



Real testing and validating data
make the **Gulfmark Offshore**
HCM upgrade plain sailing

“Object Sync allows the business user to be self-sufficient”

GulfMark Offshore, Inc.

GulfMark owns, operates and manages a modern fleet of offshore support vessels that include: Platform Supply, Anchor Handling Towing Supply, Fast Supply/Crew boats and Specialty Vessels. Their primary business is marine transportation services in support of the upstream oil and gas industry.



Tackling an SAP HCM Upgrade

Recently GulfMark upgraded their largest region to their Global HCM framework. The project was very high impact and extremely complex, affecting Payroll and Crew scheduling and necessitating an entire payroll transformation. The challenge was how to engage a team that was risk averse and complete the project on time.

Other considerations included the impact of the project on the entire HCM business community. Change Control and an aggressive timeframe were handled with no failure on day-to-day business impact. After examining a number of options, GulfMark found the EPI USE Labs' solutions would provide the functionality and completeness they needed. For the copying of HCM data they used Object Sync™ for HR from the Data Sync Manager product suite, and for the parallel testing phase they used Variance Monitor™.

The main obstacle was the amount of time and planning it took to refresh non-production instances. Several weeks of planning and many days of execution were needed prior to the project to refresh the systems. ("It used to be a very tedious process" said Sandeep Pulavarty, the SAP Development Manager.)

All development scenarios were created manually, which naturally took many hours to complete for each scenario. This affected the ability to troubleshoot production problems.

Evaluate Retro Time

Because the payroll team wanted to do a retro time evaluation over a full year for all employees, Object Sync was ideal to select a year's worth of data and move all the employees from production to the QAS system. In QAS the team forced a time evaluation to retro for that year.

The next step was to run payroll and compare the results between the test system and production to find the inconsistencies. The GulfMark team was able to do all this on their own in a single day with Variance Monitor, saving weeks of manual processing and waiting for IT support.

"We now have much better data in our test environments. Object Sync allows the business user to be self-sufficient. They have the flexibility to select only the data they want to copy ... you don't have to move all employees, just the ones you want to. Data scrambling was essential due to the sensitive nature of HCM data. Because we had better test data in our development and test environments, we were able to perform thorough testing. This helped us reduce the number of transports needed."

Sandeep Pulavarty
SAP Development Manager

Validate Data

GulfMark also upgraded their largest region to the current SAP Global Framework. This project had a very high degree of sensitivity because it affected payroll, cost assignment and crew scheduling. Using Object Sync they quickly copied the complete employee data into two separate test environments. The upgrades were applied to one of the test environments and a payroll cycle was run. Then, with Variance Monitor, they were able to automate a full volume parallel test to quickly identify the differences. This entire process was driven by the HR business team without reliance on any other project teams, saving valuable time.

Choose the Right Software

In today's world of increased demand on systems and decreased availability of resources, companies are looking for ways to accelerate processes without impacting quality. Implementing or upgrading your SAP system is no exception, whether it's a technical or a functional upgrade. The use of software is crucial to the success of any upgrade project, as even technical upgrades involve ABAP changes, configuration changes and the usual mandatory testing.

Object Sync is the simplest, most effective way to copy data within a SAP ERP landscape. It enables all levels of SAP users to copy to any nonproduction system, on-demand, accurately and intelligently.

Variance Monitor is completely integrated with SAP and automatically compares application data between two SAP systems. Using a flexible threshold and comparison rule structure, it analyses each employee between your live Production system and the upgraded system and reports on all exceptions

EPI-USE Labs develop innovative software products aimed at bringing the very best out of SAP systems, and so improve the efficiency. Our solutions simplify and speed up data management, enabling those in leadership to make informed decisions based on the most up-to-date data available.

If you would like to find out what EPI-USE Labs can do for you, visit www.epiuselabs.com or contact sales@epiuselabs.com