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CUSTOMER STORY – ENERGY & UTILITIES

Connected Devices

Helping a UK utility provider to become one of the first to launch their new remote energy control successfully

Tried and tested

A UK energy utility venturing into the remote energy control market with a new device needed confidence that the product would enhance its reputation by fulfilling customer expectations with no room for even a minor shortfall.

The company needed to be assured that the device was reliable, easy to operate and a sound reflection of the company's commitment to its customers. They sought the services of SQS, as an independent quality partner that would provide expertise with advice based on experience, and to manage the governance of testing.

Benefits

- Increased visibility of testing phases through quality governance
- Improved user friendliness of the application through continuous feedback thus safeguarding customer confidence
- A controlled approach to testing enhancing reliability of remote energy control functionality and performance

Moment in time

Following its alliance with a manufacturer of an existing device that provided remote energy control, the company planned to add to the product so that it met its requirements. They needed to be assured that regression testing of the newly added features demonstrated the product as reliable, easy to operate and a sound reflection of the company's commitment to its customers.

Data on the device from its originators was scant and of limited use given the energy utilities need to up the performance and functionality of the thermostat.

Challenges

The primary requirement was the assurance that the quality and fitness for purpose of the device was such that it: enhanced its brand; and minimised the risk of damage to reputation.

It was crucially important that there was unflawed continuity between the branding on the device and the website via which customers would control it.

Solution

From the outset SQS put the quality at the heart of the project. Specific testing activity included:

- "Quality barometer" provided comprehensive reporting and clarity at any given stage in the development that the company's requirements were being met
- Early exploratory testing to ensure that the system operation was intuitive and the device was easy to use
- Engaging the utility company closely during the peak simulation exercise - with the IT infrastructure architect and database administrators - present at test runs
- Repeat testing on a range of browsers along with testing on different screens was vital. Tests encompassed usability as well as performance
- Testing on the prototype version was manual to prevent any incorrect images or content being missed. This decision reflected the intensity of the need to ensure all the utility company's aims were met, particularly its expectations for the device's usability and for consistent branding

- Non-functional tests included failover and disaster recovery with a top priority being to ensure user settings were preserved in either instance

Ultimately, the utility company had confidence that the device would provide its customers with a reliable and resilient service and be a first-rate representation of the company.

Contact

If you are interested in SQS' service offering regarding testing and quality management for the Energy & Utilities industry, please do not hesitate to send us an e-mail: info@sqs.com

About SQS Software Quality Systems

SQS is the world's leading specialist in software quality. We provide end-to-end business process quality assurance for software based systems. SQS consultants identify and mitigate business risk in technology led transformations utilising standardised methodology, industrialised automation solutions, global delivery and deep domain knowledge across multiple industries. Through our specialisation we provide the objectivity which delivers certainty.

Headquartered in Cologne, Germany, the company employs approximately 4,600 staff. SQS has offices in Germany, the UK, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Egypt, Finland, France, India, Ireland, Italy, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the US and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, SQS maintains a minority stake in a company in Portugal. In 2015, SQS generated revenues of 320.7 million Euros.

SQS is the first German company to have a primary listing on the AIM (Alternative Investment Market) in London. In addition, SQS shares are also traded on the German Stock Exchange in Frankfurt am Main.

With over 10,000 completed projects under its belt, SQS has a strong client base, including half of the DAX 30, nearly a third of the STOXX 50 and 20 per cent of the FTSE 100 companies.