



SUCCESS STORY

A Euro-zone central bank leverages long-term SkySparc partnership to support upgrade

HIGH LEVELS OF UAT AUTOMATION ACHIEVED, MIGRATION PROCESS STREAMLINED

INDUSTRY
Central banking

SOLUTION
SkySparc OmniFi

ABOUT

The client is a European central bank and member of the Eurosystem of euro-zone central banks. It uses Wallstreet Suite for many of its core functions, including mission-critical reserve management and monetary policy operations.

Wallstreet Suite is used to handle many transaction types by the bank's front-, middle-, back-office teams, supporting processes including risk management and accounting.

Unusually among central banks, it trades corporate bonds, as well as more traditional government bonds and bills, and foreign exchange. A system support team of 10 maintain the system and respond to the needs of around 50 users across the bank.

CHALLENGES

As an extensive user, the client wanted to upgrade to version 7.4 from 7.2 as efficiently as possible, but the large volumes of required test transactions meant that user acceptance testing (UAT) could absorb high levels of internal resources.

The number of transactions that must be tested as part of the upgrade process runs

to around 500, so reducing workload and the scope for manual error was important.

To effect the upgrade with minimal impact on ongoing operations, the central bank required a UAT solution that would provide maximum automation and flexibility, while guaranteeing system stability.

"Reliability is our number one priority. As a central bank, we have strict testing

requirements. We need to ensure our systems operate in the most secure environment possible.

"As part of UAT, stress tests will be done to demonstrate performance under a heavy workload," says the central bank's project manager for banking operations.

QUICK FACTS

- The bank has **improved quality** and reduced risk through **automation**, more thorough testing and faster processes.
- Automated loading of transactions and static data **minimizes risk** of manual errors and helps to **spread workload**.
- **Regression testing** ensures differences can be quickly identified and resolved without impacting the upgrade project timeframe.

SOLUTION

SkySparc had previously supported the central bank's upgrade from version 6.0 to 7.2 and it have been using OmniFi since 2009. As an existing trusted long-term partner, the central bank approached SkySparc to seek its input on how to conduct UAT for the new upgrade as securely and efficiently as possible. SkySparc also recommended use of the latest version of OmniFi, which included improved testing, reporting and reconciliation capabilities, compared with the version previously used by the central bank.

The central bank deployed OmniFi to verify successful migration to 7.4, supporting three rounds of UAT. Once the transactions and comparison data for the test cases were decided, they were entered into OmniFi, run, and the results were reconciled across two test environments to verify results against expectations. Even simple tasks, such as entering transactions for testing, can be time-consuming and prone to error if large volumes are entered manually. Previously, reconciliation of test results had involved manual manipulation and comparison of Excel spreadsheets.

Use of OmniFi increased automation levels and accelerated the testing and migration process substantially. Although the central bank initially required some support when setting up the test transactions, once it

had run a few test cases through OmniFi, internal users were able to use the tool's capabilities with little assistance from SkySparc.

For the UAT, the central bank ran test transactions across two environments - first, a copy of the existing 7.2 system; second, the new 7.4 version - then compared the results. "Previously we'd have to conduct one round of test, enter the results in a spreadsheet, then conduct the second round in the new environment. Now we can conduct both sets of tests in parallel, and have the flexibility to add new transactions if we see fit. Using OmniFi means we can handle a higher number of transactions in a shorter time, which means the testing process is more comprehensive, giving added certainty, thereby reducing operational risk," explains the project manager.

"Extensive use of OmniFi in the UAT process enabled us to achieve much higher levels of automation...Not only did this save time, but it enabled us to shift much of the workload to before - rather than after - the UAT stage."

PROJECT MANAGER, BANKING OPERATIONS

RESULTS

The test cases were implemented and UAT conducted in a much more automated manner than previously, with the vast majority of the 500 test cases fully automated. This paved the way for an efficient upgrade to 7.4 while minimizing the additional workload on internal staff, thus supporting the central bank's system security and operational risk priorities.

"Extensive use of OmniFi in the UAT process enabled us to achieve much higher levels of automation. In fact, almost all test transactions were automated. Not only did this save time, but it enabled us to shift much of the workload to before - rather than after - the UAT stage. During such an intensive testing period, the whole process is much more efficient and reliable if we can balance the workload in an efficient manner," the project manager says.

Although the central bank did not call on SkySparc's product support staff extensively during the testing process, the project manager was pleased with the response when required. "Once the business consultants helped us set up the test cases, we only needed to ask further questions occasionally," he says. "When we used the helpdesk, we were happy with the quality and speed of response."

ABOUT SKYSPARC

SkySparc, an independent solutions provider trusted by banks, central banks, Fortune Global 500 corporate treasuries and asset managers, offers complementary software, outsourced support and a wide range of financial and technical consulting services. Outsourced support enables our customers to focus on their core business and benefit from attentive service from our financial and technical experts. SkySparc OmniFi delivers sustainable business value to customer through advanced management reporting, process automation, system integration and fully automated testing. SkySparc was named Technology Consultant of the Year in Central Banking's FinTech & RegTech Global Awards 2021 and 2019, has previously won Treasury Today's Adam Smith Award for Best Risk Management Solution and Central Banking's Consultancy and Advisory Award, and is a five-time winner of Dagens Industri's Gazelle Award.



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