SYSchange®

SYSchange® ROI at Rabobank

The Problem

"The high number of LPARs coupled with the constant changes being introduced to those systems, make the tasks of security and change control a daunting one at best. This is because traditional products do not offer an automated and transparent process for tracking changes that take place in every corner of our data center. Inherent to this challenge are the enormous resources that are ordinarily required to achieve such ends."

"At Rabobank, one of our imperatives was to acquire a solution offering a comprehensive set of change management technologies that would help us gain control of change and keep us at the helm."

The Solution – SYSchange for z/OS

Rabobank regularly benefits from the capabilities delivered by SYSchange to protect their own critical system libraries and monitor changes in those libraries; the ones that they decide as being critical.

> *"SYSchange has provided us the assurance that all system-wide activities are centrally monitored, backed up for recovery purposes, and quickly reported."*

SYSchange provides Rabobank with key information for their entire system:

> *"SYSchange provides us with key change information such as: who made the change, why the change was made, when the change was made, and what has changed ..."*

This, along with the ability to resort to an earlier member version on-line has been very important for Rabobank. In SYSPLEX environments they are also able to identify the LPAR on which the change has been introduced.

In addition to the real-time monitoring and control of changes, SYSchange also provides change information using alternative technologies. For example, if Rabobank wants to keep track of changes made to a certain software environment, they simply tokenize that environment. They have been able to tokenize several DASD volumes in minutes. Then, before a mass distribution they simply re-tokenize the same environment to identify and report changes to ensure there are no unexpected or unauthorized changes that will infect their target environments. More recent additions to SYSchange include the ability to identify and report changes in VSAM clusters, and an email alert that notifies of any changes to the libraries.

By defining libraries for SYSchange protection, Rabobank has automated the notification process. Each night a report is generated on each system, and sent out via SMTP to the appropriate persons. All reports are combined into one, sorted on system ID, dataset name, and date and time of change. This report is used by the change managers to see first-hand where changes have occurred.

> *"...we have automated the process of informing auditors and change managers of critical changes, on a nightly basis. ... This report is used by the change managers to see first-hand where changes have occurred."*

Additionally, tokenization provides Rabobank the benefit of readily identifying the changes in between major distributions. Another very beneficial aspect of this tokenization process is that before a major distribution, SYSchange identifies whether or not the changes that are about to be deployed to the target system, have already been introduced as a part of another distribution cycle; which is a very useful technique for helping them eliminate regression.

Rabobank

Rabobank Contact:

Henny J. Hesse
Senior Systems Programmer

Rabobank Group is a full-range financial services provider comprised of 183 independent local Dutch Rabobanks, a central organization (Rabobank Nederland), and a large number of specialized international offices.

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In the past, using their traditional full copy distribution techniques, changes made on a target system but not on the master system were later overlaid by the full distribution of the master system (a regression case). Investigation of such dangerous regression cases (if NOT discovered in-time), would be costly.

Rabobank uses the packaging features built into SYSchange for deploying their changes across all systems and activating them. They can perform these critical tasks with confidence because SYSchange provides another useful technology referred to as a "rollback" package (this is a feature that Rabobank had specifically requested.) This means that if they ever need to revert back to the state prior to a promotion, they can use the rollback function of SYSchange. The rollback function becomes even more critical if a PTF contains errors.

"...we now use the packaging features built into SYSchange for deploying our changes across all systems and activating them."

At Rabobank, another long-time concern was that the task of change creation versus change promotion was administered all by the same group. SYSchange provides Rabobank with the versatility of splitting the task of change creation versus change activation. This way the dangers of having the same technician(s) work on both the development system and production system is eliminated.

Dramatic Savings

Without SYSchange it took one person around 1–2 days (at least 12 man-hours) to complete the same tasks that now take minutes with full auditability, automation, and risk mitigation!
Rabobank provided the following cost justification for their Change Distribution task
(Note: This is for a single process they run within the bank and ONLY considers hard labor savings.)

Without SYSchange assuming one man-hour costs 50 Euros, the calculation works out to be:

12 (hours) x 50 (Euros) x 18 (LPARS) = 10,800 Euros.

With SYSchange assuming one man-hour costs 50 Euros, the runtime and the cost work out to be the following:
.05 (hours) x 50 (Euros) x 18 (LPARS) = 45 Euros

"This work must be performed each time before and after distribution. The distribution runs 6 times each year. So, if we only use SYSchange to control our mass distribution processes, the yearly cost would be:

Total cost without SYSchange:	**2 x 6 x 10,800**	**= 129,600 Euros**
Total cost with SYSchange:	**2 x 6 x 45**	**= 540 Euros**

Conclusion:

"It is clear that at Rabobank, SYSchange has redefined our change management methodologies. It has provided us many valuable solutions that save us time, help us eliminate disasters and build our overall confidence. With SYSchange we have also responded to audit requirements mandated by regulators."

"We have worked very closely with the development team at Pristine Software and have requested many enhancements that are important for our team. Their response has always been positive and we have usually received the requested enhancements within days or weeks. This is a unique experience for us. Usually, with our other vendors these requests take months or years to be realized."

GFS Software, Inc. is an authorized distributor of SYSchange.

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