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CASE STUDY

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL DATA CENTRE MIGRATION TESTING



Essex County Council

Client description:	Local Government
Locations:	Chelmsford
Testing team size:	Five TCL Test Consultants
Testing structure:	Project and Programme based testing
Testing delivered:	Functional testing, Operational Acceptance Testing, User Acceptance Testing

Client situation

In 2009 Essex County Council embarked on a programme of work to migrate from their existing data centre solution to a new hosted data centre. The programme was time constrained, due to contractually binding migration dates, and Essex County Council needed to engage an independent and objective testing capability to de-risk the migration from the old data centre to the new one. TCL were asked to work alongside the new hosted data centre supplier, working for and on behalf of Essex County Council, to provide independent and objective Quality Assurance, Quality Governance and Testing of the migration programme.

Solution proposed

Having undertaken a large number of migration and infrastructure projects across a wide range of customers in the previous decade, the proposed solution leveraged TCL's domain knowledge, skills and experience in this area.

Drawing on TCL's previous experience with large telecoms providers, government departments and utility companies, TCL demonstrated to Essex County Council that they had previously undertaken business critical migrations of many applications, including CRM and billing applications, and the associated databases. These projects involved large scale data migration and, coupled with TCL's experience of testing in complex infrastructure projects, TCL were able to assure Essex County Council that they would be able plan, analyse, and design an effective and efficient approach to the data centre migration testing. In addition, TCL were also well placed to execute and report on this approach so that Essex County Council was provided with informed risk-based decision making points throughout the programme lifecycle. At the heart of the solution were TCL's professionally trained and highly skilled test consultants. TCL proposed that Essex County Council engage two of their most technically capable Test Team Leaders, to interface with both the business users and the server and network experts. Export, Transform and Load (ETL) experience and knowledge and experience of leading Data Migration Tools were pivotal to the solution.



"Working with Essex County Council has proved to be a rewarding and challenging experience. The opportunity has allowed TCL to demonstrate our independent and objective approach to the planning, analysis, design, execution and reporting of testing in a mission critical, time constrained, data centre migration programme. We have been able to assist Essex County Council in de-risking the data centre migration, by quality assuring and testing their applications, prior to the move from the incumbent supplier to the new supplier."

Ian Londesbrough
Consultancy Partner
TCL Global



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Solution proposed continued

In addition, TCL provided an Operational Acceptance Test Manager, who also coordinated configuration management activities, environments, defect tracking and defect management. The Operational Acceptance Test Manager and Test Team Leaders were supported by two experienced Test Analysts.

Success achieved

Working closely with the Essex County Council data migration programme team, alongside the new hosted data centre supplier, TCL delivered a clear, effective and efficient risk-based approach and plan for the quality assurance, quality governance and testing of the Essex County Council data migration programme. At each step of the lifecycle TCL provided key decision making information to Essex County Council about their readiness to progress to the next stage and any risks that would be transferred to the next stage. This has resulted in the successful and seamless migration of the six highest priority applications from the old Primary Data Centre to the new infrastructure plus the “lift and shift” migration of more than forty applications from the old Secondary Data Centre. This success has led to the extension and re-engagement of TCL’s Testing Services for the remaining migration of the forty plus applications which were subject to the “lift and shift” approach.

“ I valued the independence and objectivity which the TCL team brought to the Essex County Council data migration programme. The Test Planning, Test Preparation, Test Execution and Test Reporting have been delivered to an excellent standard and the Test Progress Reporting provided project reassurance and the honest view required. The test deliverables the team have produced have been to the highest standard and the team has the trust of the client project, business teams and Test Manager alike. The TCL team provides an honest, yet considered viewpoint and only escalates when absolutely necessary - all actions/decisions are carefully thought through. The TCL Team have added value throughout the project, been pivotal in the smooth go live and have required very little management. ”

Rob Bown, Data Centre Migration Programme Test Manager, Essex County Council

“ I have the utmost confidence in the TCL Test Team which has been one of the work streams in the Data Centre Migration Programme that I have had to spend the least time with. The weekly reporting of project risk and the tenacious efforts to mitigate the risks and resolve the defects has been a major factor in the success of the Data Centre Migration Programme which has gone very smoothly with no business impact after go live. The Business feedback has been excellent and the Test Team have engaged the business effectively and managed their expectations well.



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TCL have engaged very effectively with Essex County Council, they are easy to do business with and have delivered everything we have asked to a very high standard and added value above our expectations. If there has ever been a demonstration to ECC of the importance and benefits of structured testing, DCM is it. The disciplines TCL imbedded within the project were without doubt one of the major contributors to the projects success. ”

James Jordan, Programme Manager, Information Services & Programmes, Essex County Council

“ The TCL Team has contributed significant value to the successful delivery of the Data Centre Migration project. This project represents a significant milestone for us in ECC and the entire organisation was relying on us for successful delivery. The efforts of the test team to de-risk the data centre migration by honestly reporting the risks and issues and pushing to get them resolved was a major factor in our success. ”

Mark Briggs, Chief Information Officer, Information Services, Essex County Council