

Opportunities & Challenges of QAD Application Consolidation



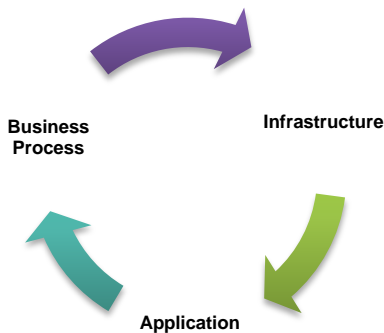
**THIRDWARE
SOLUTION INC.**

Does your IT environment consists of QAD with multiple versions?

Are you planning to execute QAD Application Consolidation in the near future?

Read on. This paper talks about the opportunities presented by QAD Application Consolidation and the challenges posed in executing the same.

One of the key influencers of annual operating cost is the operating environment of QAD. Application Environment and Infrastructure Environment are two of the key drivers to annual cost. More than being a cost element, overhauling these environments presents an opportunity to change the IT is being managed.



Forces of IT Process

In large environments, it is not rare to find multiple versions of QAD spread across the IT geography of the organization. QAD Application consolidation presents multiple challenges from disparate master data to rogue custom codes. These challenges, Viewed from another angle, affords opportunities for “housekeeping”. It is these opportunities which allow to derive maximum benefit from this exercise.

Opportunities or Challenges Application Consolidation

Master Data Management

In a distributed environment and with multiple versions implemented at different points of time, it is common to find disparate Master Data. With companies increasing using BI for consolidation, disparate Master Data is buried under custom interfaces. Cleaning Master Data to a common Master is both a challenge as well as an opportunity to drive strong reporting.

A key task that needs to be embarked on is of Data Cleanup and reconciliation of masters across multiple instances that are being consolidated. Some data transformation / cleansing will be required.

Custom Code Assurance

In a distributed and multi version environment, specific challenge will lie in managing custom codes. Unless, the organization has been following rigorous version control management. It is not difficult to find instances of custom codes with missing source codes, custom codes lying in multiple directories / prospath etc. Cleaning up of custom codes presents a opportunity to remove codes no longer required. This enables to reduce the complexity in the new environment.

However, challenges lie in mapping various custom codes by entity or location. Project team must ensure that codes are matched with the version of consolidated instance and customizations are executed only for the required entity. In some cases, the need for custom code might require to be questioned/ deterred as it might impact other entities also. Project team should also take into consideration enhancement of customized programs for multi-site / multi-entity model.



THIRDWARE SOLUTION INC.

Code Review

Custom Codes, written over a period of time, are most likely to carry rogue elements like hard coding (messages, labels, constants, storage paths etc), language specific labels (in case of multi-lingual environment) etc.

Along with these, Project Team must also review the database level triggers for smooth functioning in the consolidated environment.

Interfaces (with Legacy or Web Applications)

With relevant housekeeping, master data harmonization etc interfaces might require to be spruced up. More than that Project Team must ensure compatibility with new consolidated environment along with elements like latency, different locations, data centers, support times, multi time zone etc. Also some basic house keeping will need to be done on the scripts to take care of hard coding IP addresses and directory structures.

License Management

Consolidation facilitates Application license sharing between multiple sites / markets and leveraging inefficiencies of over/under utilization of access by specific groups / teams. This User Licenses consolidation could result in substantial cost savings. However, challenge would be to restrict respective sites once they exceed the threshold of licenses pertaining to the respective sites.

Enhancement of Business Process Mapping

Revisit the custom processes is a key opportunity. Harmonization of application environment provides an opportunity to harmonize business process as well. This allows to enhance the information visibility across different units and increase the velocity of transactions and information flow.

Common Pitfalls:

What are the typical pitfalls to avoid in a consolidation? True challenges in a consolidated environment is likely to come from other quarters. These are people related and requires to be handled with care. Management will require to be sensitive to the following.

Focused Change management effort

Like most IT Projects consolidation is first an exercise of change management that spans across both the IT organization and business user community. There are significant changes in the way things work from an IT Organization perspective they feel that they are losing control on the very tools that are required for them to deliver. Care must be taken to cross train the local resources and prepare them for their new roles of coordinators or business requirement representatives.

Re-train the IT and Business teams (New approach, system access etc)

The user and IT Community in the different locations will need to made stake holders in the consolidation project , constant communication should be maintained. Also they should be made aware initially of the pro's and cons of the consolidation. Required training must be provided.

Thirdware's Consolidation services

Thirdware, has helped many of its customers in this consolidation journey. Our experienced team has completed many varied and complex consolidations, where we worked with the customers to address their consolidation requirements. Our past experience allows us to be confident as well as qualified, to offer assistance as you embark on your consolidation journey.



Thirdware QAD practice Fast Facts

- » An experienced team of 200+ QAD Consultants
- » 250+ QAD engagements
- » 1000+ person years of QAD experience

Thirdware Solution Inc

Crystal Glen Centre,
39555, Orchard Hill Place – Suite 600,
Novi, MI, 48375

Toll Free: 888.278.TSPL
(888.278.8775)

info@tspl.com
www.tspl.com