

SHAREPOINT/NINTEX EXPERTISE IN ACTION: WORKFLOW ISSUES RESOLVED

CLIENT OVERVIEW

The client is an international pharmaceutical company that develops, manufactures and distributes generic, brand, and biosimilar products, with more than 750 products marketed globally through operations in more than 60 countries. With frequent mergers, acquisitions, and interdependent business processes, the company had developed an exciting new application designed to improve workflow between departments and significantly improve operations. The company was in the midst of an initial rollout, when the application began to experience random, yet devastating performance issues, threatening to critically impact business processes during prime business hours.

CHALLENGE

Quickly Launch a Successful, Stable Application and Ensure a More Efficient Architecture Going Forward

The promising application was developed in-house on a SharePoint platform, utilizing Nintex workflows to integrate and automate business processes. Like with many aspects of SharePoint, there are complex settings, performance limitations, and common errors that can add up to big issues. The company needed the knowledge of an experienced SharePoint consultant with Nintex workflow expertise, combined with infrastructure knowledge, to quickly resolve any workflow problems and identify any infrastructure issues, in order to ensure the success of the rollout. **Aspect Consulting provided the perfect fit resources:** with decades of data management consulting knowledge, as well as critical SharePoint/Nintex-specific expertise, the company engaged Aspect Consulting to resolve the issues.

SOLUTION

Conduct Application & Infrastructure Assessment & Implement Fixes

To ensure a complete resolution, Aspect took a two-pronged approach to analyze and optimize the client's application environment:

STEP ONE: CONDUCT APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

To begin the engagement, Aspect performed an in-depth assessment of the client's application with the goal of recommending critical workflow configuration changes. Aspect executed workflow objects and collected key information, fixing critical application issues, and designing a roadmap for moving forward with long-term efficiency improvements:

- **Examine Workflow Execution:** The assessment detected asynchronous processing that was causing unnecessary pauses in workflow. Aspect removed troublesome parallel workflows, and introduced Nintex-recommended timers to end abnormal halts in workflow.
- **Assess Memory Storage** In memory variables were utilized, forcing Nintex to synchronize information captured in RAM across multiple nodes within a clustered environment. In addition, Aspect detected that Nintex workflows were calling an excessive number

of objects, exceeding SharePoint default settings. Aspect further streamlined workflow, reset SharePoint default settings, and recommended eliminating in-memory variables with a list storage facility, for additional efficiency.

- **Institute Microsoft Recommended Settings and Vendor Updates:** Aspect detected incorrectly set options and instituted recommended throttling, timeout, and timer interval settings to further maximize efficiency. In addition, Aspect implemented the latest Nintex application patches, to ensure that the application was utilizing the vendor's latest technology.

CONDUCT INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Aspect also assessed the server configuration in each environment to examine the impact on application processing:

- **Conduct Benchmarking Exercises:** Aspect collected CPU and RAM utilization, and assessed available disk space. Aspect detected that disk space was not sufficient in either environment, and made SQL Server configuration adjustments to stop restricting the amount of RAM available to other applications, significantly improving performance.
- **Monitor Utilization:** Going forward, Aspect recommended setting up monitoring using **WatchDog EMS** database monitoring solution to collect utilization data, so that disk space growth, CPU and RAM utilization could be easily collected and used to predict and resolve any future issues before they arise.
- **Detect and Apply SQL Server Updates:** Aspect detected and applied the necessary patches to update the SQL database attached to the application SharePoint farm.

BENEFITS

Environment Stability Achieved at An Affordable Price

The company was able to successfully roll out the application free of painful performance problems, and running within a more efficient environment.

WORKFLOW EFFICIENCY ACHIEVED

Aspect was able to streamline workflow settings and options so that abnormal halts in workflow no longer occurred. Aspect reduced the complexity of the original design, for easier troubleshooting and reduced support needs going forward.

OPTIMIZED ENVIRONMENT

Aspect resolved disk space, CPU and RAM utilization issues, and successfully implemented a custom monitoring tool to monitor, predict and prevent future issues.

QUICK RESOLUTION

Most importantly, Aspect had the consultants with the correct expertise on hand to quickly deploy, assess, and resolve the client's application issues, allowing the client to successfully move forward with a successful rollout of the new application.