

IHS Markit Uses Attunity Gold Client to Enhance its SAP User Experience with Secure and Accurate Test Data Access

“With Attunity Gold Client we are able to copy select data out of production into another environment exactly as you see it in production. It behaves exactly the same, so it makes development and support much easier, saving us significant time.”

— David Linton, Director of SAP at IHS Markit



With tens of thousands of key business and government customers, including leading financial institutions and Fortune Global 500 companies, secure data access and effective processing of information are absolutely key to IHS Markit (Markit).

Markit's SAP production system is tightly controlled and audited, requiring multiple layers of authorisation in order to access the system and any data. Consequently, it was difficult to provide effective SAP user support because it could take many days before access to production was even granted.

Prior to selecting Gold Client, Markit was manually creating, matching and reviewing a massive amount of information to mimic production data in QA, which was proving to be an inefficient process.

According to David Linton, Director of SAP at IHS Markit, there were two possible ways of reducing the excessive use of Firefighter access while still addressing compliance issues:

1. Reduce the scope of what his team was doing in terms of day-to-day processing, by pushing the workload towards the finance teams.
2. Replicate data from production to QA or DEV in order to address user support queries, rather than having to wait for access to production to be granted. Additionally, a solution with the ability to scramble data would allow them to mask any data considered sensitive.

Solution

Markit considered a few different software solutions on the market, including EPI-USE and Attunity Gold Client. A member of Linton's team had positive experiences using Gold Client at a previous organisation and recommended the solution. After discussions with Attunity, Linton selected Gold Client over the alternative, heavily considering the technology behind the solutions.

“What we liked about Gold Client was that it actually copied data across to the target system exactly as it was in production; the same document numbers, the same customer numbers would go across,” stated Linton.

Implementing Gold Client meant that Markit was able to simplify their SAP user support. Linton highlighted three specific features of Gold Client that they benefited from the most.



IHS Markit*

About IHS Markit

IHS Markit (Nasdaq: INFO) is a world leader in critical information, analytics and expertise to forge solutions for the major industries and markets that drive economies worldwide. The company delivers next-generation information, analytics and solutions to customers in business, finance and government, improving their operational efficiency and providing deep insights that lead to well-informed, confident decisions.

IHS Markit have more than 50,000 key business and government customers, including 85 percent of the Fortune Global 500 and the world's leading financial institutions. Headquartered in London, IHS Markit are committed to sustainable, profitable growth. www.ihsmarkit.com

Firstly, he praised Attunity Gold Client's ability to copy data exactly as it is in production, meaning they are able to work on accurate data that behaves in the same way as it does in production. This enables the team to answer questions prompted by SAP users much more quickly and with less administration.

Secondly, he spoke highly of the way Gold Client enables them to bring specific subsections of transactional data into QA from production, allowing his team to debug without all the admin and audit logging associated with their previous approach.

Linton also spoke favourably of the way Gold Client can be used to take large data sets and reduce the number of development changes required. Talking about the recent creation of a payroll interface for Singapore, Linton described how he was able to copy all of the company's Singapore employees into the DEV environment while generating just two transports. Additionally, the entire development project for testing was completed without the need to release the transports. "Typically, before Attunity Gold Client, this size of development would have generated between 15 and 20 transports," said Linton.

"The dependency aspect has also really helped," added Linton. "You can bring across one invoice and it will transfer all relevant data exactly as it exists in the source, so you get the needed customer materials, billing documents, accounting entries and so on, all from bringing across just one object."

Linton confirmed that all his expectations were met regarding the implementation of Attunity Gold Client. "It was really quick. We did some prep work, Attunity came on-site for the implementation, and within two days we were up and running. A few days were then spent on training. It was very simple."

Results

For the core objective of complying with regulatory conditions while reducing the use of Firefighter, Gold Client has been a huge success.

Further, Attunity Gold Client has saved Markit numerous man-hours, as Linton's team is now able to support their SAP users more efficiently with reduced access to the production environment. "Since implementing Gold Client, we have seen around a 30% reduction in our usage of Firefighter access, with no compromise in the level of support offered to our users," added Linton.

Attunity Gold Client has also solved several other key issues for Markit. For example, the number of requests to access production has decreased overall.

"On larger changes from the development side, we significantly reduced the levels of changes that need to be put into production by about 70-80%. The greatest benefits we've seen within our own group is a big reduction in time spent, the requirement for less documentation, fewer approvals and fewer reviews," said Linton.

As a result of implementing Gold Client, Linton and his team are able to better support Markit's SAP users, and his own team no longer requires constant production access, freeing up considerable amounts of time. By leveraging Attunity Gold Client, IHS Markit has transformed a lengthy and difficult process into a simple, effective and streamlined operation.

Objectives

To provide effective and efficient SAP user support by reducing the use of FireFighter whilst complying with regulatory conditions.

Solution

Attunity Gold Client enables Markit to enhance its SAP user experience with secure and accurate test data access.

Benefits

- Support Markit's SAP users more easily and quickly
- ~30% reduction in usage of Firefighter access
- Less documentation whilst meeting compliance and regulatory conditions
- Fewer approvals and reviews and less development changes
- Quick and simple to implement

"Since implementing Gold Client, we have seen around a 30% reduction in our usage of Firefighter access, with no compromise in the level of support offered to our users."

— David Linton, Director of SAP at IHS Markit