

SPHERION

Boosts Developer Productivity with Spring

SPHERION



SPRINGSOURCE RESULTS

Spring delivers the following business results to Spherion:

- Reduced Development Time - Cut by at Least 30%
- Fast Developer Ramp-Up - Reduced from a Month to a Couple of Days
- Successful Hand-Off to Customer
- Enhanced Application Quality
- Improved User Experience and Customer Satisfaction
- Easier Object/Relational Persistence

TESTIMONIAL

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“It used to take about a month for a new developer to ramp up, but now it only takes a couple days with Spring.”

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Spherion

Spherion Corporation, based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, is a leading recruiting and staffing company that provides solutions to meet the evolving needs of companies and job candidates. Spherion provides its services to approximately 10,000 customers, from Fortune 500 companies to a wide range of small and mid-size organizations. Over the company's 60+ year history, Spherion has sourced, screened and placed millions of individuals in temporary, temp-to-hire and full-time jobs. Employing more than 230,000 people annually through its network, Spherion is one of North America's largest employers.

Challenge

The Candidate Group is part of Spherion's IT department, responsible for developing web applications which are a large part of the company's recruitment efforts. Before the group switched to Spring, the de facto standard platform to build, run and manage enterprise Java applications, they were using EJBs for development and writing a considerable amount of custom code. Applications required substantial overhead, and development was a difficult and time-consuming process.

“There were many interface classes that had to be written with EJBs,” recalls Steve Hiller, Senior Programmer/Analyst in Spherion's Candidate Group. “They had to be maintained in several places across the application, and we had to generate all the stubs that go along with that. It was a lot of coding work and maintenance hassle.”

In addition, ramp up at Spherion took about a month before a new developer could be productive, due to the complexity of the development environment. There was a long learning curve, and the code was not easy to understand.

Testing was also an issue prior to using Spring. Since Spherion's applications are not commercial software, there was not as much focus on testing. The objective was to get the application into production as quickly as possible, so time-consuming unit testing became a lower priority.

Solution

To increase developer productivity, the Candidate Group switched to Spring on the latest project, a web application that provides an automated online method for job candidates to fill out a number of required pre-hire forms. This is an application which is expected to save the company millions of dollars.

Impressed by the Candidate Group's success on this project, Spherion's Internet Group has decided to use Spring on its next project as well, an overhaul of the company's external website for Canada.

One of the primary reasons Spherion chose Spring was dependency injection, however, there were many other out-of-the-box features that they found to be valuable as well. Spring transaction management and email services are just two examples of functionality that Spherion has leveraged.

Benefits

SPRING DELIVERS THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS RESULTS TO SPHERION:

Reduced Development Time

"Spring has made development much simpler, and it has eliminated the maintenance and development hassle we had before with EJBs," says Hiller. "We just don't have to do any of that work anymore. By using Spring, we have reduced our development time by at least 30%."

Fast Developer Ramp-Up

Spring provides new developers with a simple centralized development environment that is easier to understand, according to Hiller. Consequently, new developers at Spherion can ramp up and become productive very quickly. "It used to take about a month for a new developer to ramp up, but now it only takes a couple days with Spring," Hiller confirms.

Enhanced Application Quality

"With Spring, testing is much easier, so we test more than we used to," Hiller says. "Application quality is much better because of the additional testing. We have had significantly less bugs on the application we built in Spring, compared to before. Also, the organization of the data is less complicated, and the code in Spring makes it easier to find the issues up front."

Improved User Experience and Customer Satisfaction

The Spherion Candidate Group must meet the expectations of a few different audiences when they develop a web application. The end users are the candidates that the company will place for employment, but the Candidate Group must also satisfy the Spherion recruiters and ultimately the customers who will be employing the candidates.

"The recruiters are very impressed with the new application that we developed in Spring," Hiller explains. "They see the application as very intuitive, and I think that is a natural outcome of our ability to focus more on the user experience, because Spring takes care of the rest." Hiller says the positive feedback from recruiters and employees means the application will be well accepted by Spherion's customers because it is designed to handle special forms for each customer.

Easier Object/Relational Persistence

As an added advantage, moving to Spring also enabled Spherion to utilize Hibernate for high-performance object/relational persistence, minimizing the coding needed to map Java objects to a relational database.

"We like the integration between Spring and Hibernate," Hiller explains. "There is a lot of support in Spring. The two work together very nicely. We not only gain the advantages of Spring dependency injection, but we also get the benefits of using Hibernate to take care of mapping data to the database."

"Historically, we did all our persistence coding using JDBC in the traditional manner, but there was a significant amount of coding," he continues. "In addition, on a deployment date, it used to be a major hassle to coordinate everything between the developers and database administrators. Now, with Hibernate, it is a drastic reduction in effort for us in terms of coding and maintenance, and we have fewer problems. Hibernate and Spring take care of almost all that work for us. And we maintain it ourselves, so we don't have to get DBAs up at 3 a.m. to do deployments."

About SpringSource

SpringSource, a division of VMware, Inc., (NYSE: VMW) and the leader in Java application infrastructure and management, provides a complete suite of software products that accelerate the entire build, run, manage enterprise Java application lifecycle. SpringSource employs the open source leaders who created and drive innovation for Spring, the de facto standard programming model for enterprise Java applications. SpringSource also employs the Java and Web thought leaders within the Apache Tomcat, Apache HTTP Server, Hyperic, Groovy and Grails open source communities. Nearly half of the Global 2000, including many world's leading retail, financial services, manufacturing, healthcare, technology and public sector clients are SpringSource customers. For more information visit: www.springsource.com.



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