Seapine Software

Case Study

Industry:
Computer Hardware

Seapine Products:
Surround SCM

"[Surround SCM] is exactly what you want source code management to be."

Leon Vandervalk
Senior Engineer

DeFelsko

DeFelsko, a U.S. manufacturer of coating thickness gauges and inspection instruments, has been in business for over 40 years. These devices consist of a hand-held unit with a probe that is used to take measurements. Results are displayed in a small LCD display. There are numerous applications for these devices ranging from measuring the thickness of paint or powder coating to measuring the wall thickness of metal tanks or pipes.

Situation

Like any manufacturer, every product that is manufactured generates numerous documents that need to be managed. These documents include engineering specifications, blueprints and technical drawings, manufacturing process documentation, technical documentation such as user manuals and instructions, quotes and purchase orders, and more. In addition, ISO quality control standards require that all document revisions be captured and archived.

Solution

Prior to choosing Surround SCM, DeFelsko used a low-cost change management solution. Unfortunately, they lost critical data during a routine product upgrade. They quickly realized they could not risk additional data loss, so they began looking for a more reliable alternative. Leon Vandervalk, senior engineer, summed it up this way, "You get what you pay for...I don't mind paying more for something as long as it works."

Vandervalk decided to review Borland StarTeam, Perforce, BitKeeper, QVCS, and Surround SCM. After an initial review, he determined that Surround SCM best suited his needs, so he began a formal evaluation. During the evaluation, Vandervalk set up Surround SCM in a test environment. He was so pleased with the results that he implemented it to manage live projects. He decided to purchase Surround SCM based on its client/server architecture, ease-of-use, IDE integration, and bug-free operation.

Results

Following the decision to purchase Surround SCM, Vandervalk expected to have to rebuild the projects that were being managed in the test environ-

ment. But the transition was extremely easy, since it merely required copying the projects from the test environment to the live environment. All changes and revision histories were preserved. Vandervalk observed that a similar process could be used to manually back up projects in the future. "We never looked at backup as part of the selection criteria, but in hindsight, this feature is very useful." Within a month, all existing data from their previous change management solution was completely migrated to Surround SCM. This simple transition was a big plus.

Surround SCM can be integrated with most popular IDEs, allowing developers to work with source files without leaving their IDE.

Vandervalk especially likes Surround SCM's integration with CodeWright. Typical tasks such as checking in, checking out, and comparing and merging files require little effort. "I rarely use the SCM client, just the controls within CodeWright. Every time I fire up CodeWright, it sees the SCM database. It's exactly what you want source code management to be."

Surround SCM's document management capabilities are substantial. Files are stored in a server-based repository that is accessible to team members, both locally and remotely. Similarly, Surround SCM provides robust version control features. A file cannot be modified without recording who, when, and why it changed. These features were critical to Vandervalk, since they needed to provide secure access to both internal and external developers and technical personnel.

Today, Vandervalk is using Surround SCM primarily to manage engineering documents and technical publications, but he plans to expand its use to include management procedures and ISO documentation. "Source files for us are more than just software source code. We use Surround SCM to archive technical drawings and manage revisions. It becomes a document management system as opposed to just source code management."

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