Case Study

Aspire Systems - Experience in Digital Marketing and Social Media

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1. Digital agency’s email marketing platform goes on-demand

**Our Customer:**
A UK based digital agency that helps B2B organizations with tailored marketing solutions and strategies using homegrown suite of softwares that includes campaign managers and eCards.

**Their Need:**
The customer had a web-based software for sending eCards. To enable each client to send multiple eCards to their respective databases, they wanted to upgrade it to a multi-tenant SaaS Solution. It also had to integrate their campaign email manager and support multiple languages and browsers.

**The Solution:**
Since improving the existing web-based software to the desired levels was not feasible, a new viable SaaS solution was proposed. The development of the new solution was carried out on Aspire's PropelSaaS framework. This framework consists of plumbing layer components, building blocks and various SaaS application specific components. The use of PropelSaaS helped reduce 93% of architecture development and 34% of coding time. The solution enabled multiple clients to have their own user role structure and multiple users under each of those roles supported by an appropriate client Admin. To benefit from elastic hosting, the solution was deployed in the Amazon EC2 cloud.

**Key software features**
- Tailoring and designing of the eCards and the interface for brand enhancement
- Choice of multiple template designs for any occasion in multiple languages
- Blackberry/Mobile/Print friendly campaigns generation
- Campaigner integration with contact databases using API
- Reports to measure success of campaigns by accessing view rates, URL clicks, survey/RSVP responses, undeliverables, opt outs, web page hits and domain reports
- Integration of campaigner with a number of leading Customer Relationship Management Systems

**Tools and Technologies used:**
.Net 3.5, ASP.Net MVC, SQL Server 2005

2. Social media launch for a major apparel company

**Our Customer:**
Indian retail and apparel powerhouse; owning and supplying a range of premium international brands.
Their Need:
The customer wanted to utilize the wide-spreading reach of the internet to promoting its new apparel brand. They wanted an application that would viral-market the brand’s presence across netizen hubs on the internet. The brand in question is aimed at the youth section of the society and the application had to incorporate a user interface which appealed to them.

The Solution:
To harness the raging potential of the social networking crowd, Aspire suggested that an application be built which can be deployed on such sites. The reason we suggested this approach is because social networks allow precise targeting of the audience thereby increasing the effectiveness of a marketing campaign. In essence, the application had to increase product awareness and provide the young users a platform for casual interaction.

Selecting Facebook as the first destination, we built an application that boasts of features like seamless navigation and collaboration.

Rich user interface using AJAX and Flex to improve user experience by making the application responsive and interactive; thereby recreating a desktop environment.

The collaborative UI empowers users to share the discoveries on their Facebook page as status updates. Forums and polls were also introduced to allow people to discuss/assess the apparels and also other fashion-related topics.

The application has been also loosely-coupled with Facebook. This allows it to be transferred to another website/portal like Twitter with minimal development work. User friendliness was further enhanced by implementing Single sign-on, thereby allowing users to directly log into Facebook from the application.

Tools and Technologies used:
Flex, PHP, REST framework, Facebook API, SSO

3. Mobile CRM empowerment for an SMS marketing provider

The Customer:
Leaving supplier of SMS text messaging and mobile data applications and services. Their softwares and services are used by organizations of all sizes to initiate and sustain marketing and customer relationship purposes.

Their Need:
The customer’s software is a powerful bulk SMS text message management and distribution system that allows PC users to easily send and receive a large volume of SMS text messages in one simple operation. They wanted to develop a mobile plug-ins for Sage CRM and MS CRM, empowering users with the ability to send, receive and track messages through familiar CRM softwares.
The Solution:
The customer had an application that operates independently or in conjunction with popular CRM applications like Sage CRM, Microsoft Dynamics CRM, and Microsoft Outlook. Aspire's mobile plug-in solution added a host of mobile features to the CRM including two-way SMS text messaging, SMS text campaign design, deployment and workflow integration. Plug-ins were developed by Aspire to act as a stand-alone application that would be common for each of the CRMs.

Key software features:
- PC usage to send text messages and receive responses to the text messaging inbox
- Checking of delivery status for all messages in real-time, using comprehensive delivery receipt information and reporting
- Unique individual sender ID for each text message
- Quick synchronization of contacts and groups between Sage/MS CRM and the text messaging software
- Contact import to text messaging software from CSV file, MS Outlook or Excel
- Includes merge fields allowing personalization of messages
- Scheduling of messages, up to a full year in advance
- Payment only for messages actually received by recipients' handsets — refunds for incorrect or discontinued numbers

Tools and Technologies used:
ASP.NET 2.0, C#, .NET 2.0

4. Dynamic email content management for an interactive marketing service leader

The Customer:
The global leader in interactive marketing services; providing tools and services that empower clients to create and manage online marketing campaigns using e-mail, search engines, targeted websites and banner ads.

Their Need:
The customer wanted technology assistance for handling the email marketing campaigns of its clients, which includes one of the world's leading mobile phone suppliers.

Our Solution:
The emails used in the campaigns are referred to as "assets". The assets for the e-mail marketing campaigns are of two kinds:

- Static – applicable to all sets of users
- Dynamic – Content generated based on the preference of the end users
- The dynamic content extracts data from a server to provide customized emails for the end-users. Aspire enhanced the dynamic message creator to increase efficiency by approximately 30%. Apart from that, the following services were provided:
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- Assembling dynamic messages with JavaScript, HTML.
- Performing platform quality check to make sure that the message assembles fine across all platforms (browsers and email clients)
- QA’ing the XML files for automation process

Aspire was directly involved in maintaining the email marketing campaign of a major phone supplier. Their campaigns were setup according to the age of the handsets of the end-users. The dynamic content had to ensure that people with handsets of varying ages were receiving mails relevant to their needs.

**Tools and Technologies used:**
Java script 1.6, HTML 3.2, CSS, Macromedia Dreamweaver MX 2004, MS-Excel 2003

5. Rejuvenating a Directory Publishing software used by media groups

**The Customer:**
Developing and implementing innovative software solutions for the News Publishing Industry, their solutions are used by more than 600 organizations around the world.

**Their Need:**
Our customer has a software which provides media companies with the ability to easily create and deploy niche directories, geo domains and boutique sites to maximize local revenue opportunities. They wanted to re-write their software into the Drupal PHP content management platform with enhanced features.

**The Solution:**
The primary requirement was for the software to store a large amount of information, be able to slice them under various categories and set them up them as independent sites which use the same database and code underneath. It also had to house integration with various Drupal plug-ins and Apache Solr for search capabilities. Aspire started by defining a site map for the website, user access control rights and required custom tables. Drupal was installed and configured to allow Taxonomy and Navigation Setup.

The developed software provides media companies features such as:

- High-level category layout for major points of interest in the local community
- Software toolset to make it easy to add engaging components or behaviors to an advertiser’s listing creating profitable up-sell opportunities.
- An easily customizable local business directory component to meet specific branding requirements
- Search-optimized list and detail views within the software for improved search engine visibility
- Credit card payment processing through the PayPal Payflow service

**Tools and Technologies used:**
Linux (Ubuntu/Centos), PHP 5.2.3, MySQL 5.2, Aptana /Eclipse PDT IDE, Acquia Drupal 1.2.21 (Drupal 6.15 core)
6. Continual enhancement of a brand management software

**The Customer:**
A digital marketing pioneer focused on developing cutting edge web-based marketing and business solutions.

**Their Need:**
The customer had a Marketing Management software that serves as a tracking mechanism for managing different brands of an organization (end-user). The software provides a wizard with various plug-ins for their clients with which they can design their customized websites/web applications for a particular brand or product. They required assistance from a technology partner to help design and enhance the plug-ins.

**The Solution:**
The software is basically a Content Management System containing a framework for designing websites and web applications. Aspire started with providing higher customization options by developing new plug-ins for the framework.

The plug-ins were conceptualized by our customer and the development was carried out by Aspire. In some cases, the plug-ins were unique requests by the end users which were not available. These plug-ins are deployed on a Dynamic Form Builder, a tool which allows proper authorized user to create forms on the fly with zero coding and immediately host it on the brands website.

Aspire has been providing an efficient and robust assistance to the technology requirements of the marketing management software with implementation of best practices such as:

- All Data deployments carried out through RedGate for safely transforming data between servers.
- Having standalone QA and UAT servers that are updated on a time to time bases
- Versioning done effectively using SVN

As a highlight to the project, Aspire has been directly involved in designing plug-ins for the brand website of a leading worldwide confectionary manufacturer

**Tools and Technologies used:**
ABOUT ASPIRE SYSTEMS
Aspire Systems provides end-to-end software development services to Independent Software Vendors (ISVs)/packaged software providers, Software-Enabled Businesses and Innovative Enterprises.

We are passionate about Producteering™ – our approach to creating software better and faster. It helps us deliver tangible business results for our customers through technology. Our key strengths are in the areas of SaaS, Cloud Computing, Web 2.0/RIA, Mobile, Test Automation, Agile/Scrum, and in the Healthcare domain.

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