

Modernization and integration of JDE World ERP increases productivity and reduces costs for Benderson!

▶ Critical issue

Constricted by limitations and inflexibility of the 5250 'green screen' interface.

Many working hours wasted manually transferring information from JDE World to other applications.

▶ Solution

Seamlessly integrate JDE World with other applications.

Provide direct access from JDE database in real-time.

Create single graphical interface to access all applications.

▶ Results

Streamlined processes and significant cost savings.

Significant productivity increases through application integration.

Reduced training times for new user-friendly graphical interface.

Background

Benderson Development is one of the largest privately-owned property development companies in North America. With over 50 years experience, they have established themselves as a leader in retail and power center development. The organization has experienced remarkable growth over the last ten years, targeting major expansion in its retail centre holdings across the United States, in addition to its existing development portfolio holdings which include office buildings, industrial parks, residential communities and hotels.

Challenge

Benderson have been running Oracle JDE World alongside a number of other software applications. They have spent over 20 years customizing these applications to meet the demands of their fast-growing business. Despite continual refinement however, it became increasingly apparent that the limitations, and specifically the inflexibility of the 5250 'green screen' interface of the applications were impacting the organization's productivity. If Benderson were to retain their market-leading position, they would need to deliver significant productivity gains by modernizing their applications.

With no ability to interface across platforms, significant inefficiencies had been identified in existing business processes. Benderson recognized the need to integrate their JDE World ERP system with a range of other applications used at multiple business levels, across their entire network.

In addition, Benderson recognized that they were becoming increasingly constricted by the limitations of the traditional 'green screen' interface. The transfer of information between JDE World and other applications was inefficient and time consuming, with leasing agents relying heavily on administrative support to provide them with information from their data warehouse. The most efficient solution would be to create a richer graphical interface that would enable leasing agents to access relevant information directly, removing the time consuming process of having the administration team source the information for them from the data warehouse. Also, because the leasing agents typically work remotely and are out in the field, providing access via the Web would enable them to access the system much more easily and conveniently.

Solution

Having invested 20 years developing their applications

“Having looked into an alternative that was going to cost over two million dollars and take more than two years to develop, Benderson instead opted to employ looksoftware’s leading-edge technology.” *Dave Hyzy, Director of IT*

and architecture, Benderson were very reluctant to ‘tear it up and start again’. Like many other organizations in the same position, they determined that the risk of throwing away such a significant amount of perfectly good code to re-write their applications was simply too high - instead, they decided that this time-tested, highly functional code would form the basis of a modernized system. Using the looksoftware suite, Benderson were able to seamlessly integrate and re-use their existing applications, delivering major cost-savings and service improvements.

The integration process enabled the existing business intelligence application to feed information from Benderson’s JDE World database into a data warehouse on a nightly basis, thus making this data accessible to leasing agents. With the aid of this integration and the creation of a user-friendly graphical interface, leasing agents are now able to directly access the information they require from the JDE database in real-time, at the click of a button.

Dave Hyzy, Director of IT for Benderson Development worked closely with looksoftware to develop the solution: “We had a need to integrate information into applications running on JDE World. We needed something to help pull information from JDE applications into other applications, and vice versa. Green screen was not working for us in this regard. looksoftware offers a very slick way to allow this seamless integration between these applications....I am very impressed with looksoftware’s current offering, and with their vision for the future.”

Benefits

As a result of integrating applications with their JDE World database and applying a new GUI on the front-end, Benderson have achieved a huge boost in efficiency. Frontline staff no-longer need to rely on back-end support to source information; they now have that information at their fingertips, utilizing the Internet to access the applications which traditionally were only accessible from

within the confinements of the corporate office. This in turn has freed up administration staff to focus on other important tasks, eliminating time spent on cumbersome information searches.

Creating a simple GUI, consolidating data from disparate systems and enabling staff to easily navigate across platforms to locate relevant information has proved to be an incredibly empowering experience. Streamlined processes and enhanced accessibility of information has resulted in increased service levels, adding value to Benderson’s brand and encouraging their continued growth as a leading developer throughout the United States.

Benderson also highlighted significant cost savings as a benefit derived from looksoftware’s integration and modernization solution. Having looked into an alternative that was going to cost over two million dollars and take more than two years to develop, Benderson instead opted to employ looksoftware’s leading-edge technology. This enabled them to reuse existing IT assets and deliver a graphic front-end eighteen months earlier, for a fraction of the cost.

Dave Hyzy regards Benderson’s partnership with looksoftware as very positive: They are not the first vendor I have partnered with. I must say however, that looksoftware are unique, in that every person with whom I have come into contact has been of the highest quality. They are great people. They know their stuff, and have an enthusiasm about their software, which is infectious. I really think that makes a difference – in the long run, that approach has to benefit both of us.