

# DeBeers - Case Study

looksoftware™

## Critical issue

- ▶ Cumbersome user interface
- ▶ Need for integrated applications

## Solution

- ▶ Smart client customised user interface with integration, to be delivered in the shortest time frame possible

## Results

- ▶ New easy to use application with built-in integration functionality
- ▶ Consistent, intuitive user interface
- ▶ 4000 screens refaced within 2 months
- ▶ No changes to existing applications or underlying code

## Rapid UI rejuvenation on existing applications

### Background

The De Beers Group is the largest diamond mining and marketing company in the world. They produce over 40 per cent of the world's annual diamond output by value from their own mines in South Africa and in partnership with the governments of Botswana, Namibia and Tanzania. De Beers' mining operations span every category of diamond mining - open pit, underground, alluvial, coastal and sea, while its exploration programme extends across six continents.

### Challenge

De Beers converted from mainframe to AS400, using CA's Advantage 2/E in the early nineties. Their integrated set of applications span Financials, Engineering and Materials Management, and totals more than 10 million lines of RPG, servicing 5000 users and replacing the previous mainframe systems.

A review of these applications in mid 2000 found that while they were functionally strong, new modern User Interfaces (UIs) could improve productivity and improve application integration. De Beers' IT department, Divisional Information Systems (DIS), undertook the task of evaluating the application modernization alternatives.

Carina van Niekerk, led the DIS evaluation team. "**newlook** and another market leading modernization solution were closely evaluated. We had a small window of opportunity to quickly 'GUIfy' our green screen applications. We chose **newlook** due to its rapid development features and ease of use. We could not afford to use a tool that would take months to modernize our applications, the cost would have been astronomical."

### Solution

DIS worked with **looksoftware** and South African partner InfoLogic to deliver a pilot to confirm that **newlook** could deliver what it promised during the initial evaluation. There was strong business-user support for the modernized UI, however for some data entry tasks, the traditional 5250 interface was preferred by a few.

Gary Hagemann, InfoLogic Director, commented "*Business-user acceptance is vital to the success of projects like this. Supporting multiple UI styles, including traditional emulation is a common and reasonable user requirement that **newlook** handles elegantly. After 2 weeks of initial training and consulting support, the DIS team completed the rest of the implementation totalling over 4000 screens in about 2 months. We were ready to provide more consulting support, but De Beers just didn't need it. **newlook** astounded us with its ease-of-use, the development team had no trouble using it.*"

**"We chose newlook due to its rapid development features and ease-of-use"**

Carina van Niekerk

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## Benefits

looksoftware's 'on the fly' architecture doesn't require the existing applications to be changed, converted or translated, so installing and getting started is simple. The dynamic environment makes each field and screen from the existing application instantly available as objects with supporting events and properties. Customizations and extensions may be defined for changing workflow, interface appearance and behaviour. Where desired, the generated graphical interfaces may be overridden, redesigned, split or merged.

While business-users were satisfied with ease of use, consistency and simpler navigation, the new graphical UI design reflected the De Beers vision, a modern graphical UI across all its applications. UI modernization also provides the platform for delivering more tangible business benefits through improved application integration.

De Beers has built some applications with CA's Plex client server development toolset. Using looksoftware's integration support, these applications were seamlessly integrated with the refaced applications.

Carina van Niekerk said, "**newlook** has provided the rapid UI rejuvenation our existing applications needed. Users have been impressed with the refaced applications and many consider them to be 'new'. Proof indeed that **newlook** delivers what it promises.

## Feature Summary

A summary of the **newlook** features:

- Improve productivity, reuseability and flexibility with Smart Client support
- Minimize maintenance and improve business responsiveness using **newlook**' dynamic architecture and rules-based approach

- Reduce user learning and implementation time frames with **newlook**'s out-of-the-box capabilities and intuitive design features
- Reduce complexity and risk without changing existing applications
- Optimize business user productivity with **newlook**'s dynamic architecture, rules-based approach and desktop integration

Contact us to arrange a live webcast and see the difference a dynamic architecture can make to your productivity.

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