cpX'Energy

VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH automates IT tests

TESTING

Shorter test runs and fewer errors with the introduction of cpX.Test from Sopra Steria

Too much manual work for software tests

Energy wholesaler VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH updates its .Sales software several times a year. The adjustment is usually tested by the billing department. There is a common test case catalogue, which is distributed to the employees and processed.

Although a specific and script-based test exists that automates testing to a certain extent, release tests using this method often take several weeks.

The facts

_ Several software updates per year.

_ 6 to 8 weeks for a test run several times a year.

_ Each test run is processed.

_ Time and time again software errors occur despite the time and personnel effort deployed in the testing.

The challenge

VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH was looking for a solution that would save the company time and resources and deliver a good test quality under the prevailing conditions.

The energy wholesaler took the decision to automate the software tests to offset the lack of test capacities and relieve the workload of the affected departments.

The energy supplier also wanted to significantly increase test quality by having test cases that were as precise as possible. The existing manual test cases served as a template.

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The solution

VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH decided on cpX.Test from Sopra Steria. Sopra Steria has been offering automated test support for several years, including the platform-based solution cpX.Test. Customers can also book a service with supporting test capacities.
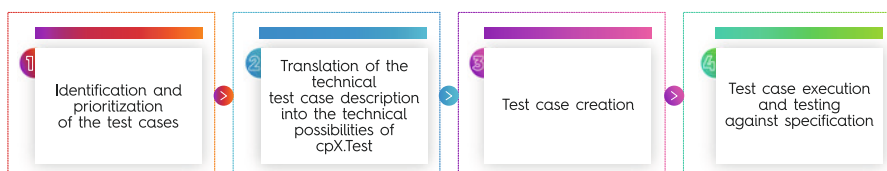
cpX.Test is a cloud-based solution developed and hosted by Sopra Steria. This means that VNG Handel & Vertrieb did not have to set up any IT infrastructure and a project could start immediately.

The test platform uses customer data for the tests and to this end the test system is connected via interfaces.

Sopra Steria offers a range of support services to complement the test platform. The service ranges from "Bronze" (independent operation and analysis of test runs) to "Gold" (maintenance, analysis and performance of the test cases by Sopra Steria). Customers thus have the option to minimise their involvement in test activities.

Cooperation

An agile approach was chosen for the project implementation. A team started by automating the tests in small steps and this delivered the greatest efficiency increase and the best test coverage. The agile project implementation meant that all participants were continuously involved. Short coordination paths quickly ensured measurable results. The sprint reviews established a common understanding of the procedure and in the sprint planning process, test cases were redesigned, repeatedly prioritised and existing test cases were adapted if necessary.

1 Identification and prioritization of the test cases	2 Translation of the technical test case description into the technical possibilities of cpX.Test	3 Test case creation	4 Test case execution and testing against specification

This detailed work when creating the test cases requires a lot of communication. The close cooperation between Sopra Steria and VNG Handels & Vertrieb GmbH proved to be an advantage when coordinating the scope of the test bilaterally. The project work was mainly carried out remotely, supported by Microsoft Teams.

The Result

The benefit for VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH from the test automation and the use of cpX.Test are measurable improvements in terms of efficiency and quality:

_ A test run now only takes 1 week - and no longer 6 to 8 weeks.

_ Reduction of breakdowns to 0 since the deployment of cpX.Test.

_ Minimisation of "Blocker" category faults to 1 – compared to 12 in the previous year.

The energy wholesaler is very pleased with the results achieved. Follow-up projects to implement further test cases are ongoing.

About the customer

Based in Leipzig, VNG Handel & Vertrieb GmbH is a reliable and flexibler supplier of natural gas to domestic and international trading companies, distributors, municipal utilities and industrial and major customers.

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