

## NELLER CUTS TESTING COSTS AND SAFEGUARDS APPLICATION RELIABILITY WITH THE ARCAD TEST AUTOMATION SOLUTIONS ■■■

Using ARCAD-Verifier to automate the testing of their **Preceda People software**, Neller has business confidence that enhancements made in new releases have not impacted core functionality - while saving time in repeat regression testing.



**Neller Pty Ltd**

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

*“ In a competitiveness context with business demands for rapid turnaround on new software releases, the new Eclipse-based version of ARCAD-Verifier helps us to perform the testing and validation of releases to ensure the system meet all the current functional requirements without compromising quality”.*

said Carmine Palmieri,  
Development Manager

Neller Pty is the leading Australian supplier of on-demand software systems – with offices in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. Neller Pty Ltd has been designing, developing and supporting human resources and payroll software solutions for organisations in Australia and New Zealand for over 33 years. Their principal solution, Preceda On Demand, is delivered through the on-demand platform, commonly referred to as Software as a Service (SaaS) - via the internet and is specifically designed for businesses in Australia and New Zealand utilising the latest technologies on the IBM i server.

At Neller, the “**Preceda People**” software consists of an integrated, end-to-end people management system that provides Human Resource Management, Payroll, Employee SelfService, Award Interpretation and Time and Attendance functionality from one central database, with a common browser user interface.

This Preceda People solution is designed with a back-end native portion on the IBM i, and also a Web front-end built primarily using LANSAs for the Web. *“As Preceda People has been developed over a 33 year period, using many technologies and techniques, core business processes have become challenging to change”* said Carmine Palmieri. In fact *“the Development and QA teams must be able to respond quickly and accurately to legislative and industrial changes, while continuously enhancing functionality without comprising on quality and existing functionality”* he adds.

Neller was very appreciative of the integrated approach found in the ARCAD solutions. The choice of the ARCAD automated testing tool was driven by the possibility of an incremental and open approach to full application lifecycle management and productivity gains with maximum automation.



### ■ A testing strategy to reach our goal with a maximum of automation

“ *highly easy-to-use product, with a rapid ramp-up to testing productivity and return on investment.*”

said Carmine Palmieri

Tools and objectives were fixed. The next step was to develop a methodology and structure that would achieve the testing goals. **“We had to define a strategy that would automate as much testing as possible”** says Carmine. The first step for successfully implementing ARCAD 8.8, the new **Eclipse-based version of ARCAD-Verifier**, was to create a project team, consisting of a project manager and dedicated resources, both a technical resource and a QA resource. Real teamwork was in place with the ARCAD support department to upgrade to the new Verifier version. ARCAD’s close vendor/customer relationship and cooperation with Neller certainly contributed to this rapid rollout and successful utilization on the new Preceda release. The project was on time and on budget, meeting the early September deadline.

So, as scheduled, Neller was ready to use ARCAD-Verifier to successfully validate the new release of their Preceda application – consisting of a full regression test against 3 major databases within their Payroll system. Verifier ran without incident from the start, to end of the Payroll execution – including the restore of their databases. Some unexpected differences were correctly identified by Verifier during this initial test run, and thanks to the tool, true regressions were easy to identify and pointed precisely to the area in the system to modify. Some valid differences (non-regressions) were also identified, and rapidly validated/excluded to serve as the new reference. A 2nd test run confirmed the

non-regression of their application.

### ■ Outcomes and Results with ARCAD-Verifier

The QA team at Neller has congratulated ARCAD on the simplicity of use, and the design of ARCAD-Verifier – “the product is easy to teach and understand, with rapid setup and scenario preparation time” they said.

**“Implementing and using the new ARCAD-Verifier version to regression test our new release of Preceda People has given the business confidence that enhancements made in the latest version of Preceda People have not impacted the current core functionality. This project has been very successful, as all the project objectives were met with great results”** adds Carmine Palmieri.

From the outset, Verifier has been designed around simplicity of use – it is suitable for use by end-users, with functional knowledge rather than internal technical knowledge of applications. No scripting is involved, as Verifier works on a simple principle of record and replay, using its underlying repository to make scenario maintenance easy and automate test campaigns based on application changes.

The major strength of ARCAD-Verifier is undoubtedly in the complete management of data within test scenarios. Verifier detects any data read and manipulated by your application as a given scenario runs, and stores this knowledge with the scenario itself, in order to rapidly restore the precise data context for a scenario prior to its replay. Then on a simple principle of comparison against a designated reference, Verifier will detect any differences (potential regressions) during the replay, in *Data files, Spool files, and the 5250 user interface.*

If the application **“under test”** has only a green-screen user interface, then scenarios can be recorded in 5250 via the built-in emulator in Verifier. However, if the application also has a Web-based front-end, it is often more convenient to record scenarios by interacting with

this Web-based user interface. Either way, all keystrokes are recorded, and users still benefit from the same powerful difference-detection in data files and spool files over on the IBM i.

### ■ An easy-to-use testing solution for more productivity and saving time.

The new Verifier version has been met with much acclaim at Neller, as a **“highly easy-to-use product, with a rapid ramp-up to testing productivity and return on investment”** says Carmine. Also the remote support and assistance received from the ARCAD technical support has been described as **“exceptional”**.

**“Implementing ARCAD-Verifier is a huge milestone for the development/QA teams at Neller. We now have an automated regression testing tool that can be used for future version of Preceda People, to make certain existing core functionality has not been compromised”** he adds. **“Minimal training was required for Neller resources to be able to build environments and create scenarios ourselves, as well as less processes were required to create scenarios”**. ■

#### UPCOMING PROJECTS

Automated testing with ARCAD-Verifier has now been included into the software development cycle for every version of “Preceda People” which is developed.

Integrated with the ARCAD-Open Repository and ARCAD-Observer retro-Documentation solutions already in use at Neller, ARCAD-Skipper is being considered for multi-platform Application Lifecycle Management.

**“One of the key reasons why we chose Arcad over the competition was because we felt that ARCAD as a company cared and truly wanted to see its customers succeed – This has proven to be correct.” - Neller Pty.**

