

CAST Forum on Application Intelligence

Interview with Mr. Jon Barker, Lead Delivery Manager Application Management Systems Integration Atos Origin

CASE STUDY

Context

Mr. Barker, could you please tell us first a bit more about Atos Origin?

Atos Origin is an international information technology services company. Our organization is divided into several service lines addressing Consultancy, Systems Integration, Managed Operations and Business Process Outsource areas. The Systems Integration service line encompasses both Technology Solutions and Application Management. The company's annual revenues are more than? 5.5 billion and it employs over 47,000 people in 40 countries. The Application Management Business Unit consists of pproximately 6,800 people around the world, mainly for the Telecoms, Energy, Finance, Public Sector and manufacturing industries.

Could you describe your job at Atos Origin?

As the Application Management (AM) Tools Rollout Manager, my role is to facilitate the industrialization of our AM services through the effective use of technology. I am responsible for strategy, selection, evaluation and subsequent recommendation of a set of tools that support our end-to-end AM processes. This lead to a definitive tools policy with models to predict and measure Return on Investment (ROI) for each solution as well as an implementation roadmap and a strategy to make it part of our methodology in all our AM centers.

The Problem

Could you describe the current challenges that Atos Origin faces, as a Systems Integrator?

We are in the business of providing technology services to large corporations. When customers choose Atos Origin they expect us to add value by using our experience across both the breadth and depth of technologies. Our challenges therefore are aligned to those of our clients. We strive to exceed customer expectations by improving service and ROI for our clients. Managing risk for both our clients and our delivery is crucial to continuing business success.

Which needs in Application Management prompted your interest into Application Intelligence solutions?

We didn't purchase CAST because we had problems; rather the drive was to improve service by standardizing and industrializing our Application Development process. This whole approach needs to be underpinned by a proven ROI. The ROI model we developed for Application Intelligence

demonstrated efficiency gains that gave direct returns to the customer both in terms of quality and cost. The challenge for Atos Origin is to turn these customer benefits into improved customer satisfaction levels.

Another key benefit was knowledge acquisition. During service transitions Atos Origin must be able to rapidly acquire functional and technical knowledge about existing applications from the client in a minimal time frame. A common misconception is that knowledge transfer is achieved by documentation, but rarely is documentation detailed or accurate enough to effect knowledge acquisition. Often this knowledge is no longer held by anyone in the support team due to poor knowledge management or attrition.

The Solution

Why did you choose to evaluate CAST solutions in particular?

The applicability to a wide platform was a key requirement for choosing CAST. Other solutions often cover a single technology or language making it nearly impossible to get a complete picture of application architecture and the interaction of components across technology platforms. Initially, we chose to evaluate an application encompassing ASP & VB6, Java, C #, .NET with MS SQL Server, Sybase and Oracle databases.

The Results

How did you evaluate the CAST Application Intelligence Platform and what were the results? The evaluation was undertaken in 2003 using two different projects. The evaluation compared the same

analysis tasks done by two separate groups of people. On the one hand, experts in the application in question compared with people trained in the use of CAST with no previous experience of the application.

The results were impressive. We measured a 40% average effort savings for analysis tasks for the group using CAST as well as a 10% average savings for test planning because CAST enables accurate targeting of testing effort. This equates to an overall efficiency savings of between 10% and 17% on a standard AM project. We also measured a 33% gain in application knowledge transfer.

Following the successful evaluation we carried out a further live pilot at one of our Application Service Centers in Europe, which corroborated the evaluation metrics.

Which are the main areas of benefits of CAST?

In day-to-day use, the CAST Application Intelligence Platform supports our AM process in a number of ways:

- It helps us understand where the application complexity lies
- It helps us understand where component coupling and cross-platform dependencies are
- It provides a quick and standard entry point to do investigation without having to manually trawl through code

This translates into effective application governance allowing us to understand the complexity of an

application and what it will take to maintain and change it over time. The 'As-is' application architecture is always documented and accurate. Coding estimates and planning are based on consistent information thereby controlling risk while delivering better applications in a more timely and cost-effective manner. The earlier in the lifecycle we are able to use CAST, the greater the benefits that accrue.

How do your teams actually use the CAST platform?

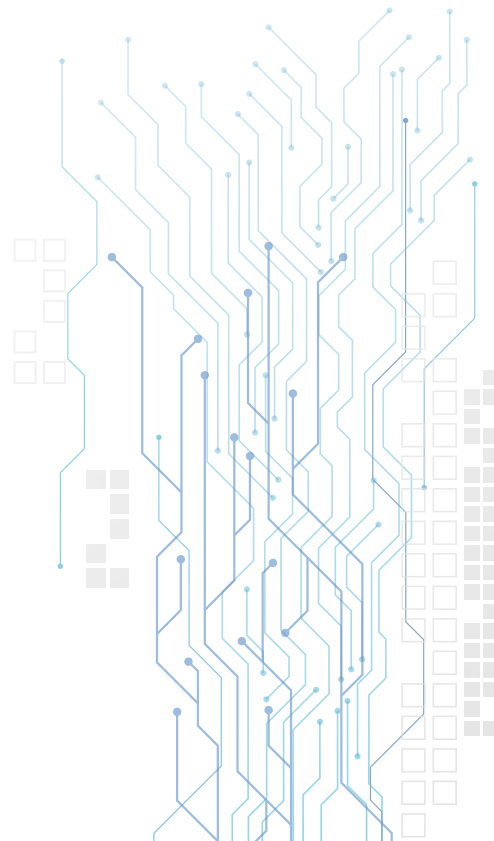
Prior to taking a new application into AM, my teams perform an application health check, using CAST. Any quality or over-complexity issues are highlighted and are targeted for remediation, either by the project or by an agreed service improvement plan. Thus, whether we are taking on application services from external or internal sources we have a standard process that assesses the quality of the application and of our own solution. When the service take-on is from external sources the application health check is used as an input for due diligence. On a day-today basis each change request is impact assessed using CAST. The CAST analysis documentation forms part of the analysis deliverable so the customer is aware of the technical implications of the change. The CAST analysis is used to estimate coding and testing effort thereby allowing each change to be planned. CAST has made it easier to share with customers the basis of our change estimates.

Conclusion

How does Atos Origin expect to use CAST solutions in the future?

CAST will be used to strengthen application governance of globally-sourced services, thus providing a common tool set in both front and back office functions. This will ensure that the application governance can still be managed by the front office function where the analysis process is undertaken.

In services where CAST has already been adopted, we plan to enlarge our use of CAST to include all impact assessments and estimates. We will continue to fine-tune this process and monitor trends with each new baseline. The CAST KPI metrics are likely to become standard metrics in our internal service reporting to enable cross-service comparison.





“ CAST has become a key element in our AM organization to improve application governance. Using CAST, we automatically get the bill of health of an application and therefore base our estimates on consistent information. This helps control risk while delivering better applications in a more timely and cost effective manner. ”

- Jon Barker, Lead Delivery Manager Application Management Systems Integration, Atos Origin

“ When CAST has been used during service take-on it has given us much greater confidence in the success of our knowledge transfer as well as increasing our effectiveness in those critical early days of taking on a new service. ”

About CAST

CAST is the software intelligence category leader. CAST technology can see inside custom applications with MRI-like precision, automatically generating intelligence about their inner workings - composition, architecture, transaction flows, cloud readiness, structural flaws, legal and security risks. It's becoming essential for faster modernization for cloud, raising the speed and efficiency of Software Engineering, better open source risk control, and accurate technical due diligence. CAST operates globally with offices in North America, Europe, India, China.

Visit castsoftware.com.