CUSTOMER

INDUSTRY

Banking

CHALLENGE

Royal Bank of Canada's Information Technology division needed to make sure its test data management software was efficient enough to handle the bank's ever-expanding list of financial services for its customers, and that all new applications interfaced well with existing ones.

SOLUTION

Compuware
File-AID®

RESULTS

- Enabled more effective use of IT resources
- Improved cost savings
- Increased time savings

Test Data Optimization Tools Continue to Earn Interest at Royal Bank of Canada

Business Challenge

Today's banking customers expect high-performance electronic delivery channels, available globally, 24/7. While aggressively pursuing new e-business delivery channels to meet these demands, Royal Bank of Canada must take careful measurements to ensure all new applications interface with existing ones.

Royal Bank of Canada is one of that country's largest banks, by assets and market capitalization, with broad leadership in financial services. The bank's well-diversified earnings stream across geographies and products. Approximately 74,000 full- and part-time bank employees serve close to 15 million clients worldwide.

Rather than simply providing tool support, Royal Bank's development team focuses on providing solutions for its internal customers. "We try to find the right combination of tools that allows the users to reach a solution," says Jeff Price, project leader, Technology Development Support Services.

For example, when the bank's business analysts performed business assessment tests in the past, they had trouble viewing data in the COBOL record layout format. "These people are business analysts; they're not technical in any way," adds Price.

The bank's IT division needed to make more efficient use of its resources, while performing test data management projects more quickly and affordably. Faced with increasing customer expectations, the IT organization had to ensure that the bank's growing list of financial service offerings would function properly and efficiently, and that its new applications would complement existing ones.

Solution

After re-evaluating Compuware File-AID and other software products in the market, Royal Bank once again realized the value it gets from File-AID and how it benefited from the solution's broad range of functionality on a daily basis. "We couldn't even get the other tools installed, much less up and running," says Price. "There's no comparison. We recognize Compuware's tools as some of the best in the industry."

File-AID was introduced to the bank's business analysts by Mary Hayward, technical systems analyst in the Technology Development Support Services group. The business analysts now use the tool's browse facility—with its COBOL layout—extensively for insight into a file's field contents. "Analysts don't need to get a tech person involved," she says, noting the time savings. "Now they have a tool to view data without help."

Compuware

Like any large organization, Royal Bank must justify all its product purchases. To ensure usage rates warrant software purchases, the bank regularly performs a series of usage tests on all of its software tools. Usage reports have shown that File-AID is the tool most frequently used by the bank's developers.

Results

Royal Bank's development team realized they could replace another vendor's tool and get better results from a solution they already had, File-AID's Compare function. "We find the Compare function in File-AID/MVS outperforms the other vendor's tool," says Price. "We gained huge savings in software costs and improved functionality, because we can code these things in batch."

Ron Crockett, a direct deposit accounting (DDA) interface and test coordinator, also appreciates the Compare function. "File-AID's printouts are much easier to read than the ones we used for years. File-AID shows you the whole 'From' record, then 'To' record and both are clearly marked with the changed section. Our old Compare interweaved the data," says Crockett. "DDA staff literally resides in File-AID on a daily basis. It's such a powerful tool."

John MacDougall, technical systems analyst with Royal Bank Investment Systems, appreciates File-AID's Selection Criteria. "Our VSAM master files are very large. Let's say I need to select all of our Registered Education Savings Plans, and then I need to pinpoint all zero balances in those plans; the Selection Criteria feature pulls exactly what I need in minutes," he says.

Without File-AID, someone would have to search every record in hex, line by line. "Selection Criteria eliminates the chance for human error and saves so much time," says MacDougall. "I've gone from an hour or two to less than five minutes."

"These projects are simply not possible with any other tool. It's all or nothing; we have to use File-AID if we want to perform our regular, day-to-day routines."

— Jeff Price, Project Leader, Technology Development Support Services, Royal Bank of Canada

Royal Bank also depends on File-AID when working with large files. "These projects are simply not possible with any other tool. It's all or nothing; we have to use File-AID if we want to perform our regular, day-to-day routines," says Price. "And it's user-friendly, so new users are capable of editing files in five minutes to half an hour."

Royal Bank's development teams like the transparent integration of Compuware's products, the way the team can easily move from one tool to another with the touch of a "hot key." For example, when the technical analysis team needed to convert an old application, they used Hiperstation for testing. "We first used File-AID's Cross Reference to modify the application's old, clunky screens to create a test path. Then we used Hiperstation to execute it," says Hayward. "The process is faster and more flexible, and the two tools really complemented each other."

Without File-AID's Cross Reference function, programmers would have to maintain a series of old CLISTs to edit test cases. Since the CLISTs were written so long ago, they are difficult for new programmers to understand. File-AID's Cross Reference function eliminated the maintenance process.

Another way Royal Bank is providing solutions for users is by making some of its old legacy applications, such as DDA and Canadian Savings Bonds, available on the Internet. These applications contain several master files, each with numerous data files. It's very important for developers to understand the primary function for each data file, what information is contained in it and how it relates to other files within the application.

File-AID allows developers who are unfamiliar with certain applications to immediately see data in record layout, so they can grasp the data relationships and concepts the file has used. "In Internet banking, when writing the COBOL code, users can immediately see the relationship between files within an application and from application to application," says Price.

Just like Royal Bank's development team, File-AID allows customers to tackle projects by themselves, quickly and easily.

To learn more, please visit: **compuware.com/file-aid.**

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