

Order sentence testing easier, faster with JOE

Northern Arizona Healthcare cycles through pharmacy formulary and order set testing in matter of hours, rather than weeks

The labor-intensive, time-consuming testing of Millenium order sentences is fast-becoming a thing of the past. What formerly required teams of analysts registering patients and manually entering patient prescription orders is now done with custom automation scripts.

Northern Arizona Healthcare (NAH) knows the exercise well. NAH was up against a deadline to run a test of 7,000 pharmacy order sentences. Registering test patients and placing test orders would have required two full-time staff members over a three-week period. Clearly a big task, with significant cost and time implications.

Resources being scarce and with no time to waste, NAH enlisted the help of JOE – a combination of services designed by HPG Resources for testing large order sets.

JOE helps health systems test and validate pharmacy formularies and other repetitive order sets. With order sentences and combinations numbering into the thousands, this normally represents an enormous investment in manual testing time. JOE can reduce these hours without any additional burden to staff resources.



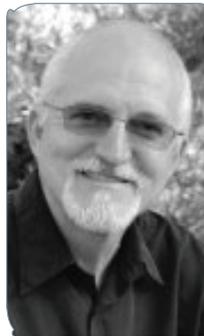
"We've brought efficiency and accuracy to these labor intensive tasks to make it a win-win situation, for our customers and our HPG consultants on site."

– Joe Vanderbeek, Senior Consultant, HPG Resources

The elephant in the room

JOE saves time, eases pressure on testing staff, and is much more accurate than manual clicks. The use of JOE at NAH illustrates the benefits.

Wayne Hatwich, the HPG senior consultant on the project, had the chance to suggest JOE during a weekly status meeting. The order sentence loading and testing phase at NAH was an open issue that needed a resolution, so Hatwich spoke up.



"The team went beyond our expectations in terms of volume of testing completed and the speed with which it was accomplished. Our organization breathed a big sigh of relief to have gotten this done on time."

– Don Sutton, Project Manager, Northern Arizona Healthcare

"We weren't exactly sure how to tackle the order sentence testing issue – the elephant in the room – and we had deadlines and project milestone targets that needed to be met," said Hatwich. "I said we could automate the order sentence testing. They loved the idea and we got it going quickly."

Joe Vanderbeek is the senior consultant at HPG that heads up the JOE team. With 10+ years of Millenium consulting experience, Vanderbeek knows the system inside and out. Using remote access, he can easily direct keystrokes and clicks, register test patients, enter pharmacy and lab

orders, and audit the whole process, automatically checking for errors at every step.

“We’re able to take a lot of boring and repetitive tasks, and make them less boring,” jokes Vanderbeek. “Seriously, we’ve brought efficiency and accuracy to these labor intensive tasks to make it a win-win situation, for our customers and our HPG consultants on site.”

“We have a methodology for scoping, designing and successfully implementing an order sentence project. And if there is a problem, it’s much easier to see errors with the help of our audit reports,” said Vanderbeek.

Vanderbeek and his team first assess the number of order sentences to be tested. They also examine database tables, looking for common build mistakes. These are noted, categorized and compiled in a report card. Issues are corrected and this clears the way for reliable audit trails, saving time and minimizing frustration later on.



“We weren’t exactly sure how to tackle the order sentence testing issue – the elephant in the room – and we had deadlines and project milestone targets that needed to be met. I said we could automate the order sentence testing. They loved the idea and we got it going quickly.”

– Wayne Hatwich, R.Ph., Senior Consultant, HPG Resources

For NAH, Vanderbeek and his team tested the order sentences in seven days and a spreadsheet was produced listing specific orders that created problems. The errors were documented as requested by NAH. They were grouped in a way that the expert PharmNet® resource would be able to quickly identify and resolve the issues, allowing the expert to maximize their time and experience.

When to Call JOE

1. When iterative, repetitive, monotonous order entry testing is needed.
2. When estimated manual testing time will take more than 100 hours.
3. When you want to improve efficiency, save time, and ensure accuracy.

A sigh of relief

NAH project manager Don Sutton is very positive about his experience with JOE. In reviewing the scope, cost and timeline, Sutton felt it was a job well done.

“The team went beyond our expectations in terms of volume of testing completed and the speed with which it was accomplished,” said Sutton. “Our organization breathed a big sigh of relief to have gotten this done on time.”

Previous automated testing projects he’d tried with WinRunner and other vendors were abandoned due to delays and lack of expertise, said Sutton. Some software tools were provided to them but there was no assistance available for using the software correctly and efficiently.

The process with HPG was easy and productive, said Sutton. Since JOE is a service, it’s a turnkey solution that gets done right. Sutton agreed the money was well spent on JOE and would recommend the service to others.