

# VocaLink Mitigates Risks Associated with Application Development

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## Case Study

## Client Info at a Glance

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**Company:** VocaLink

**Location:** Rickmansworth, UK



### FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Company Overview:** VocaLink is the power behind the UK's payment processing system. VocaLink operates behind the scenes, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year acting as the conduit between payee and payer, connecting hundreds of banks and over 100,000 corporate organizations throughout the world.

**Business Value of TeamQuest:** VocaLink's capacity planners effectively maximized the benefits of new hardware investments by identifying potentially adverse situations before they impacted users. TeamQuest software also helped the team accurately test new applications going into the new server environment.

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# Background

VocaLink's IP payment solution is the largest fully inter-operable Public Key Infrastructure community in the world, handling more than 77 million payments a day from more than 100,000 customers throughout the world. Each year, VocaLink processes more than 8 billion transactions and recently processed more than 80 million transactions in a single day. VocaLink also supports 100 million card accounts and over 60,000 ATMs.

VocaLink processes 15 percent of Europe's automated payments, enabling salaries and benefits to be paid into bank accounts, and enabling bills to be paid seamlessly and automatically. The company has a full range of Internet and value-added network access to its services and is the power behind the UK's payment processing system, touching the lives of millions of people every day.

***“A service disruption could potentially affect thousands of customers.”***

## The Challenges

In order to ensure the integrity of systems, capacity planning and performance analysts Peter O'Connor and Martin Faulkner required software to do the following:

- Monitor systems
- Burrow down to give detailed information during problem situations
- Increase oversight, accuracy and historical context for the test environments
- Provide the platform for the company's capacity planning efforts

With a two-person team, a lot of challenges faced O'Connor and Faulkner during the recent redevelopment of all the company's services for new technology. They focused on four goals. One of the

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top priorities was to identify which applications were using the most resources in order to begin a performance improvement program. A service disruption could potentially affect thousands of customers.

Other priorities included maximizing the benefits of new hardware investments, identifying potentially adverse situations before they impacted users, and accurately testing new applications going into the new server environment.

Their existing software vendor wasn't able to meet the specific needs of their environment.

"We process 90 percent of UK salaries, 70 percent of household bills and most state benefits," said O'Connor. "With the number of applications we have running at the same time, it's important that we're able to monitor our systems and identify applications using excess resources."

"Before using TeamQuest Performance Software, we were using a very disproportionate amount of CPU in our environment," said Faulkner. "Our awareness of the breakdown of the processing resources was low."

***"Before using TeamQuest Performance Software, we were using a very disproportionate amount of CPU in our environment."***

## The Solution

After a brief proof of concept confirmed that TeamQuest software was the best fit for VocaLink's IT infrastructure needs, O'Connor and Faulkner set their sights on the testing environment.

One of the big advantages they found was using the raw data from TeamQuest Model for capacity plans.

"The software is very intuitive," said O'Connor. "I was able to get the data in the format of my choice and make proactive decisions about our strategy."

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TeamQuest software helped immensely with load characteristics on their database server.

“One instance of our Oracle database had stopped and within a minute of it happening, our administrators were alerted — avoiding a potential catastrophe,” said Faulkner. “Because of the alert, we were able to resolve the problem quickly.”

## Benefits

Faulkner touts the intuitive nature of the software and customer service as primary advantages of TeamQuest Performance Software.

O’Connor noted that thorough performance testing and prediction were performed at each phase of the team’s five-year development project to determine if more workload could be added to the existing environment. “TeamQuest was instrumental in predicting performance, minimizing risk and optimizing the use of hardware resources during the project,” he says, “and continues to do so.”

“Our jobs would have been impossible without the software,” said Faulkner. “It gave us the added confidence to move forward with other projects.”

***“TeamQuest was instrumental in predicting performance, minimizing risk and optimizing the use of hardware resources during the project, and continues to do so.”***

## WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS

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