



CASE STUDY | SUTTER HEALTH

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Reducing the time and effort spent on release management is a challenge for many Salesforce-powered businesses. California-based Sutter Health wanted to move away from Change Sets and turned to Gearset, with impressive results.



“Being able to quantify the time saving - what used to take 8 hours, now takes less than an hour with Gearset - that’s huge, and it really speaks for itself.”

NADIA MAYARD

Program Manager, Sutter Health

Summary: simplifying deployments with Gearset

Sutter Health, a not-for-profit healthcare provider in Northern California, were looking for an alternative deployment solution to Change Sets. They wanted to reduce the time their Salesforce teams spent manually running releases and metadata migrations, and improve their change reporting. By using Gearset, they reduced deployment time from days to hours, cut out error-prone manual steps, and freed up valuable time to continue supporting their 50,000 strong user base.

The background

Sutter Health is a not-for-profit health system in Northern California, headquartered in Sacramento. Its care network comprises over 50,000 doctors, staff and volunteers across more than 100 towns and cities across the state. They specialize in personalized, high-value healthcare with a focus on the community and quality of care.

Sutter Health are heavy Salesforce users, having adopted the platform in 2013, and have two production instances - one used for Sales and Service Cloud, and another with NGO Connect installed to manage their philanthropic activities.

These orgs serve three large business lines and two communities, and contain a significant amount of customization, including custom Apex code and Visual Force pages. A team of 5 admins and 15 developers support 1500 active users, and 50,000 Employees and Providers through their self-service portals.

The problem

Sutter Health were facing challenges deploying changes between their development, test, staging, and production organizations using Change Sets. Deployments required lengthy manual steps, keeping track of changes was difficult, and with limited release windows, their team was at full capacity.

As a healthcare provider with a focus on customer success, Sutter Health have strict deployment processes to minimize any service disruption. Releases are limited to tight deployment windows during scheduled downtime. This time limitation meant planning and preparation was key, as Nadia Mayard, Salesforce program manager at Sutter Health, explained.

“We were exclusively using Change Sets and manual configuration for deployments. It’s been a challenge, because we’re balancing the challenges of running a high reliability organization and stringent change management processes. We only make high impact/high risk changes between midnight and 4am. We really have to have our ducks in a row but there’s the additional pressure to complete the complex moves in a tight time window.”

Even with all this preparation, once the Change Set was deployed the team had to manually migrate profiles and custom settings. This was a time-consuming process.

“If anything goes wrong, or if there are an excessive amount of changes that need to be done manually, things can get problematic. Custom settings or profiles could easily take a whole deployment window to manually deploy.”

Within the release team, capacity was limited and tracking changes in orgs was difficult, diverting resources away from valuable development and support. This meant drift in their organizations could go undetected, causing issues further down the line.

Looking for a better way

As a result, Sutter Health were looking for ways to streamline their release management. When their Salesforce implementation partner recommended Gearset, they investigated further and were immediately impressed.

“The UI is slick. It’s clean, simple, really easy to connect to your orgs. It’s very clear what you’re trying to do, and the UI makes it easy. You don’t have to hunt and peck for things. I’ve been developer, I’ve been admin, I’ve been project manager – everything really. It’s really nice to be able to find a tool that works really well across all the roles.”

Cutting deployment time with Gearset

Gearset is simplifying releases at Sutter Health by enabling rapid comparisons and deployments in one simple workflow, without complex manual steps. This is freeing up the team to focus on delivering a high quality experience to their customers.

*“We’ve had great success using Gearset to move changes from one environment to another. The biggest win is that we no longer have to rely on restrictive Change Sets, which only bring some things over and leave us to handle pesky things like profile changes, picklist value changes, and custom settings manually. Gearset’s ability to deploy all the custom objects that we want is amazing. Not having to do those manual steps during a deployment - **the time saving with Gearset was extraordinary.**”*

Through its change monitoring service and rapid comparisons, Gearset is also allowing Sutter Health to easily track their organizations.

"We're humans, sometimes we forget things. It's really helpful to have that periodic org assessment done - how far off base are we, or how much has an org changed over time."

As a result, Gearset is delivering significant value to Sutter Health and taking some of the pressure off their tight release schedule.

"To give you an idea, we had allotted two days to moving to production during our last deployment, and, with Gearset, completed all the activities in 4 hours. That's a HUGE win! I strongly suspect we'll have Gearset in our toolbox for a long time."

Recommending Gearset to other Salesforce-powered businesses

Would Sutter Health recommend Gearset to other companies seeking to improve their release management?

*"Unequivocally. Absolutely, no doubt. We aren't a special use case - we have time constraints and resource constraints like any other business. Being able to quantify the time saving - what used to take 8 hours, now takes less than an hour with Gearset - that's huge, and it really speaks for itself. The customer service has been fantastic. **The overall experience has been resoundingly positive. We have nothing but good things to say.**"*

Find out how your business could save time and money by switching to Gearset. Visit www.gearset.com for more information and to start your free 30-day trial, or email team@gearset.com to arrange a demo.