



TALENTSOFT

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Talentsoft lets developers take full ownership of services



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Julien Villemeur
CIO at Talentsoft

Talentsoft is a European leader in cloud-based talent management software. Its software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions are used by 1,800 companies and institutions in the public and private sector, and by government agencies to help their employees' career development. Over 9 million users, including employees, their managers, and talent professionals rely on Talentsoft services to maximise and grow their career potential.

Founded in the Paris suburbs in 2007, Talentsoft has become an increasingly international company, with offices in 22 countries across Asia, Africa, and the Americas, and running its applications in 130 countries and 27 languages. The company's ethos is to collaborate, move fast, fail, and learn. As Talentsoft strives to work more closely with its customers, it faces a critical challenge: how to ensure its cloud-based services are robust in their delivery but tailored to meet the specific needs of customers in different parts of the world—all while complying with local employment laws. And the company must do so while maintaining rapid growth; in terms of new customers and new infrastructure, the business grew 30% in 2017.

Developers take full ownership of services

"We're in a continuous state of integration and development," says Talentsoft CIO Julien Villemeur. "From a development point of view, we need to know the precise status of the build and testing phase, and that developers have the right resource available when they need it."

Talentsoft runs a hybrid cloud environment. It owns and manages its own data centres, and partners with Microsoft Azure to leverage the public cloud in order to scale capacity to keep up with user adoption. The company is currently opening a new data centre every three months, so it has adapted to treat Infrastructure as Code by fully automating the provisioning, configuration, and creation of nodes. The entire workflow is supervised and monitored through New Relic by Villemeur's team, and updates to applications are planned weekly. "We use New Relic to monitor and supervise our applications throughout this hybrid infrastructure," says Villemeur.

Talentsoft's engagement with New Relic goes back to 2015. According to Villemeur, "On the upstream side, we use New Relic synthetics and dashboards to make sure our developers have what they need. Downstream, we use application performance monitoring (APM) and infrastructure monitoring to ensure we have a detailed understanding of the root cause of any issue. New Relic is now pervasive in all our operations, not only monitoring application performance but gaining full visibility into how that application performance is impacting our customers."

What has made New Relic essential to Talentsoft is the ability to have a good understanding of the root cause of any performance issue. The company's developers are able to have a role in supervising and monitoring the overall performance of their services. With this visibility, they have the ownership to fix these issues directly and assume full responsibility for their services.

Building a DevOps mindset with the right tool

Villemeur's vision is to establish a true DevOps culture across the organization, and he accepts this is more about mindset than tools: "It's about the people, not the technology—but the technology is an enabler."

"Every team, whether in operations or development, has a TV screen showing a New Relic dashboard. The dashboards are easy to tailor to show metrics relevant to each team, but they're also great for showing common trends. It's the kind of thing that

makes it easier for developers and operations to work more closely together." For example, in Talentsoft's DevTools organization, which is in charge of its CI/CD workflow, the same performance dashboards and Infrastructure pages are displayed on TV screens throughout the workplace.

Ultimately, New Relic underpins Talentsoft's service delivery. As the business grows, the detail New Relic monitoring reveals enables Villemeur's team to quickly jump on any service delivery issues. "What I like about New Relic is the ability to use New Relic Query Language (NRQL) to create custom dashboards to understand how our customers are impacted by performance. I really like how easy it is to create these different charts and dashboards," he says. "Any Talentsoft employee can have access to this information if they need it. It's already shown great value and we're looking to add modules to understand how to implement custom attributes, to better understand the impact of performance on specific customers."

By providing a more complete picture of the company's data, New Relic helps Talentsoft make more informed decisions about how to grow effectively. When the company holds its regular capacity planning review, New Relic measurements are the basis for how many servers will be added, or if and where it will reduce infrastructure. "New Relic is the solution we lean on in a crisis," concludes Villemeur. "Our developers can drill down to get the kind of details they need to better inform the next round of improvements. Even our sales teams can see exactly what's going on with a customer."