NTT DATA

South Africa | Manufacturing

SkinChem gets ready to save time with 135 use cases for automated regression tests

Client profile

Founded in 2010, SkinChem was founded as an initiative of a successful South African cosmetics line that had struggled to source contract manufacturers which met their high standards. With competitive rates and an emphasis on quality and efficiency, SkinChem has grown to be a leading contract manufacturer, filler and packer of cosmetic products, servicing companies all over South Africa.

Why NTT DATA?

- One of the largest Microsoft Dynamics 365 Partner in South Africa
- Proven track record for Microsoft Dynamics 365 services and Executive Automats' advanced automated test solution features.

Skin Chem
MANUFACTURING LABORATORY

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We went into this knowing that NTT DATA is an established Microsoft partner and an expert in automation. In just eight weeks, their team worked with us to put together and refine automated tests. The test run demonstrated that the solution would provide faster Dynamics 365 updates and better quality control. Exactly what we wanted.

Lisa van der Merwe,
Operations & Planning Manager, SkinChem

Business need

- Support operations with an up-to-date ERP solution
- Spend less time on manual regression testing
- Updated test plan that matches actual business processes

Solution

- Proposed a pilot study for automated testing
- Conducted workshops to identify key test cases and performance metrics
- Designed and tested automation scripts based on test datasets
- Refined the solution through testing
- Negotiated Executive Automats license agreement
- Developed an automation and performance test strategy

Outcomes

- Free up employees to focus on manufacturing
- Improved software releases
- Reduced risk of critical errors in ERP solution

Business need

Test updated software without interrupting business as usual

The demand for top-quality local and export cosmetic products is on the increase. SkinChem has grown to be a leading contract manufacturer, filler and packer of cosmetic products, serving companies all over South Africa. From developing products in the laboratory to manufacturing cosmetics, they offer their customers premium service with high-quality products.

Microsoft Dynamics 365 is the enterprise resource planning (ERP) tool that keeps the business operating smoothly. To make sure data is secure and the ERP solution up to date, SkinChem must update the platform's software at least twice a year. After every upgrade, they run tests to verify that the upgrade has not affected how well their solution works.

This testing was outsourced, incurring additional costs, and with the available test cases often outdated the SkinChem team was not always sure if processes were tested accurately. The manufacturer wanted to take a more efficient approach to testing, have a fast turnaround time and reduce the risk of deploying faulty code into production.

Solution

Setting up repeatable, reusable automated testing

We worked closely with SkinChem to scope their environment, see what was needed and then propose a solution. We recommended using Executive Automats for Dynamics 365 to automate and speed up regression testing.

We started by setting up a pilot Executive Automats environment and hosting business-process workshops to review test cases and identify performance metrics.

Once we established which test cases were most important and had test datasets, we could design and test automation scripts – because our proposed solution also had to be tested to make sure it delivered the hoped-for improvements.

The tests results helped us refine the solution and develop an automation and performance test strategy that the manufacturer could use to prepare for wider adoption.

For the final sprint, we submitted the automated tests to SkinChem. We also negotiated a license agreement for Executive Automats.

Outcomes

Focus on business, not manual testing

The pilot project demonstrated that automated testing was an efficient way to test that every feature worked before deploying updated software.

SkinChem's employees will be able to focus on their core tasks, instead of spending time manually regression-testing updates before they're rolled out.

Run tests more accurately

Automated testing consistently identifies and addresses problems, leading to improved software releases.

Decrease business risk

By improving the accuracy and coverage of testing, each upgrade cycle carries less risk of introducing critical errors that can interrupt manufacturing.

Opportunity to expand use cases

Once established, the testing framework can be expanded to include more use cases.

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Our employees would groan every time it was time to update Microsoft Dynamics 365. Testing to see if software changes have impacted functionality took a long time. So these updates are absolutely worth it.

Lisa van der Merwe,
Operations & Planning Manager, SkinChem

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