



Case Study

Customer Profile

Publishing Technology, formerly VISTA International, is the largest supplier of technology and related services for the publishing industry. Working with eight of the ten largest publishers in the world, Publishing Technology helps information providers meet their evolving and wide-ranging publishing needs. Partnering with publishers of any size, discipline, or technical literacy, Publishing Technology presents publishers with the full potential of their content in the digital environment, increasing the efficiency of process throughout their publishing enterprise. Their market-leading technologies and integrated services are differentiated by the scope of publishing issues they address, and stand alone due to their singular focus and comprehensive experience in the publishing sector. Publishing Technology's clients value the economies of scale and simplified communications gained when working with a single, trusted partner.

Delivering the Latest Best Seller

How the right focus helped a leader in the publishing industry deliver both rich applications and a flexible platform.

For nearly 30 years, Publishing Technology has offered software applications for the publishing industry built in their proprietary language and architected around one robust kernel. While their software suite was updated over time to offer users a better look and feel, the core kernel remained the common thread through all updates and never radically changed as it served customer needs. That kernel remains in wide use at their customer sites throughout the publishing world.

Over time, Publishing Technology's R&D focus naturally shifted from its underlying platform to the rich application set it was developing for the publishing industry. Nearly 400 publishers worldwide, including 8 of the 10 largest, rely on Publishing Technology systems to deliver industry-leading technology to power critical publishing processes and deliver content online. An estimated 85% of all books sold in the UK pass through a Publishing Technology system.

In order to meet changing industry requirements, Publishing Technology found their clients demanding highly customized installations. As a testament to its original design and construction, the core kernel remained largely intact. But in recent years as new languages like Microsoft .NET grew in popularity, their product could not fully leverage these new technologies due to the limitations presented by the kernel and its proprietary language.

Publishing Technology determined that they would re-architect the product in .NET from the ground up. Having spent some time investigating the possibility of developing a platform foundation themselves, they came to the conclusion that a better alternative was to focus on their rich application set instead, and rely on an outside source for the foundation.

The new platform would require several key features:

- **Bring more value to their customers** by delivering better products to market, more quickly.
- **Involve less customization and more standardization**, including the utilization of the Microsoft operating system and platform stack.
- **Focus their resource pool on individual application solutions**, where they had already developed a competitive advantage.
- **Stay current with the Microsoft operating system and platform stack**, while minimizing the resource drain on their technical organization.





“ Getting to our next version software was a tremendous undertaking, but relying on the robust Aptify platform allowed us to focus our energies on what we’ve always done best: applications that precisely meet customer requirements, not on reinventing a framework from the ground up.”

Brian Gibson
Chief Operating Officer, Publishing Applications
Publishing Technology

The Aptify Solution

In 2008 Publishing Technology was introduced to Aptify RAD, an Application Lifecycle Platform. Aptify’s enterprise-class rapid application development (RAD) platform for .NET is the same platform used to drive Aptify’s membership applications suite. The Aptify RAD platform is a layer of sophisticated technology on top of Microsoft .NET that compliments and extends the framework. Aptify RAD is specifically designed to aid in the development, deployment and maintenance of enterprise-class .NET business applications.

The Aptify platform’s intuitive development environment employs a unique method of defining business functionality at a high-level and within a design-time and run-time framework that provides robust built-in capabilities.

Developers can quickly and easily manage the mundane and routine aspects of software development, including database development, a single development environment for simultaneous production of windows and web UI’s, and a graphical interface for business rule implementation using a drag and drop methodology.

Code in any .NET language may be seamlessly incorporated by the developer as desired. The result is that development time and complexity of some development activities is dramatically reduced, typically by as much as 70%.

Publishing Technology immediately recognized that Aptify RAD could dramatically reduce the time to market for their next generation product.

A Proof of Concept exercise was devised and after measured debate, it was decided that Publishing Technology would base its next generation product line on the Aptify platform.

Within just a few months, the Publishing Technology product engineering team was building their first applications on Aptify. These applications were infused with Aptify’s meta-data driven forms, web pages, search dialogs and dashboards. They made extensive use of Aptify’s process pipeline technology to create business process flows using components from Aptify’s library and .NET extensions drafted by the Publishing Technology development team.

These business process flows formed the foundation of application logic which can be configured to meet the business process requirements of Publishing Technology’s customers.

Underlying Technology Platform

Aptify has developed a powerful framework that extends popular Microsoft technologies such as .NET, SQL Server and Windows to bring the capabilities of flexible, component-based computing to organizations of all sizes. Aptify provides a scalable IT infrastructure.

Some of the technologies that we incorporate into our platform include:

- Microsoft .NET 3.5 Framework
- Microsoft SQL Server 2008
- Microsoft Windows, XP and Vista
- Microsoft Office
 - Excel
 - Word
 - Outlook
- Crystal® Decisions / Business Objects™

“ Aptify reduced our development time significantly, through a tried and tested development framework that contains the flexibility and functionality required for us to build and deploy the applications our customers demand.”

Brian Gibson
Chief Operating Officer, Publishing Applications
Publishing Technology



The Benefits Achieved

By January of 2009, Publishing Technology was providing key customers beta demonstrations of the new product line. Publishing Technology was able to go to market with the first of its new applications set in just a few months, reducing their development time and resources significantly.

After using the Aptify platform as the foundation of their next generation of applications, Publishing Technology was able to:

Focus the development team's energies on what it had done best over the years – building applications particular to the well understood needs and demands of the publishing industry – rather than on development of a new platform foundation to manage the application stack.

Get products to market quickly, enabled by faster development times.

Develop applications that are natively designed with a Service Oriented Architecture to improve flexibility and ease system integration.

Significantly reduce Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) reductions in maintenance of new applications.

Take full advantage of the latest technologies available for applications based in .NET.

Provide its customers with a new ability to participate more directly in the maintenance, support and modification of their delivered solutions now in .NET.

Include new value add features such as MS office integration, Record History (a complete log of changes made to the database with the ability to rollback), easy business intelligence allowing end users to query, report and analyze their system data, and personalized dashboards for end-users specific to their business role and function.

Aptify RAD Solution Highlights

- Unified development process for Web and Windows® UI
- Automated generation of UI including forms, web pages, search dialogs, and dashboards
- Automatic generation of business objects and XML Web Services
- Automated database object generation (tables, views, stored procedures, etc.) and maintenance
- Built-in graphical workflow/business process automation
- Robust, native security and data audit capabilities, fully integrated into SQL Server
- Powerful ad-hoc query and reporting with built-in charts and pivot tables
- Leverages the full power of Microsoft .NET, Microsoft SQL Server and ASP.NET/AJAX
- Automated, centralized deployment to Web and Windows clients
- Single point of administration for presentation, business logic and data layer changes
- Easily scale with any number of Application Servers
- Automatic updates of smart-client components
- Rapidly deployed changes and easy updates
- Reduced QA cycle time
- Configuration management meta-data repository keeps track of every system change
- Rapid addition/modification of BPM (Business Process Management and workflow)

About Aptify

Since 1993, Aptify has grown to be a leader in application software for enterprise-class associations, non-profits and other member-based organizations. Aptify's Association Management System (AMS) provides over 20 powerful applications including membership, meetings and events, committees and chapters, subscriptions and publications, education and certification, fundraising and grants, advertising, and many others. Aptify offers extensive out-of-the-box functionality, unparalleled flexibility and scalability, rapid implementation and an attractive Total Cost of Ownership (TCO).

Aptify is headquartered in Washington, D.C. and maintains domestic offices in California, Chicago and Pennsylvania as well as international offices in Canada and India. Aptify is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner with an active international partner presence in Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary and the United Kingdom.

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