Ancestry Cuts Downtime by 50% using Harness Governance and Pipeline Management

“We were acting like we had an advanced CI/CD culture with the capability to deploy multiple times a day. The truth is we didn’t have the infrastructure to support that for all our teams.”

Russ Barnett | Chief Architect

Software Delivery Challenges

- Each Ancestry application team used a custom Jenkins pipeline to deploy software. Individual teams were able to deploy multiple times a day and felt like their pipelines worked. But there was a wide disparity between teams. Some teams implemented best practices and other teams struggled to deploy.
- Due to the variety of custom deployment solutions, not all teams used canary deployments or used them consistently. Lack of canary verification resulted in many production issues that led to service outages.
- Ancestry attempted to onboard all application teams onto a centralized testing coverage tool for a year and a half. They reached a 20% adoption rate.
- The implementation of a canary deployment for two systems took a developer roughly 2 weeks. Ancestry has 10 systems per team across 70 teams. That equates to roughly 13 years of developer effort to implement canary deployments.

Harness Continuous Delivery Benefits

- Ancestry onboarded 350 out of 700 systems to Harness this past year. That puts Ancestry on track to have standardized canary deployments within 2 years. The time it would’ve taken to add those additional gates to Jenkins would have been approximately six times higher.
- Ancestry’s test coverage tool was added as a pipeline gate. This increased adoption by 77%.
- Harness Continuous Verification catches the majority of deployment issues before code reaches production. This has drastically reduced Ancestry’s outage time and helped maintain its brand reputation.

Business Impact & ROI

- 85% reduction in implementation time of standar Continuous Delivery pipelines, with full adoption projected to take 2 years.
- 50% reduction in production outages due to code deployments. The remaining outages come from infrastructure issues, not deployment issues.
- 3x increase in deployment velocity for teams using Harness.
- 77% higher adoption rates of internal testing tools.