RS Software

Sandbox Strategy Meets Need for Speed

Direct Banking, Payment Services Company Wants Faster Time to Market

The growing use of digital devices by consumers is driving digital transformation across all the organizations that provide financial services. As a direct banking and payment services company, which issues card and operates payment networks, this organization wanted to improve its time to market by creating a scalable test environment that allowed them to jumpstart adoption. Achieving this goal would improve the company's time to market for the new functionality their customers demanded and keep the organization competitive in an increasingly complex payments landscape.

Focus on Other Challenges Leaves Need for Speed Unmet

With a number of legacy systems in place, the adoption of an API management platform in the early stages and an enterprise service bus evaluation in progress, the organization was functioning in a dynamic environment. While all these items were vital to the company's goal of keeping ahead of the digital transformation taking place in the market, the organization did not have the bandwidth necessary to focus on setting up a sandbox or scalable test environment that would allow them to deliver new functionality faster. The company needed a partner with knowledge of API management and experience in establishing scalable testing environments that evolve over time.
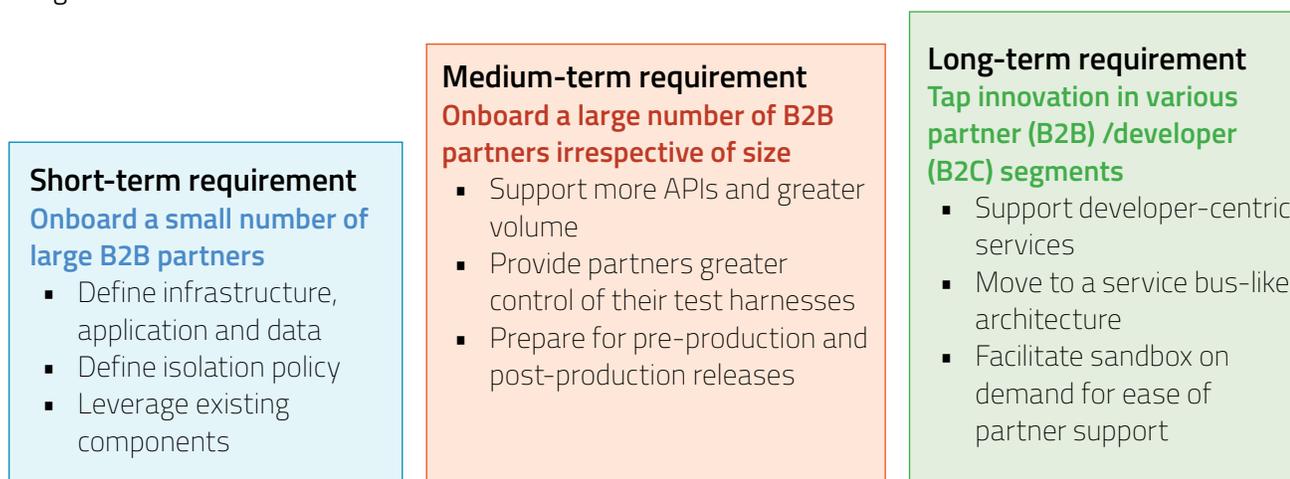
How to Build a Sandbox

The client was already using its open API strategy to create a limited number of offerings for clients and eventually hoped expand its reach. To support this goal, the sandbox environment for the company would need to:

- Deliver seamless self-certification to partners that supported frictionless adoption

- Provide an integrated platform for development test phases

- Deliver high-quality, sustainable user experience

- Support virtualized demo versions to promote interest and solicit feedback

The options for implementing a sandbox are numerous including utilization of everything from a completely Isolated sandbox to the Production as a Sandbox (PaaS) model. RS Software considered the requirements for the sandbox in the client's case and the best practices for scalable test environments in the industry, ultimately recommending a hybrid sandbox approach.

An actionable strategy was laid out for short, medium and long range goals of the company with action plans for the key components of the sandbox. These phases are described in more detail in the diagram below.

Short-term requirement
Onboard a small number of large B2B partners
- Define infrastructure, application and data
- Define isolation policy
- Leverage existing components

Medium-term requirement
Onboard a large number of B2B partners irrespective of size
- Support more APIs and greater volume
- Provide partners greater control of their test harnesses
- Prepare for pre-production and post-production releases

Long-term requirement
Tap innovation in various partner (B2B) /developer (B2C) segments
- Support developer-centric services
- Move to a service bus-like architecture
- Facilitate sandbox on demand for ease of partner support

Framework Provides Foundation for Needs Today and Tomorrow

RS Sandbox Strategy Framework was created to help organizations implement an approach to providing a scalable testing environment supporting their API management platform that best fits their needs today and strategy for the future. Our consultants leveraged the framework to map the client's business drivers against the industry best practices and recommended an approach to meet those needs. As was the case with this client, the recommendation is implemented in a phased approach that supports requirements across several stages of the client's expansion of its API strategy.