

PRODUCTION SUPPORT AND ARCHITECT TECHNOLOGY

When embarking on a new business model, it can sometimes be more advantageous to allow internal teams to handle new workflows associated with innovation and new market openings, while allowing external teams to maintain and support existing applications.

Our client's business was growing, primarily driven by the newly deregulated market, with new opportunities opening almost every quarter. Our client was trying to solve two problems. They were hindered by the shortage of talent in the technology industry. They also wanted their existing team of developers to work on new market openings and needed a partner who could come in and take over the support of their existing applications.

They wanted to retain their own employees and give them new and interesting things to work on. Since they work for an energy provider, they would know more about the business than an outsider. The Chief Information Officer for this client signed up to support the business with this growth by entering new markets. His top priority was to keep the existing system running and humming and continue to make money for the business while they were getting into new markets.

Cyber Group was also brought in to meet another objective. Because the customer did not have any QA (Quality Assurance) practice or discipline in his team, he wanted Cyber Group to institute a QA practice and QA team as part of this production, to aid in their future software development life cycle workflows.

To solve these associated issues, we did several things. First, we brought a very well established Knowledge Transfer Methodology to the table, which is roughly a 12 week organized process where we take their support systems



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(transfer them). During the first week or so, we spent plenty of time gaining an understanding of the process, technology, and infrastructure. Then we started taking over some simpler tasks from a support standpoint. The goal was that at the end of 12 weeks, we would be able to take on the support responsibilities at a minimum of 90%. Only the trickiest issues could potentially escalate to the client.

Simultaneously we analyzed their software development life cycle; how they developed software and rolled out software for their business. We proposed their purchase of a quality assurance process. We then established the team, which did two things for our client. First, they became the regression testing team so that with any new changes we were making to the distinct system, they could ensure that we were not accidentally causing any problems. Additionally, we were able to support them with new testing features.

This production support project has been operational for seven years now and is still going strong. We have been able to show, quarter over quarter, metrics which are significant to our client. Primarily, we have shown the continuous improvement of productivity associated with solving support issues by our team members.

Production support is an important part of scaling a growing business. Utilizing the expert skills of external groups to aid with supporting internal applications allows a business to add to their business model and focus on more strategic tasks, all of which results in the business increasing its bottom line.