Macro Scheduler User Podcast Interview: Mitchell Vincent, K Software

Interview by Tracy Fitzpatrick

FITZPATRICK: Hi. It's Tracy Fitzpatrick here, and I'm interviewing Macro Scheduler users about their experience with the software.   With me now is Mitchell Vincent from K Software. Hi Mitchell, Thank you for joining me.

VINCENT: Hello, Tracy; pleasure to be here.

FITZPATRICK: Great. Mitchell, can you tell our listeners a little bit about your business?

VINCENT: Sure. My business, K Software, develops small business software: accounting and invoicing packages.

FITZPATRICK: Ok, excellent. And I know you've been using the Macro Scheduler for a while now, right?

VINCENT: I have, yes.

FITZPATRICK: Ok, and can you tell me a little bit about the ways that you use it? I know that you use it for three fairly specific things that we talked about before and I think those are worth sharing with our listeners, so maybe you could share those with us.

VINCENT: Sure, absolutely. The first and probably most important for us, thing that we do with Macro Scheduler, is test our software. A lot of our software is data entry software, so it's very important, obviously, that it all works properly. And what we do is basically we either create or buy sets of data, test data, and generally in an Excel spreadsheet format. But we've done it from other databases and lots of things. And we write Macro Scheduler scripts to simulate users inputting that data into our software. It tests a few different things. Mainly keystrokes, tab orders - so that it's all logical. You know, field one comes right before field two, etc.; that the data does get saved. And we also use it for load testing. We will load up a very large list of customers, for instance, and have the software run for days on end, just entering those customers one after another and trapping errors that come up. So it's a very valuable testing tool for us.

FITZPATRICK: Yeah, I can see how that, you know, really streamlines the testing process for you, and the obvious - finding errors yourself, rather than your customers finding out the hard way - especially with invoicing, you know, software.

VINCENT: It is very important that one plus one equals two. And everybody can get their information and they're absolutely certain it's right.

FITZPATRICK: Now let me ask you – what would happen if you weren't using the Macro Scheduler? How would you go about your testing efforts, then?

VINCENT: Well, to be honest, we simply wouldn't be able to do what we do with Macro Scheduler. It's just not physically possible to simulate entering 100,000 customers. A person can't type that fast, and certainly can't stay up for four days straight doing so. Yeah…if we weren't using Macro Scheduler, we would not be able to do the level of testing we do.

FITZPATRICK: Wow, ok. That's definitely a positive story. What are the other uses that you have for it right now?

VINCENT: Well, another thing that I do with Macro Scheduler here is sort of for my own sanity. We have a lot of websites and order-entry systems and things we constantly have to log in and out of. And I've written a lot of scripts for our office computers here to allow people to quickly get into the order entry system if a customer calls and has a question. We need to look up their order quickly. So basic website scripting: go to a webpage, log in, and sometimes they are multi-step processes like with banks or whatnot. We automate all of that.

FITZPATRICK: Ok, so that really cuts down on, you know, the time spent doing your everyday tasks, right?

VINCENT: Absolutely! It saves – I couldn't tell you how much time, but a lot.

FITZPATRICK: Ok, and I know that you also have another use that we've talked about before, that you actually helped some other company with. Isn't that right?

VINCENT: We do, yes. We develop some custom software here and a lot of times there's a database conversion or data conversion to be done. And it just can't be done any other way except to have a human enter the data from one

system into another. With Macro Scheduler we actually automate that because it can do just about anything a person can do. We write scripts to do that conversion for them. It takes the human element out of it so everything is fast and accurate and can happen quickly. So, yeah, that is probably the second largest thing we do with Macro Scheduler, is importing data for other companies.   It's a very useful tool for us, definitely.

FITZPATRICK: And I think you said the same thing in this situation, as with your own software testing, that it just wouldn't be done to the level that you need it to be done?

VINCENT: Absolutely, absolutely. I mean no user can be as accurate as a script. We've already gone over that. They simply can't do it as fast or as perfect as a piece of software can. And sometimes when you're talking about very large sets of data, it wouldn't be feasible to hire enough people to type in all of the information. So, I don't know what some of these companies would have done if we didn't have a tool like Macro Scheduler where we could get that stuff done in an automated fashion.   I guess it just wouldn't get done!

FITZPATRICK: Well, that's all very interesting, and I think our users will agree that this saves so much time, and it does things that just can't normally be done with humans.

VINCENT: It really streamlines office processes, data migration, and software testing. If the software developers haven't started using Macro Scheduler… once you start, you won't put it down.

FITZPATRICK: I like it! It's a good tag-line.

VINCENT: There you go.

FITZPATRICK: Well, Mitchell, thank you very much for your time.

VINCENT: No problem at all.

FITZPATRICK: Now for our audience, if you found this Macro Scheduler story useful, you may like to listen to our other user story podcasts by visiting our website at www.MJTnet.com or if you have a story of your own to share, we'd love to hear from you. Send us an email to sharemystory@mjtnet.com .