Feel the Need for Speed

Upgrade to PeopleSoft Financial Management Release 8.9 with Trane Company

In this presentation, see how Trane has successfully upgraded PeopleSoft Financials from Release 8.0 to 8.9. Covered in the session will be not only our approach but tips we have learned from past experience in upgrade, things that worked and not worked for us. Tips to consider implementing before, during and after the upgrade to improve the process and go live conversion. The session will also show our approach to meeting Sarbanes and Oxley requirement used for this major upgrade.

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Room 111

Agenda

- **Overview of Trane Company**
  - **Two major business units with PeopleSoft Financial Enterprise Software installed**
    - **Trane Commercial Systems (TCS)**
    - **Trane Residential Systems   (RS)**
- **Upgrade Strategy**
  - **Approach**
  - **Customization approach to minimize impact on upgrade**
  - **Upgrade timeline**
- **Upgrade path**
  - **Team Structure and communications**
  - **Creating and working in the development and User Acceptance Instances**
  - **Stress Testing**
- **Go Live Process**
- **Post Upgrade Process**
- **Upgrade Benefits**
- **Sarbanes – Oxley Requirements**

- **Overview of Trane Company**

  Trane had two major sectors for the Commercial and Residential markets. Each sector has it own Data Center, Application support group and PeopleSoft Financial Enterprise installation.

  This presentation will focus on the Residential (RS) sector for Trane. Our environment supports 14 North America and two international locations. The technical team resides in a location plant location and all our functional Users are remote to the support site.

  Residential implemented General Ledger on release 5 upgraded to release 7 and then implemented Assets, Project, and Accounts Payables. The core modules were then upgraded to release 8 to add or reinstall the Accounts Receivable module before implementing that module. Upgrading to release 8.9 from release 8 is our third major upgrade.

Upgrade Strategy

- Our small team is experience in PeopleSoft Upgrades and the approach we take is to not be the first o upgrade as we try to wait for SP2 release as it usually is more stable. We do not want to be too far behind the general available release as the upgrade proves too difficult.

- Our approach is to handle as much of the upgrade as possible as we are the owners after implementation. What normally may be done in other installations by the DBA team, those upgrade tasks are completed by our team.

- From our early upgrade experience we developed a customization strategy that would meet our additional and/or unique requirements and to minimize the impact on future upgrades. This approach has been successful to keeping the compare process and re-implementing our customer code back into the new upgrade code line.

- Our timeline followed the suggested approach in PeopleSoft upgrade papers. For the first time we did not upgrade in place but were able to create a new test envoirment that became the production instance after conversion. This certainly is the approach to take as it provides an opportunity to confirm all supporting production (different versions in most cases) and allow stress testing in the future production platform. One complementation we had not expected was a request to delay our upgrade process and to extend it out so our outsourced provider would not be required to learn two new way of providing service for Trane. Our upgrade would have forced the provider to swap over to a new method right after their take over. This delay extended our process and caused additional project oppertunities to manage both on the technical and functional side.

Upgrade Path

- To maintain focus and meet Sarbanes and Oxley requirements we have very specific approvals, team assignments with roles and responsibilities and milestone meeting with signoffs as toll gates before moving forward. Weekly progress meeting with functional and technical teams who were responsible for the testing and sign off recommendations to Application owners were held to insure we kept on track.

- PeopleSoft upgrade communications suggest the idea of functional users work inside the Demo database to understand the new navigation and perform the first pass of fit-gap analysis. Our experience, it has been difficult to convince our functional users to do this and they wait until our development instance with familiar data is available. There would be an advantage to doing the initial work in Demo, but we allow the key functional users in our development instance while we perform the compare reports and our development activities. After our compare analysis we publish a list of functions that may be tested and the ones to not touch until we have implement our changed or performed more analysis on. Our goal is to implement all changes before we create the first instance of User Acceptance Testing DataBase. In this environment, our developers are locked out and functional testing proceeds from the unit testing, to integration testing.

- For the first time in our upgrade experience, Trane RS allotted time to perform a stress test. Since we had no experience in doing this task and our being assured the UNIX hardware was many times faster that what we were running today, we waited late in the project to consider or plan. Up to that point we had all indications the system was very powerful and would be more than adequate to handle our daily and month end load. Our first stress test was a real disaster as we brought the system down several times. This, as you can imagine caused a lot of stress and anxiety for all.   We did have the Oracle and UNIX technical teams monitoring the test and were able to quickly research the problem, make changes and do the second stress test. We were more successful but not were we had hoped to be but were able to demonstrate enough improvements to gain Application Owner sign-off to proceed with the upgrade.

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Go Live Process

- From our past experience there are some tasks that can be performed prior to the upgrade process and should be considered as it reduces the total end to end upgrade time. Partial tools only upgrade process may be run to extract the queries and trees and move to the database that will be used during the upgrade. Going forward, all production changes by the functional users would need to be made after the final move to production. Clear understanding and communications reduces the confusion in this area.

- By completing more than one test move to production, long running scripts may be analyzed so improvements can be made. Modifying scripts after the understanding what is to be accomplished can save many hours as some scripts have to be manually tuned.

- PeopleSoft provides a Change Assistant process that runs on the windows platform. Some scripts may be move to the backend HOST CPU to gain increased processor speed.

Post Upgrade Process

- Prior to upgrading, a methodology was developed to communicate issues to insure these were tracked, handled on a priority basis, and resolved quickly. Our first priority was to stabilize the production environment, insure the functionality was producing accounting sound results and functional tasks produce expected results.

- Majority of problems were security related as it didn't appear to us it copied over cleanly and since the test and production environment have to be keep in sync after the tools database is created (which is early in the process), some security setting were not missed. We had one issue that was self inflicted because we did not test our DRAFT discount process correctly and a payment predictor process that had to be re-tuned. Overall our upgrade was another very successful experience.

- After stabilization we proceeded to implement all PeopleSoft bundles to get up to date and solve several issues we were experiencing. This project served as another validation and fine tuning the functional test scripts as all modules and functions had to be retested and approved prior to moving to production.

Upgrade Benefits

Speed in daily and month-end processes
- Prior to the release we were constantly battling performance issues especially during month end.

- Two factors that have solved this issue after the upgrade up to this point in time. We were able to purchase a faster UNIX server with newer technology that we currently had. The UNIX box was not off the shelf new and the money we had budgeted actually allow us to purchase a faster computer.   The second component was the use of PeopleSoft parallel processing. Several of the critical daily and month-end process that are resource intensive are enabled to run in the parallel mode. This approach splits the work to be processed over several processors and competes in parallel.   Both these two events were significant in producing much faster duration times, very welcomed by all.

We delayed starting our upgrade until the latest tools version was out that had all the latest in Data Archiving features. One of the future projects we need to accomplish is to archive data off the production tables and we did not want to customize that process or be required to do another upgrade before business requirements called out a need.

Sarbanes – Oxley Requirements

- This was our first upgrade experience after SOX was in place in our environment. Our approach was to be pro active as we knew what basically was produced by PeopleSoft in the upgrade process and what SOX requirement (toll-gates) we required to be compliant.

- On the front end we developed a process to meet the SOX compliance requirements and reduce additional tasks for our development team. We presented the case that PeopleSoft has a very strict process on how the upgrade was to be performed with two large volumes of instructions and steps to be followed.   Our presentation detailed the specific toll gates we would step through, with each one having requirement, functional reviews with the owners and Application Owner approval before going to the next step.

- Using this approach and with the presentation we did receive signoff from our audit team and we did not have to add a lot of extra steps that would not have been done anyway to insure the functional results were obtained.

Summary

Upgrades are a part of the real world and if you use purchased software it is a part of the long term project plan to keep your software up-to-date.   Taking the common sense approach to upgrading, utilizing strengths you have, learning from prior experience, others who have completed upgrades certainly adds value to a successful Upgrade.