearQuest, as enabled through the QuickStart service, has been readily accepted throughout NEC and has already yielded tangible improvements in efficiency values and defect tracking. Bourque reports that overall communication between Vibren, NEC and NEC's vendors has been markedly improved since the ClearQuest rollout. "And improved communication translates to improved everything else" he commented. Bourque said, "the Rational ClearQuest QuickStart service really enabled us to maximize our investment in Rational ClearQuest."

About Rational

Rational provides a software development platform that improves the speed, quality, and predictability of software projects. This integrated, full life-cycle solution combines software engineering best practices, market-leading tools, and professional services. Ninety-six of the Fortune 100 rely on Rational tools and services to build better software, faster. This open platform is extended by partners who provide more than 500 complementary products and services.

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