ServerLogic
Customer Case Study

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ServerLogic Delivers Complex Reporting Solution Using Visual Studio Platform

Overview

Country or region: United States
Industry: State government
Partner: ServerLogic Corporation

Business Situation

Client was under severe deadline constraints to deliver complex health and environmental web-based reporting system. Project was undertaken using the Java platform, but was behind schedule.

Solution

Client engaged ServerLogic to help them meet their deadline. ServerLogic recommended that by using Microsoft Visual Studio Team System and taking advantage of features like master pages, code-behind and other features of the .NET class libraries, the project could be delivered under budget and on time.

Benefits

- Higher quality
- Increased productivity
- Lower cost
- Enhanced application life-cycle management
- Better customer service

Microsoft® Visual Studio 2008

"By using Microsoft's Visual Studio, our development team was able to deliver a robust and maintainable reporting system in record time and for less money."
Andrew King, Systems Architect, ServerLogic Corp.

In the fall of 2008, a large government service agency was tasked to provide environmental and health-related data to the general public. Their IT group first attempted to build the system on a Java platform. However, early in the development cycle, it became clear that they would not meet their project deadlines using these tools. The agency then turned to ServerLogic, a Pacific Northwest-based IT consultancy and Microsoft Certified Gold Partner that specializes in Business Intelligence and custom .NET application development. Using Microsoft Visual Studio Team System 2008, ServerLogic designed and developed a flexible and robust web-based reporting application that ensured they could meet deadlines while providing the functionality and ease-of-use required by the general public. In addition to meeting their deadline, the resulting application's modular design and integrated management tools will make the application much easier to maintain and enhance in the future. As a result, the agency's IT group has switched their development platform of choice to Microsoft's Visual Studio. They are now in a position where they can begin to realize the benefits of quick prototyping, leveraging the class libraries, and benefiting from a growing pool of .NET trained software developers surrounding this powerful tool.

Summary

Solution

Because of the power and flexibility of Visual Studio Team System, the first functional prototype of the application was released within 8 days of starting the project. The result of this effort was an XML driven, .NET-based Dynamic Query Engine. This query engine was capable of connecting to many types of database platforms (including DB2) and provided both aggregate and detailed information to end users. This information could be output in a tabular or graphical report format.

Dynamic Query Engine is a set of XML configuration files. Each XML configuration file represents the information needed to map data in a database to a set of custom reporting objects.

- **User Input Interface** – the interface that is presented to users is different for each type of data being presented. To achieve this level of customizability, a .NET User Control was created to provide a dynamic set of inputs.

- **Output Interfaces** – The data being processed can be output into table, printer or chart format. Depending on the output selected, a different set of .NET User Controls are used.

- **Calculation Logic** – A set of classes was created to process data pulled from a database and perform various types of calculations.

- **Suppression Logic** – Some information is very sensitive. Based on data-specific rules, certain sensitive information can be suppressed.

- **Mapping Logic** – These classes represent the logic needed to map XML files stored on disc to specific database tables and user interface components. This mapping logic represents the core of the overall system.

Benefits

Some of the benefits that will be realized as the client's data warehouse environment expands include:

- **Rapid Prototype Development** – With Visual Studio and .NET, a prototype could be developed in days, as opposed to weeks.

- **Potential to Leverage Framework** – The .NET Framework contains several class libraries that had specific application to this client's project, thus shortening the development cycle.

- **Faster Overall Development** – By leveraging features like master pages, code-behind and data binding, most of the underlying framework needed to develop dynamic, web-based applications is already provided by the .NET Framework.

- **Lower Cost** – All of the benefits above lead to a lower overall cost.

For More Information

For more information about ServerLogic and Microsoft Business Solutions, call **866-838-6932** or visit

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.NET Based Query Engine
Application Architecture Diagram