

## Bold Technologies secures its own future by licensing

### ArtinSoft's Visual Basic Upgrade Companion

The leading ISV in the security automation industry chose the most powerful and reliable migration product to ensure a smooth transition of his flagship application from VB6 to C#

#### Situation

When it comes to security automation, Colorado-based Bold Technologies Ltd. has been an industry leader in central station and alarm company management software since 1981.

In 2002, Bold Technologies introduced Manitou, a Windows-based alarm automation software with a three-tier client/server architecture. Developed to be scalable for super central stations, smaller monitoring posts and everything in between, Manitou incorporated the latest technology, including automated actions, audio/video integration and remote connectivity via the Internet and a PDA.

Manitou is an n-tier application with the back end written in unmanaged C++, but Visual Basic 6.0 was used for the user interface (more than 600,000 lines of VB6 code). Any application used in the security industry, in this case, by alarm monitoring stations, is a very high-availability software that has to be up 24/7, because it normally deals with life and death matters. Although Bold produced a very solid industry leading application, Bold Technologies found themselves spending too many resources to work around VB6 issues such as runtime errors and bugs that were no longer supported officially. They also found the similar types of issues with some of the 3rd Party controls they used and that were not supported either under that platform, and all this resulted in low productivity.

On the other hand, they thought there was a high possibility that Microsoft may also discontinue runtime support for VB6 in future operating systems, so they decided to move forward fast.

#### Solution

Bold technologies began looking towards porting Manitou to Microsoft's .NET platform. They evaluated several alternatives, but decided on ArtinSoft's automated solution in the end. "ArtinSoft seemed the only one that sorted out the details, not only the basic issues of a migration

#### Customer Profile

Bold Technologies is an industry leader in central station and alarm company management software. Its main product, Manitou, was a Windows-based alarm automation software with a three-tier client/server architecture, with the back end written in unmanaged C++ and Visual Basic 6.0 used for the user interface (more than 600,000 lines of VB6 code).

#### Business situation

Bold Technologies found themselves spending too many resources to work around VB6 issues such as runtime errors and bugs that were no longer supported officially. They also found the similar types of issues with some of the 3rd Party controls they used and that were not supported either under that platform, and all this resulted in low productivity.

#### Solution

After evaluating other alternatives, Bold Technologies chose ArtinSoft's VBUC to migrate Manitou to C#, since the solution turned out to be the most thorough and allowed saving between 12-15 months compared to a full manual rewrite.

#### Benefits

Licensing ArtinSoft's VB6 to .NET migration product will allow Bold Technologies to save time and cost on their migration project. And moving to the .NET platform will ensure official support and a more reliable and productive environment that will yield lower costs and risk.

engagement. Its product, the Visual Basic Upgrade Companion, included unique, powerful features, many of which turned out to be very valuable for this specific project, like ADO to ADO.NET conversion and error handling transformation”, said Rod Coles, Bold Technologies President.

The Visual Basic Upgrade Companion also allowed converting to C#, besides VB.NET, and Bold Technologies had already settled for the former as their target language. Their experience with C++ seemed to make the transition to C# a natural choice somehow, and they also thought that since Microsoft wrote the framework itself in C# they might be putting more effort and support towards that language. Plus they’ve found more resources available for C# compared to VB.NET in the marketplace.

Finally, there was also a time pressure that made a manual rewrite just not feasible; they estimated that a full rewrite would take at least 18 months, while an automated migration using the VBUC could be done in between 3 and 6 months, including some post-migration application enhancement.

## **Benefits**

Licensing ArtinSoft’s VB6 to .NET migration product will allow Bold Technologies to save time and cost on their migration project. And besides increasing the system’s reliability, by moving to the .NET framework they will have access to a faster development environment, which allows easy debugging and better integration with other new technologies, such as Silverlight. And the multi-threading capability resulted particularly attractive for Bold Technologies, in terms of improved performance and concurrency.

Overall the .NET platform represents a more robust and productive environment that will allow Bold Technologies to avoid future technological advancement constraints, improving the technical and functional adequacy of their solution. Plus moving to this platform will reduce operational and maintenance cost, improving developer productivity while mitigating the risk that the growing lack of VB6 programming talent represents.