SoftSol's Data Cleansing Solution Prepares CalPERS for Enterprise Modernization

Engagement Highlights

- Cleansing project to prepare data for large-scale modernization

- 16-month project

- $16 million contract value

- 70-Person onsite SoftSol Team

- 430,000 Data Issues Resolved

- Extensive physical and logical security measures due highly sensitive customer data

- No cleansing correction errors reported for 8 months following the project's completion

Background

The **California Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS)** is the nation's largest public pension fund with assets totaling more than $225 billion. The System provides retirement and health benefits to approximately 1.5 million state and local public employees and their families.
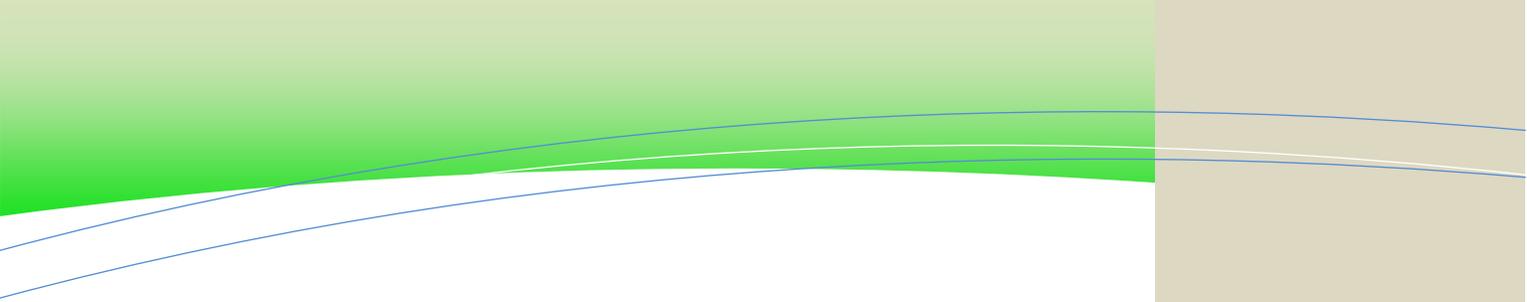
CalPERS Pension System Technology Infrastructure is a mixture of client server and mainframe technologies developed over several years in an attempt to upgrade and modernize the pension system. It had multiple applications performing diverse activities including the Corporate Database (CDB) – an entry point for all enrollment of State employees, retirees, health benefit recipients, and all contract employer data.

In 2004, CalPERS embarked on the Pension System Resumption Project (PSR) to design, develop, and convert the legacy systems of the original COMET/CDB project to an integrated, web-based, self-service Pension System to serve all CalPERS members. In preparation for the PSR project, CalPERS required an assessment of the quality of the data prior to conversion and migration of data to the new systems. SoftSol was chosen as a vendor for the completion of the data correction initiative.

Challenge

Due to the diverse nature of the technology structure (maintenance of both legacy and CDB architecture and systems) and the need for accuracy and continuity of interfaces, CalPERS maintained a complex back-bridge to move data between their CDB, contribution reporting, and benefit payments systems. The complexity of the refresh and synchronization of the data across the legacy applications had resulted in substantial redundancy and data conflict issues.

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SoftSol Solution

The CalPERS Data Quality and Integrity Unit (DCIU) forecasted the data preparation requirements after estimating and categorizing the data issues that were likely to impede the PSR Project data conversion requirements. SoftSol assisted CalPERS in addressing these data issues by a combination of manual and automated routines. After DCIU evaluated the complexity of the issues and established the correction metrics, SoftSol formulated a multi-phased approach to complete data preparation on time for the start of the PSR project. SoftSol's team of 70 Data Analysts, Technical experts, Quality Assurance Leads and Managers effectively synchronized member data across various pension and benefits systems. They extracted the data quality rules to be validated across the full dataset. SoftSol's data correction processes included data profiling, data rules extraction, setting up a data correction workflow process, data validation, data quality assurance and governance.

Results

With SoftSol's help, CalPERS was able to create a modernization-oriented data source system on time for its data migration efforts. SoftSol's experts increased the data quality while fully complying with the strict evaluation routines set by CalPERS. They completed the data correction of key data sets (categories) related to member data de-duplication, member service consolidation, removal of service overlaps, and retirement benefits validation. With the completion of data quality correction and assurance by SoftSol, the application data that were consolidated from various data system sources were ready for being migrated successfully to the new pension systems. This project ultimately enabled the progress towards the creation of a unified consolidated application for all Pension Systems needed by CalPERS and their business partners.

About SoftSol

SoftSol specializes in taking IT to the next level. We are the one-stop source for the tools, people, and processes that multiply the return on your IT investment.

Enterprise technology modernization is SoftSol's core specialty. This service combines automated tools and an innovative methodology to migrate legacy systems from outdated platforms to the latest technologies. In the process, vital business knowledge confined by the limitations of antiquated technology can be renewed for improved compatibility, functionality, and protection against accidental obsolescence.

Because SoftSol is also a premier custom software development shop, we leverage the latest technology innovations to enhance the versatility and efficiency of both individual applications and entire enterprise systems. Web-enablement, SOA, and cloud hosting are some of the ways SoftSol can assist IT organizations in achieving their unique business objectives.

Closely associated with this modernization focus is SoftSol's data service. Enterprise technology modernization initiatives often require data consolidation, cleansing, and migration. SoftSol assists in each of these strategies, laying the right foundation for effective data integration with new systems. The natural accompaniment to such data initiatives is a comprehensive business intelligence solution, providing the analytical and reporting tools to glean strategic insight from the full body of enterprise data.

Because SoftSol offers most of these solutions within a deliverables-based service model, efficient application testing is a constant internal emphasis. For this reason, SoftSol developed a proprietary test automation framework that dramatically improves the depth of coverage, efficiency of test script development, and the speed of executing regression test cycles (up to an 80% effort reduction over manual testing). SoftSol now provides this solution directly to clients as an end-to-end managed test automation service, enabling customers to apply the same rigorous quality standards to their own internal applications that SoftSol delivers for leading IT organizations in both industry and government.

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