

Humanitarian Aid Organization...

uses SmarteSoft solution to automate data seeding for critical informational database.

Background

Access to Critical Information: SmarteSoft answered a call from an international organization providing humanitarian aid to those in need. This organization faced a challenge: a legacy database existed containing vital information. However, no data model was available to facilitate migration to a new database while ensuring data integrity and consistency. The legacy data was accessed by many different groups within the organization for many – often disparate – uses. Data needed to be up-to-date and easily accessible.

Initially, the organization staffed a service center to migrate data manually. This process was slow, time-consuming and, as a result, expensive. Clearly, the organization needed to explore alternate methods that would meet data availability goals, reduce required manpower – and ultimately – reduce cost.

The Challenge

Taking a New Approach: a search began for alternate [solutions](#). Quickly the organization focused on a unique solution to automate the seeding of data.

As the name implies, data seeding is the task of planting (i.e. seeding) information (i.e. data) into a database. In this case, the application accessing data uses a serial process for accessing functionality. In other words, to access Function 2, all the data for Function 1 must already exist. The data seeding team pre-populates the database with specific data so that their customers (for instance: training, testing, demonstration, or other groups), could access data in the area of the application that pertains to their specific function.

The Smarte Solution

Evaluating automation software focused on three key issues:

- Speed and ease of execution
- Flexibility or ease of maintenance in response to configuration changes
- Finding the right fit for the highly specialized needs of the organization

The Result

The Right Tool for the Job: SmarteSoft's [SmartScript™](#) was the clear choice. The success of the organization's data group is measured by responsiveness to their customer's needs – which continually evolve. With SmarteScript, revision to automation scripts is quick, reliable, and easy to implement. SmarteScript maintenance for script revision can easily be completed in half a day. Revision maintenance with competitive tools evaluated took more than a week. SmarteScript helps the data group respond quickly to changes without interruption of service.

In addition, using SmarteScript meant that no software coding skills are required; new users ramped-up quickly and were generating executable data seeding scripts in no time. SmarteScript's easy script creation and revision methodology and user-friendly interface can be used by team members with a variety of skill sets.

Quick Start: In order to implement this solution quickly, the organization engaged [the professional services](#) of a SmarteSoft on-site consultant who worked with the group to help plan the project scope and develop automation scripts. This interaction provided a significant jump-start for the initiative. New skill sets were quickly developed by the data processing team. As a result, acceptance and deployment of the new method was quick and painless. The group was productive ahead of schedule as a result.

The end-users of the seeded data have clearly noticed service model improvements. The team's performance ratings for responsiveness, flexibility, and access to current data have never been better.

The data group also found SmarteSoft's customer support to be highly responsive, offering effective solutions for the minor challenges encountered. Assistance was quick, friendly, and easy to understand and implement.

An Unanticipated Benefit: The organization must meet Section 508 compliance requirements of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 508 requires access to electronic and information technology to people with disabilities. SmarteSoft's software solution utilizes MSAA (Microsoft Active Accessibility). MSAA determines how and if an accessibility aid, like a screen reader, sees objects in an application. By incorporating MSAA in the software solution, any inaccessible objects are flagged and documented in the extensive reports created during data seeding. 508 non-compliance can be addressed and corrected at the first stage of data seeding before any negative impact occurs.

The SmarteSoft team is proud to have assisted an important humanitarian organization in meeting data accessibility goals while reducing the cost to achieve that goal.