

Industry:

Engineering, construction,
software development

Seapine Products:

TestTrack Pro, Surround SCM

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and Seapine’s effective software
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a world-class software
development organization.”*

David Grange
Requirements and Process Auditor

OptiFrame Software

OptiFrame creates integrated, whole-house design applications that help design teams optimize the structural frame using engineered wood products, metal plate connected wood trusses, wall panels or field frame walls, and solid sawn lumber. OptiFrame was conceived as a joint venture. As a result, the effective exchange of information with internal employees and representatives of partner organizations has been imperative from its inception. Because of its partnership, managing multiple branches for different projects has also been essential. OptiFrame employed Seapine Software’s tools to develop a defect tracking and source code management system that is effective for all the parties involved.

Situation

OptiFrame Software’s previous defect tracking system was completely unreliable. The Windows client crashed several times a day, causing data loss. In addition, it performed poorly over a Citrix connection and not at all on the Web. With OptiFrame’s need to communicate with partners outside of their enterprise, this lack of remote access was unacceptable. When the software vendor was unable to resolve the issues, even after hours of phone support and on-site visits, OptiFrame knew it was time to find a new solution.

At the same time, OptiFrame was maxing out their source code management tool and having difficulty controlling their projects and programming assets. Developers accidentally overwrote each other’s code when checking in files and had issues rolling back changes, resulting in significant delays and added expense.

These inefficient tools affected developer confidence, partner communication, and time to market.

Solution

After researching their options over a period of three months, OptiFrame decided to implement Seapine’s solutions based on their requirements and budgets. They began with TestTrack Pro. Later, they added Surround SCM because they felt it was better equipped to handle their large code base.

The new tools had to be scalable to meet internal and external demands, and yet easy to use. In addition to the instability, a major drawback of OptiFrame's old defect tracking application was its complexity, which required all defect data to be stored and displayed on a single form. TestTrack Pro provided the flexibility to support OptiFrame's business processes in the most efficient way possible. "We needed rapid deployment," says David Grange, Requirements and Process Auditor, OptiFrame. "Our associates had to be fully productive in days, not weeks. We switched over from our previous system on a weekend, and on Monday, we were using TestTrack Pro with no significant issues."

"[Moving to TestTrack Pro and Surround SCM,] we did not have to give up any functionality and also gained the stability we were missing."

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OptiFrame needed feedback on its products quickly to enable timely response to issues. To address these needs, OptiFrame customized the TestTrack Pro workflow, implemented its Web-based interface, and began providing SoloBug, Seapine's stand-alone bug reporting application, to partner representatives. This streamlined communication both internally and with outside representatives at partner organizations. OptiFrame created multiple TestTrack Pro projects for different purposes, such as a main project and a legacy project, as well as projects for software deployment, and back-end business systems. Since OptiFrame employs both agile and Rational Unified Process (RUP) development processes, they tailored TestTrack Pro to match the development flow of each. Despite the number of projects and states, TestTrack Pro is still easy to use.

"Some of the projects have more than 40 possible states," says Grange. "But it is uncomplicated because the users only see one state with a single set of valid choices at any time."

For their source code, OptiFrame needed stability and robust branching. With Surround SCM, they implemented organized branching plans to support several products and multiple versions of those products. According to Grange, "We did not have to give up any functionality and also gained the stability we were missing. In addition, because of Surround SCM's sophisticated branching capabilities, we were able to create patches that were easier to deploy."

Results

With Surround SCM, OptiFrame can now merge code with other branches significantly faster and more efficiently than in the past, improving productivity and cycle time. Previously, developers had to manually re-code the same functionality or bug fix in multiple branches. Surround SCM's automated merging of code between branches has reduced extra work and greatly decreased the risk of errors from re-coding. Developer and management confidence improved as a result of the new system. The branching capabilities of Surround allow team leaders more flexibility to manage source code effectively, especially on longer and more risky projects.

TestTrack Pro has eliminated the loss of data from crashes, increased productivity, and improved communication across both the enterprise and the partner network. "TestTrack Pro has helped our partners be able to 'see' into our system," says Grange, "making record status visible to all involved. We've achieved this transparency while improving performance and scalability."

"Utilizing efficient processes and Seapine's effective software tools," adds Grange, "OptiFrame has become a world-class software development organization."

