



Success Story: Web Solution in ASP.NET 2.0, SharePoint and Dynamics GP

Summary:

TerpSysSM developed a versatile ASP.NET 2.0 web solution allowing remote users to upload Excel-based expense and project code reports directly into the client's financial accounting system, Microsoft Dynamics GP, via Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 (MOSS 2007).

Client: Search for Common Ground (SFCG)

A Washington D.C.-based nonprofit, Search for Common Ground is dedicated to transforming the way the world deals with conflict, promoting cooperative solutions instead of adversarial approaches.

Objectives:

- Develop a more efficient mechanism for capturing and processing financial transactions from field offices
- Cut data reporting delays from months to hours
- Facilitate development of new business models and processes via improved analytical tools and more readily quantifiable data



Challenge

The Client established a schedule where solution development and implementation proceeded simultaneously along parallel tracks. As a practical matter, this required TerpSys to be highly flexible and responsive since solution requirements, by the very nature of the project, would be subject to change on short notice.

Although the TerpSys team was thoroughly familiar with SharePoint technology, the complexity of the process, combined with the need to establish a seamless interface with the Client's financial accounting system, posed additional challenges to be overcome. The client wanted the application to be in SharePoint but also wanted a custom user interface that optimized the user experience.

Finally, the proposed solution, whatever it might be, had to make sound economic sense. This meant working within a set budget and addressing the age-old problem of cutting costs without cutting corners.

Solution

After reviewing the Client's needs, budget and timeline, TerpSys built a state-of-the-art solution based on ASP.NET 2.0, SharePoint and Dynamics GP to cut operational costs, providing new capabilities and efficiencies.

The problem of extracting data from remote users' Excel-based expense reports was solved using a tool known as Aspose.Cells. Financial transactions were created in Dynamics GP via eConnect, an enterprise application integration tool. TerpSys built SharePoint libraries to store the Field Reports for auditing purposes. The TerpSys solution automatically uploads the Field Reports to these libraries through a custom Web Service.

Significantly, the ASP.NET 2.0 solution included many internal checks and balances, and eliminated slow, error-prone manual journal entries. New built-in "audit" functions kept a tight, automatic rein on spending. This transparent shift from an expensive, labor-intensive system with limited capabilities to a modern, cost-effective system with enhanced capabilities was achieved on time and on budget.

Results

- Provided solution making it far easier for field offices to report expenses
- Enhanced ability of management to track costs, control expenses, and plan more effectively
- Decreased lead time for data to show up in accounting system from 120 days to almost instantaneous
- Reduced Client's accounting and financial operations costs significantly
- Cut lead time for Financial Statement preparation by over 90 days
- A delighted customer:

"This marks a milestone for the finance department, as a dynamic shift in the way that we work, as the new program performs logic checks and creates additional components of journal entries for overhead calculations and release of restricted funds and preventing overspending on grants."

– Jack Deeds,
Chief Financial Officer,
Search for Common Ground

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