



Borland streamlines development and deployment of mission-critical applications

BORLAND ACCELERATES SUCCESS

by enabling standardized application lifecycle information at Qwest



Borland® CaliberRM™ and CaliberRM Datamart enable Qwest development teams to efficiently define and collect information about application lifecycles into a standardized format, eliminating inconsistent and time-consuming information-gathering practices. Additional integrations with Mercury Interactive TestDirector® automate the collection of test data in the application lifecycle, improving the timeliness and accuracy of data reporting across the enterprise.

Qwest Communications provides one of the largest and most sophisticated voice and data networks in the world. From small households to global corporations, more than 25 million residential and business customers rely on Qwest for their telecommunications needs. To ensure outstanding support for these customers, Qwest has approximately 2,000 developers who support nearly 600 active applications such as network provisioning tools, billing applications for local and long-distance services, and customer-facing systems like the company Web site.

Borland products streamline information-gathering

Prior to 2003, senior IT management at Qwest faced a twofold challenge. Management lacked reliable, objective data about the status of application release cycles company wide. Attempts to collect such data were inefficient, which negatively affected developer productivity. In addition, developers spent hours each week in status meetings, and project managers collected updates between meetings by visiting developers' cubicles. The numerous interruptions and meetings to track project status actually slowed progress, and because the information-gathering process was manual, the data collected was sometimes incomplete or out-of-date by the time it was published.

A lack of consistent reporting terminology made project status data even less reliable. No standardized status definitions existed among the company's geographically distributed teams, which are located in 20 U.S. cities and multiple overseas locations. As a result, two projects could have an identical status—for example, "code complete"—when they were actually at different stages of completion. This type of status reporting caused confusion.

CaliberRM raises productivity by enabling consistent data

In March 2003, the ITS team at Qwest deployed two Borland application lifecycle management (ALM) products to help make progress tracking at Qwest more streamlined and consistent: CaliberRM, a Web-based management system designed to enable collaboration between distributed teams and CaliberRM Datamart, a powerful reporting and presentation tool. Now, as developers pass project milestones, they enter status updates in the centralized CaliberRM repository, making information

FAST FACTS

CHALLENGE

Standardize application lifecycle data for mission-critical applications to provide objective information that managers can use to make informed decisions.

SOLUTION

Use CaliberRM as a central repository for requirements data, CaliberRM Datamart for reporting, and Mercury Interactive TestDirector to automate the collection of test data.

BENEFIT

Standardizing the application lifecycle enables managers to identify troubled projects and use automation to improve data reliability—greatly reducing the incidence of product defects.

“It took just 20 minutes for us to proactively diagnose and fix memory leaks using Optimizeit. By ensuring that applications are released without defects, we can save millions of dollars in downtime and customer satisfaction.”

Phillip Hilgert, ITS Architect, Qwest Information Technologies

accessible to project managers and other developers via any Web browser. CaliberRM Datamart supplies charting, graphing, and querying functions to produce reports that make the application development lifecycle highly visible to managers, providing them with the information they need to make informed decisions. For example, managers can now easily determine when a project is running behind schedule and reallocate resources accordingly.

“Multiple weekly meetings and daily status checks are fading away,” says Phillip Hilgert, ITS Architect for Qwest Information Technologies. “CaliberRM has made it easy to collect information in one consistent format across the enterprise. Since the data from our projects are increasingly standardized, the progress reports from Datamart show results that are readily interpreted across those projects.”

Automation improves speed and accuracy of data collection

Shortly after installing CaliberRM and Datamart, Hilgert’s team integrated CaliberRM with Mercury Interactive TestDirector—a test management tool and data repository that gathers data from multiple, third-party test programs into one centralized location. Tying together TestDirector and CaliberRM enables reporting and analysis of test coverage and progress. Managers can then track whether adequate testing is being done for each project. The integration also helps project stakeholders to stay informed. Automated updates between the two repositories ensure that CaliberRM always contains the latest testing information.

“The more automated the information-gathering process, the more impartial and objective the data will be,” says Hilgert. “The fidelity of the information that we collect using the Borland ALM solution is extremely high—our managers rely on this data in addressing key program and project management decisions.”

Automation also delivers information in a timely manner by eliminating the latency inherent in manual updates. This speed is essential to Qwest developers, who follow the extreme programming enterprise (XPE) development methodology—a philosophy that espouses agile development teams with seamless access to current, accurate information.

Optimizeit saves money by preventing application downtime

Recently, Qwest started integrating another component of the Borland ALM solution—the Optimizeit Suite—a product that offers powerful testing and diagnostic capabilities. Using Optimizeit, developers can quickly and efficiently expose defects in code, such as memory leaks, which might otherwise slow time-to-market—or potentially be released into production.

“Generally speaking, if you do not catch memory leaks before an application goes into production, you have to continuously monitor the application’s memory loss and reboot the application several times a week to avoid a crash,” says Hilgert. “By contrast, it took just 20 minutes for us to proactively diagnose and fix memory leaks using Optimizeit. By ensuring that applications are released without defects, we can save millions of dollars in downtime and customer satisfaction.”

Integrated Borland suite facilitates analysis and planning

The initial success of Borland products at Qwest has led the company to consider expanding the use of Borland tools to facilitate further information gathering and sharing. The comprehensive Borland ALM solution includes Together® ControlCenter® for design and modeling and Borland Optimizeit Profiler for the Microsoft® .NET Framework—tools that increase collaboration and communication between development teams to help organizations build mature software development processes.

“Now that we have integrated CaliberRM and TestDirector, we are in a position to do forecasting, metrics, and root-cause analysis,” concludes Hilgert. “Integrating additional Borland tools expands these capabilities, allowing us to provide more comprehensive data to senior IT management. By providing the ability to measure the time, effort, and resources required by development projects, the Borland ALM solution gets around the guesswork in key managerial decisions and lets company leaders plan more effectively for the future.”

TECHNICAL ENVIRONMENT

Borland® ALM solution

CaliberRM,™ CaliberRM Datamart, Optimizeit™ Suite

Additional technologies

Mercury Interactive TestDirector®

Borland®
Excellence Endures™

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