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software corporation

Case Study

Real-time, back-end database Integration nets The Maple Group a customer for life.

In 2002, Franchise Opportunities chose GoldMine as the CRM solution best able to lead them into the next phase of company growth. Franchise Opportunities had been using a custom "intranet" solution to meet their sales force automation requirements, but as the sales staff grew, this solution became inadequate. To meet the demands of their rapid growth, Franchise Opportunities turned to GoldMine largely due to its flexibility, financial value, and outstanding reputation in the small to medium-sized business market. In the end, however, it was GoldMine's robust custom programming interface that stole the show.....

The Back-story:

Franchise Opportunities (www.franchiseopportunities.com), regarded as the number one franchise community on the net, provides an Internet portal for high-quality franchising and business resources in a secure, collegial, professional and ethical business environment. Franchise Opportunities' clients are franchisers from 12 countries around the world. The portal provides a central location where potential franchisees can research and contact various franchisers.

After reviewing the options and outlining a rough deployment sketch, Franchise Opportunities turned to The Maple Group for a solution. When it became obvious that custom database integration would be a necessary component, The Maple Group turned to their software development partner, Relatia Software Corporation.

The Solution:

Franchise Opportunities needed a quick way for sales reps to make calls and change contact data on-the-fly and then have these changes reflected on their portal website and in their Intranet database.   For instance, when a Franchiser's email contact changed, the sales staff wanted the ability to make the change quickly and easily in GoldMine and have their web portal and their internal Intranet data updated automatically; in real time. They also wanted an easy way to "turn on" and "turn off" an account so that it disappeared from the web portal.

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...By leveraging built-in capabilities of Microsoft's SQL Server database platform, Relatia's programmers were able to ensure complete integration of the franchiseopportunities.com native web portal data with the GoldMine database...

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the GoldMine database and the Intranet database behind the scenes without any further intervention by sales personnel.

In addition, Relatia programmers enabled sales inquires that are entered on the web to be immediately added to the GoldMine database and flagged for callback and lead assignment. Conversely, when changes to customer records are made in GoldMine, the Franchise Opportunities portal website databases are updated immediately; in real-time, so existing customers browsing the website see up-to-the-minute customer profile data.

The Geek Speak:

By using a combination of technologies, Relatia programmers delivered a real-time data integration environment with little long-term maintenance considerations. By working closely with Franchise Opportunities' on-staff technical resources, Relatia's programmers identified key data entry points where changes needed to be trapped and propagated throughout the database family.

Using a custom version of GoldMine's stored procedures API along with custom "black-box" ASP plugins, data entered on the web was added in real-time to the GoldMine database. Conversely, a set of custom SQL triggers were written and installed on various GoldMine database tables, making real-time changes to a replicated version of the production web portal database, then replicated to the production copy at the hosting center.

By using SQL Server's native replication capabilities, Relatia's programmers where able to eliminate the resources typically needed for a high-availability solution, ensuring that changes to data eventually flowed to all appropriate databases when connectivity was broken.

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The Win-Win:

By providing a 100% solution where others had balked, The Maple Group gained a customer for life, and, as a result, Franchise Opportunities is able to leverage the benefits of having disparate, yet synchronized application databases, each designed for a different data consumer.

"The business advice and custom development that Relatia provided has helped double our business. The sales reps now make twice the calls they did before the implementation of GoldMine. Our customers are happy because we can make changes to their accounts in a matter of minutes instead of hours; and, almost as important is the fact that these automated processes have freed up our Internet and intranet managers for other tasks. The fact that the total solution requires very little maintenance is a huge win for us." Says Mark Ziler of Franchise Opportunities. "I wouldn't hesitate to call The Maple Group regarding any custom development project. They were able to make GoldMine do things that we'd never dreamed possible."

For more information on custom development, contact Linda O'Connor at 770.663.4455 ext 305.

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