

PayGlobal

Success with Scrum in test



*“We couldn’t have achieved this level of success without Clarus...
It was a big ask and they did a fantastic job”*

THE ISSUE

PayGlobal develops software for payroll, time and attendance and other Human Resource management functions. When Stephen Canning was appointed as CTO and Development Manager, he wanted to improve software development processes and achieve higher levels of product quality and stability.

“As a company, we want to get our releases right first time and enable a seamless implementation for our customers” says Stephen Canning. “Fundamentally, when it comes to payroll, you have to pay employees accurately, on time, every time – there’s no exception. We wanted to modernise the way testing was done and inject automation, as well as the latest tools and techniques into the process” says Stephen. “We also recognised the need to introduce more thought leadership, best practice and experience into the testing team. It was the stand-out area of the business where we had the most to gain from the move to Agile practices.”

Stephen and his team recognised that Clarus (Clarus was acquired by Assurity in December 2012) had the right mix of Agile and industry-leading software testing expertise: “It was much bigger than a typical Scrum implementation. We were redesigning the software test function and process – with great results.”

KEY RESULTS

- + After implementation, the next five product releases did not have a single defect, leading to an estimated saving of more than \$120,000 annually in personnel and productivity costs
- + The time required to regression test the payroll suite was reduced from six to two weeks
- + The team dynamic has shifted completely – the development team is seen as a fun and dynamic place to work
- + Customised testing scripts and tools delivered 70% feature coverage in most areas
- + Introduced continuous integration, knowledge management and acceptance testing collaboration tools

FACT: Zero defects in the next five product releases after implementation

THE SOLUTION

Stephen and his team had experience working with Clarus' Software Quality Practice Lead Ian Ross and knew this was the type of top calibre talent that would help PayGlobal make a successful transition. "Clarus has industry-leading software testing expertise so it made good sense to bring them in" says Stephen. Clarus delivered a proposal in September 2010 to take over the testing reigns at PayGlobal, in the process designing and implementing a new test strategy and conducting a complete review of test artefacts.

Clarus Test and Agile expert Ian Ross was injected into the PayGlobal test team supported by a variety of Clarus team members and resources. According to Ian, testers are often the unsung heroes of a successful software development project. "I liken us to the goalkeeper in football – the last line of defence

against bugs getting out the door" he says. "The project with PayGlobal was much bigger than a typical Scrum implementation as we were redesigning the software test function and process."

Clarus wrote a number of custom testing scripts and tools which have helped to achieve a 70 percent 'feature coverage' level in most areas and highlighted the need for a continuous integration tool. PayGlobal chose a Jenkins build server (a Java-based application that monitors execution of repeated jobs) with a Fitnesse wiki plugin to support collaboration on acceptance testing. They also implemented the Confluence wiki, a knowledge management system to store, share and search team information from standards and templates to new staff induction plans and 'tips 'n tricks'.

THE RESULTS

"Clarus stepped in, took control of the process, implemented a sound testing strategy with the right tools and practices to support it and then performed a seamless handover to the new team lead" says Stephen Canning. "We couldn't have achieved this level of success without them."

Clarus was acquired by Assurity in December 2012.