

TENTIVE



Sligro Food Group

Advice document

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Version

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1 Introduction

Throughout the graduation internship, careful attention has been paid to understanding how the company operates. This document outlines potential areas for improvement based on the practical experience gained at Sligro. It provides advice on both functional and technical improvements. Functional advice primarily focuses on improving the way the company operates and carries out its tasks. On the other hand, technical advice revolves around specific technology-related aspects.

By providing insights into both functional and technical aspects, it is hoped that this document serves as support for potential improvements within Sligro.



2 Advice for improvements

2.1 Data Storage and Cleanup

The advice:

During discussions with the Product Owner (PO), it was revealed that no specific agreements have been made regarding the storage duration of financial data collected. However, it is essential to establish clear rules in accordance with the mandatory retention period of 7 to 10 years as prescribed by government regulations. Additionally, it is wise to consider data cleanup once the mandatory retention period has elapsed.

Benefits:

Implementing these rules helps prevent potential issues with the tax authorities. Failure to comply with the storage regulations can have serious consequences, as it involves a violation of the law.

Timeline:

Establishing a rule for the storage duration can be done relatively quickly, but the process of reviewing and cleaning up the data will take longer. It is necessary to determine which data exceeds the mandatory retention period and subsequently initiate the cleanup process. Given the large volume of financial data at Sligro, this is estimated to be a significant project that may span approximately three months.

Required Resources:

This initiative will require the involvement of employees from the IT and finance departments at Sligro. Additionally, the company's management will need to decide on the official retention period. No additional resources beyond the existing workforce are anticipated.

Advantages and Disadvantages:

The primary advantage of establishing clear agreements on data storage is to avoid any potential issues with the tax authorities. Moreover, regular data cleanup is always beneficial for maintaining a streamlined and organized system. There are no specific disadvantages associated with implementing these measures.

Conclusion:

By establishing clear rules for data storage duration and initiating a data cleanup process, Sligro can ensure compliance with legal requirements and minimize the risk of encountering problems with the tax authorities. Although this project may require a significant time investment and the collaboration of IT and finance personnel, the benefits of maintaining a clean and compliant data storage system far outweigh any potential drawbacks.



2.2 Testing Environment Synchronization

The advice:

At the beginning of the internship, it was identified that a system test could be valuable in uncovering underlying issues with the existing RPA technology. However, it was later discovered that Sligro's testing environment was not adequately configured for this purpose. As a result, the following recommendation has been formulated, focusing on synchronizing the test environment with the production environment. This is crucial for keeping test data up to date. Additionally, while there were some robots present in the test environment, the specific robot intended for the system test was missing. Consequently, testing is often conducted directly on the production environment, which goes against the intended structure of having separate test and production environments. Testing directly on the production environment can lead to significant problems with financial implications if errors or delays occur.

Benefits:

By establishing a clear structure and periodically synchronizing production data to the test environment, several advantages can be gained. Firstly, ensuring up-to-date test data enables employees to conduct thorough testing in the test environment before making any changes to the production environment. This helps identify and resolve potential issues, reducing the likelihood of errors and disruptions on the production side. Additionally, separating testing from the production environment minimizes financial risks associated with problems that may arise during testing.

Timeline:

The agreement to synchronize production data to the test environment can be established relatively quickly. With Sligro's migration to the cloud, this synchronization can often be done at the click of a button. However, it is essential to allocate sufficient time for testing on the synchronized test environment to verify the proper functioning of the system. This is estimated to require approximately one week of work.

Required Resources:

Implementing this recommendation will require the involvement of IT department employees at Sligro. The head of IT will determine the synchronization schedule. No additional resources beyond the existing IT workforce are anticipated.

Advantages and Disadvantages:

- Improved testing efficiency: Synchronizing the test environment with production allows employees to test on an up-to-date environment, enabling thorough testing before implementing changes in the production environment.
- Minimized financial risks: Separating testing from the production environment reduces the chances of errors or disruptions that could have costly financial consequences.

There are no specific disadvantages associated with this recommendation.



Conclusion:

By synchronizing the test environment with the production environment and following a clear structure, Sligro can ensure that test data remains up to date and that employees conduct testing in the appropriate environment. This will enhance testing efficiency, minimize financial risks, and enable the identification and resolution of potential issues before implementation. With the involvement of the IT department and a relatively short implementation timeline, this recommendation offers a practical solution to improve the testing process at Sligro.



2.3 Establishing Permissions for Document Control

The advice:

The dagaansluiting process can sometimes encounter issues when essential files are missing, leading to difficulties in generating the required report. The product owner (PO) has mentioned that there are rare instances where a user accidentally deletes a document on the AS400 system. To address this, the following recommendation has been developed: implementing permissions to control users' ability to manipulate specific folders or files.

Benefits:

By establishing permissions, several advantages can be achieved. Firstly, it prevents issues caused by missing documents, ensuring that all necessary files are available for the dagaansluiting process. Secondly, it enhances security by restricting unauthorized users from making changes to folders and files, reducing the risk of accidental or malicious alterations.

Timeline:

Implementing permissions can be accomplished within a week. While setting up permissions using a few commands is relatively quick, it is important to allocate time for identifying which users should have access and determining the appropriate permission levels. This process may involve configuring permissions on a per-user or per-user group basis.

Required Resources:

This recommendation will require the involvement of IT department employees at Sligro, particularly someone responsible for managing user rights on the AS400 system. No additional resources beyond the existing IT workforce are expected.

Advantages and Disadvantages:

- **Enhanced document control:** Setting permissions ensures that all required documents are available for the dagaansluiting process, reducing the chances of issues caused by missing files.
- **Improved security:** By restricting users' ability to make changes to folders and files, the organization can mitigate the risk of unauthorized alterations and maintain the integrity of the data.

There are no significant disadvantages associated with this recommendation.

Conclusion:

By implementing permissions to control user access and manipulation of folders and files on the AS400 system, Sligro can prevent issues caused by missing documents and enhance security. This recommendation provides a simple yet effective solution to mitigate risks and maintain the integrity of the dagaansluiting process. With the involvement of the IT department and an estimated timeline of one week, implementing permissions is a feasible and practical step for Sligro to improve document control and safeguard sensitive data.



2.4 Streamlining the "Dagaansluiting" Process

The advice:

The "dagaansluiting" process can experience disruptions when there are unprocessed financial mutations remaining after 8 AM, as highlighted in Figure 11 of the research document. This suboptimal situation arises because an automated process should ideally run smoothly without excessive manual intervention. When the process halts, the "dagaansluiting" needs to be manually restarted, involving additional time and communication between the IT and finance departments to resolve the financial mutations. It would be beneficial if the finance department could trigger the process themselves once the financial mutations have been resolved.

Benefits:

Implementing a more efficient "dagaansluiting" process brings several advantages. Firstly, it saves time by eliminating the need for manual restarts and communication between departments. The finance department can directly trigger the process, ensuring it begins promptly once the financial transactions are resolved. Secondly, reducing human intervention in the process enhances reliability and minimizes the risk of errors or delays caused by miscommunication or delays in restarting the process.

Timeline:

The timeline for implementation depends on whether Sligro decides to continue using the current technology or opt for the alternative C# application. In the former case, it can be realized within a relatively short period since it only requires granting access to the robots for the finance department. In the latter case, a decision needs to be made regarding how the finance department can trigger the process. This can be achieved through methods such as email triggers, but the simplest approach would be granting the finance department access to the server hosting the application to initiate the process independently.

Required Resources:

In the first case, the only resource required is time to determine which members of the finance department will receive access and to provide them with instructions on how to trigger the process. In the second case, developers at Sligro will need time to modify the application's functionalities, or alternatively, time will be needed to explain how the application can be triggered.

Advantages and Disadvantages:

- **Time-saving:** By allowing the finance department to trigger the "dagaansluiting" process, the manual restarts and communication delays are eliminated, resulting in time savings and improved operational efficiency.
- **Increased reliability:** Reducing the dependency on human intervention minimizes the risk of errors or delays caused by miscommunication or delays in restarting the process, enhancing the reliability of the "dagaansluiting" process.

Once again there are no specific disadvantages associated with this recommendation.



Conclusion:

By implementing measures to allow the finance department to trigger the "dagaansluiting" process, Sligro can streamline operations, save time, and enhance the reliability of the process. This recommendation ensures prompt execution of the process once financial transactions are resolved and minimizes manual interventions and communication delays. With the involvement of the finance department and an adaptable timeline depending on technology choices, this recommendation offers a practical solution to improve automation and efficiency in the "dagaansluiting" process at Sligro.