ARTINSOFT PAVES THE WAY FOR GYSSA'S SMOOTH

TRANSITION TO .NET

Background

ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) is one of the most challenging markets for software developing firms. The only way to protect your competitive edge is to offer ever more superior features to users. However, to achieve this goal, it is crucial to design and build your systems on platforms that offer the highest potential for future development.

Founded in 1987, GYSSA is based in Guatemala, with regional offices in all the Central American countries. GYSSA is an important player in the ERP market, having managed to position itself as one of the leading suppliers of consulting services and solutions. Optimized over a period of more than 48-programmer years of development, testing and experience, e-SPC is composed of seven sub-systems aimed at satisfying the regional market's business needs for B2B, CRM, ERP, Information Portal and Business Intelligence.

GYSSA's SPC-ERP (Sistema de Planeación y Control) constitutes the main component of e-SPC suite of products, and is a highly complex system of more than 4 million code lines. Moving SPC to .NET was the most feasible option for GYSSA to remain at the forefront of ERP suppliers' market in the Central American region. However, this mission required detailed analysis and a true migration expert. ArtinSoft, creator of Visual Studio's Upgrade Wizard for converting Visual Basic 6.0 to .NET, emerged as the best partnering option for GYSSA

The application is an ERP software that integrates all the functional areas of an enterprise with the aim of providing a far superior control of business operations and a more efficient use of resources. SPC-ERP is structured in 27 modules for Management and Finance, Human Resources, Production, Sales and Marketing and Distribution. It has been successfully implemented in several vertical market sectors, including Consumer Product Distribution, Route Systems, Vehicle Distribution, Newspapers and Pharmaceutical.

The Challenge

The main stumbling block for GYSSA was to be able to offer a Web-enabled system to its customers. Even though GYSSA knew about the "Upgrade Wizard" as the way to evolve to .NET they had the additional limitation that some of the original modules had not been built on a multi-tier architecture. The SPC was designed and developed for client-server environments and to top it all some of the modules had been designed many years ago and were built in previous versions of Visual Basic To be able to offer a multi-tier version of SPC, GYSSA had two choices; to create a completely new system from scratch or to carry out a migration and re-architecture process of the application. With an ample supply of inside information on productivity to build systems from scratch, the estimate was that it would take three years with the additional risk to do so. The risk factor was very important since most of the functionalities of the original version had proven successful for many years.

Upgrading SPC to .NET was the only reasonable way to remain competitive in this market and in the forefront as a supplier of ERP solutions in the area. To do this it required a thorough analysis of how to upgrade to .NET and a real expert in the matter.

ArtinSoft, the creator of the technology embedded in the "Upgrade Wizard" as part of the Visual Studio .NET, was the right choice for the job.

The Solution

ArtinSoft's diagnostic analysis revealed that the whole process could be completed in eight months, with an equally sized development team, and at a fraction of the cost of an entirely new development.

Faced with the uncertainty of whether to apply a multi-tier conversion to the code in Visual Basic 6.0 before migrating it to Visual Basic .NET, or whether to carry out the process once the application is upgraded, the solution finally emerged from the development environment of Visual Studio .NET. It was very clear that the application had to be first, evolved to the .NET environment, and then with the .NET facilities, converted to multi-tier system. The new features of Visual Studio .NET's IDE ensured a far more productive development.

The first step in the conversion process was to set priorities and select the modules to be moved to .NET – the accounting module was chosen accordingly. In barely 13- developer weeks the first module was migrated to .NET, and the application was ready for a 3-layer re-engineering process. The fact that the functional code was not interleaved to the management of forms and deployment of the information eased the task enormously.

The outcome of this process has been GYSSA's capacity to continue offering its clients the experience accumulated for many years, but now on a new platform with all the growth potential that the .NET offers. ArtinSoft's consulting services guarantees the functional equivalence of the new application.

GYSSA has not only managed to retrieve its investment in the generation of its code, it has also retained its clients, result of many years of support, testing and market knowhow. Using the most advanced technology, GYSSA is now capable of providing its clients with expert solutions. "When we became aware of an applications migration technology from Visual Basic to .NET, we realized that upgrading was the most cost-effective way of reviving our investment. Renewing our systems was to breathe new life into our business and to safeguard our competitive advantage. ArtinSoft paved the way for us to take advantage of .NET long before we would have expected. ArtinSoft's services and technology not only enabled us to economize a huge sum of money, they also helped us concentrate our resources on discovering the full potential of .NET to satisfy our clients' needs", said Guillermo Villacorta, Vice-president of Projects & Strategy at GYSSA. GYSSA is now technologically positioned to become one of the pioneering firms in Central America to offer viable solutions in .NET. GYSSA is now selling capacity to compete.