



Keeping one step ahead with Standards Release 7.2

Strate (Pty) Ltd recently completed their release 7.2 migration well ahead of the end of the migration window. We sat down with Cobus Coetzer, IT Messaging Team Lead, Strate (Pty) Ltd., to learn from their experience, and discuss their approach, any challenges they faced, how they overcame them and the benefits they are reaping from their early adoption.

Features and benefits

Additional robust security features

New tool to help verify CSP compliance

New tools to minimise the impact of migrating to a new system

Refreshed technical platform will provide environment stability for the years to come

Can you tell us about Strate (Pty) Ltd?

Strate (Pty) Ltd manages one of Africa's largest SWIFT infrastructures, allowing clients access to the SWIFT network through this infrastructure.

Can you share with us why it was important for you to be an early adopter of Release 7.2?

Given our decision to use our existing infrastructure for this migration, we also used the opportunity to refresh the operating system and MQSeries client to the latest releases. Although we installed Alliance Access, Alliance Gateway and Alliance WebPlatform from the prepared backup utility, we had

to plan the installation carefully to ensure minimal downtime, given that the upgrade - particularly for Alliance Access and Alliance WebPlatform - took between 5-6 hours. Therefore, timing should not be underestimated. We also took the opportunity to install all the latest mandatory patches and security updates for this release. Our strategy was to upgrade SWIFTNet Link and Alliance Gateway over one weekend and Alliance Access, Alliance WebPlatform and the Remote Adapter the following weekend. This provided us the opportunity to test backwards compatibility and ensure stability.



“We are satisfied with the quality of the software and the level of detail contained in the documentation.”

Cobus Coetzer

IT Messaging Team Lead,
Strate (Pty) Ltd

What challenges did you experience?

One of the challenges we faced was with the message and event archive size before starting the backup file utility. We had to ensure that the backup file size was manageable to reduce installation time and effort. The Archive Conversion Tool was utilised to convert the messages and events to the latest format on our backup infrastructure to not affect live operations.

We would encourage other customers to complete their migration as soon as possible to comply with security best practices. There is even a new tool to verify your compliance best practice. Oracle is now shipped as a full package as well.

In your experience what are the top 3 benefits of release 7.2 from a technical perspective?

The benefits we expect to experience from a technical perspective are multifaceted. However, the major one included the compliance to a SWIFT-certified interface and the automatic enforcement of TLS 1.2 replacing SSL, thus benefitting from data flow security. Once the messages and events from the previous format were converted, the size of the new converted backups were also significantly reduced.

What are the top 3 benefits of release 7.2 from a business perspective?

We will benefit from the adherence to the enforced stronger password policy, 4-eye checks and usage of Local Authentication required on all message partners.

In general, we are satisfied with the quality of the software and the level of detail contained in the documentation. In particular, we used the migration guide as a fall back to double check our installation progress and protocol quite intensively.

Do you feel that release 7.2 is ready for global adoption?

Yes, but care should be taken if you are using third party Alliance Developer Toolkit software to ensure they are ready and compatible with the new release.

SWIFT is a member-owned cooperative, providing secure financial messaging services to more than 11,000 organisations, across the financial ecosystem, in almost every country in the world. For nearly five decades we have delivered certainty, continuity and excellence by constantly evolving in an everchanging landscape. In today's fast moving, increasingly connected and challenging world, this approach has never been more relevant.

www.swift.com