

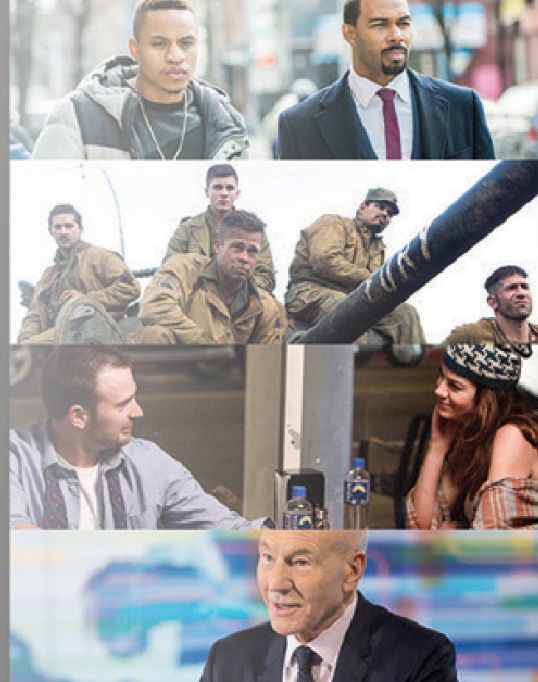
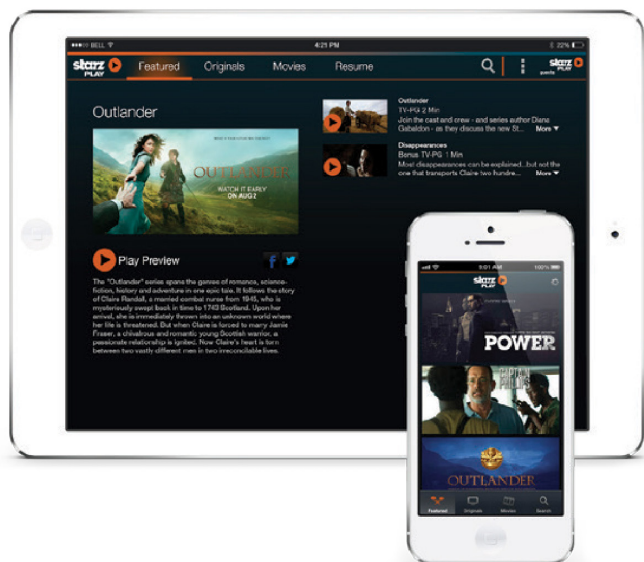


Starz Revs Up Testing Inside JIRA

CASE STUDY

Leading Media Group Achieves Test Management Efficiencies with Zephyr for JIRA

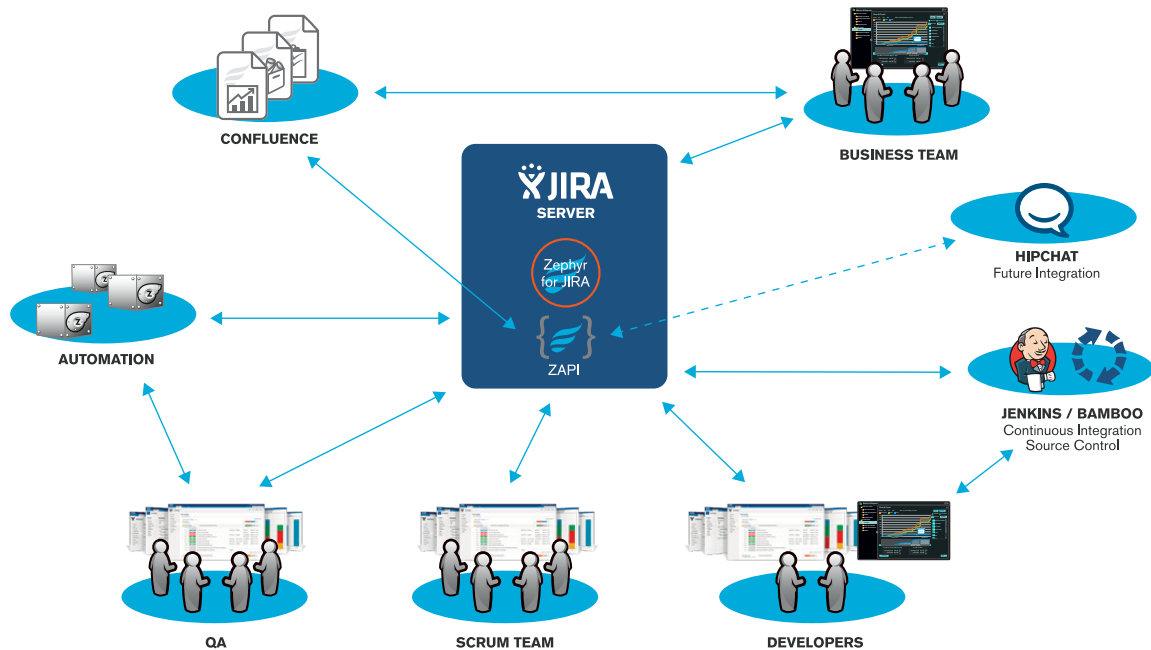
Most Americans are familiar with Starz, or at least with their flagship channels, STARZ®, ENCORE®, and MOVIEPLEX®. Starz is a leading integrated global media and entertainment company. As a leading provider of premium subscription video programming, the company's channels air more than 1,000 movies a month and are complimented by their On Demand and authenticated online offerings STARZ PLAY, ENCORE PLAY, and MOVIEPLEX PLAY.



After conducting a thorough evaluation of various test management solutions, Starz selected [Zephyr for JIRA](#) to redefine their testing process across its growing software project team. Today I had the pleasure of chatting with Starz's Manager of Software QA, Mike Waldron, about their testing and development processes. Below Mike shares how Zephyr for JIRA has helped his project team manage multiple projects in parallel, gain visibility into the status and quality of their projects, and deliver higher quality software for their customers.

Q: Before engaging with Zephyr, what were some of the specific challenges you faced?

Mike: Almost everyone was using something a little different. Spreadsheets were very common, Word documents were very common, and we did not have a formal tool that anyone was using. There are some projects that have no documentation. While Excel is a decent application for small teams, we found it impossible to link requirements to testcases and defects, reporting was extremely time consuming, and it was difficult to see where we were in the project life-cycle. Knowing that our groups would grow, we needed something better. What Zephyr was able to do for us was give us a one-stop shop to define our testcases and test cycles. One of the biggest benefits of Zephyr, in my opinion, was providing visibility and transparency of the QA process to the entire development organization.



Q: What specific benefits did you receive from using Zephyr for JIRA?

Mike: I consider Zephyr for JIRA to be the glue. It ties everything in JIRA together from a QA perspective, and it gave a lot of transparency and visibility to our development teams on what we were executing and what the status of that execution was. Our groups need to be able to move quickly. We need to be able to separate tests and prioritize them easily. Zephyr for JIRA allows us to do this. Also, we need to be able to get updates on the fly. The reporting was a big win for us, and it helps us give immediate answers to management. Zephyr empowered us to redefine our process and how we support the development life-cycle.

Q: How has Zephyr changed your testing process?

Mike: One of the things that I implemented pretty early on in the adoption of Zephyr was to redefine how our development teams detail all their tickets, especially user stories in JIRA. We'd schedule a planning session, giving QA the opportunity to ask questions. QA would go off, create our testcases, and then within a very short time circle back with development so that they would understand what QA was thinking and the approach QA would take to validate a specific release or feature set. This allows the Dev team to integrate these paths into their development efforts while they are writing the code, resulting in fewer defects. We really see this as a proactive approach to resolving defects within the process of reviewing our testcases with development ahead of time and really early on in the sprint.

Q: There are several test management solutions out there, why did you choose Zephyr for JIRA?

Mike: The main reasons for selecting Zephyr for JIRA was the JIRA integration, ease of use, ability to scale, and the status reports and quality metrics. After playing around with the tool and evaluating other options, this looked like the best product for our needs. I measure its effectiveness by how it helps us accomplish our goals. It reduced the time needed to create and execute testcases and gives us visibility and up to the moment reports.

Q: You touched on visibility, what exactly does Zephyr for JIRA allow you to see?

Mike: Percent complete metrics are a horrible way of communicating where we are in the test cycle with development. Zephyr for JIRA gives us way more insight on where we truly are within the test cycle. We started using different statuses within our testcases. Out of the box there was a 'work in progress', but we started modifying it to where we made a 'development in progress' status, as well as a 'test in progress status,' improving visibility dramatically. We can also see "This test has been started, but QA is waiting on X, Y, and Z," and X, Y, or Z could have been an additional feature set from development, or could have been some specific tasks that QA needed in order to even finish executing the test. We could see why a particular testcase was locked and the comments from a test execution which saves us a ton of time in reviewing results.