

Variance Monitor automates
University of Tennessee's
HCM testing process and
improves accuracy





THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

The University of Tennessee at a glance

- 14,000 monthly employees
- 9,000 bi-weekly employees
- Spread across 95 counties
- Statewide enrollment 49,000

The University of Tennessee (UT) is the state's oldest and largest public higher education institution, tracing its beginnings to the founding of Blount College in Knoxville in 1794, two years before Tennessee became a state. The UT System is comprised of campuses at Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Martin; the Health Science Center at Memphis; the Space Institute at Tullahoma, and the statewide Institute of Agriculture and Institute for Public Service.

The University of Tennessee has been using SAP® products since January 2002 and has approximately 14,000 active monthly employees and approximately 9,000 active bi-weekly employees. The Payroll department handles all employee paychecks and accounting and does an annual testing period to ensure accurate payroll checks.

The challenges

HR environments are constantly changing. These can be imposed by changes in internal policies (new benefits packages), government-driven regulatory changes (new tax laws), or software changes, such as SAP upgrades or support packs. These cause two major concerns:

1. **Is the change producing the correct result?**
2. **Who will it affect?**

However testing is a major drain on resources during a support or enhancement pack installation and, in the case of the University of Tennessee, BSI TaxFactory upgrades. The effort required for medium to large organizations to routinely execute testing processes is considerable and most don't have either the resources or time to adequately test Payroll and Posting to Accounting for the

whole population. As a result, selected scenarios are developed and only a sample of employees are tested, leading to missing information and inaccurate data. Unfortunately, errors still slip through because the impact of SAP enhancements and corrections may not be known.

Our testing process for Payroll and Posting to Accounting typically took two months using carefully selected scenarios and a sample of about 500 employees. This was not comprehensive and data accuracy was always in doubt.

The solution: Data Sync Manager™ and Variance Monitor™

What was needed was a solution to reduce the time and effort, with automation being the key driver. The University chose EPI-USE Labs' Data Sync Manager (DSM) and Variance Monitor to accomplish these goals.

Why Data Sync Manager?

Data Sync Manager copies selected data to non-production systems. It was selected for its high-speed capabilities and its convenience and security in the testing of support packs and updates. Up-to-date, valid, and accurate production data is easily transferred to a testing environment for testing while downtime is a thing of the past.

"That's the beauty of this product. Our testing process is easy to follow and now takes days instead of months."

Sam Musharbash. Senior Business Analyst, Payroll Support, University of Tennessee.

Why Variance Monitor?

Variance Monitor compares SAP HCM data according to tolerances you set. It can compare systems, clients and payroll periods, and even compare with data in a file.

Variance Monitor has two primary uses in an HR system: First, during configuration changes or SAP upgrades, it reduces the risks associated with allowing improper configuration into a production system. Second, when used daily for a pay period frequency, it compares existing pay with the last pay period and highlights any changes made to the system, such as new benefit plans, new union rules and any new wage type or configuration.

Variance Monitor is invaluable for reducing risks and costs involved with change, enabling administrators to ensure that the changes affect only the people and systems that should be affected.

Daily use of Variance Monitor

Whether payroll is run weekly, bi-weekly, semi-monthly or monthly, there is always a chance that data changes will impact one or more employees' pay. Most of the processes use subsets of employee data owing to the large amounts of data, which means there is the risk of missing the actual issue. Recouping pay is a time-consuming and labor-intensive process.

Variance Monitor reduces all these risks. It allows UT to review data for their entire employee population, check for both percentage and dollar value variances, and drill down to search for the reason for the variance. The University can now test the entire population in just 2 or 3 days.

The benefits of Variance Monitor

With Variance Monitor the University can:

- See fluctuations in detail or view a summary to resolve problems before they happen
- Create multiple rules to determine problems on a large scale
- Repeat comparisons easily from period to period
- Run in simulation mode to check configuration changes
- Catch issues for correction before they open payroll

The overall benefits to the University

The University of Tennessee's testing process is thirty times faster – what previously took two to three months, now takes two to three days. They are thrilled with the great time savings, as their resources are able to focus on other priorities. Most importantly, they can use DSM and Variance Monitor to check system changes proactively, and detect and fix payroll issues before they become a problem, so their payroll is now accurate.

“Data Sync Manager was the clear winner for us. The solution met the bulk of our requirements.”

Sam Musharbash, Senior Business Analyst, Payroll Support, University of Tennessee.

About EPI-USE Labs

Our passion at EPI-USE Labs is to innovate and deliver: our solutions and consultants will enhance any SAP landscape and project. To do this we employ highly skilled individuals whose technical knowhow and experience is capable of making our goal a reality. Over the last thirty years hundreds of companies across the globe have discovered the difference our solutions make to their day-to-day operations. Our solutions are primarily aimed at Client and Data Copying, Reporting, Variance Analysis, Time, Payroll and Tax.

To find out more about EPI-USE Labs' solutions and services, please visit www.epiuselabs.com or contact us at info@epiuselabs.com