

MaddenCo Goes from Green-Screen to GUI with Seagull Software



Indiana-based MaddenCo, Inc. provides integrated software systems to the independent tire dealer and truck stop service center industries. MaddenCo's solution is an integrated software package with Point-of-Sale, Warehousing, Inventory, Bar Coding, Retreading, Accounts Receivable and Payable and General Ledger availability, as well as electronic interfaces to many of the industries' leading rubber vendors.

Situation

MaddenCo's software is used at more than 1,500 tire retail outlets throughout the United States. Customers use the system to input vehicle work-up information and to enter other relevant data to order tires and track shipments. While MaddenCo's software, which was brought to market in 1977, has always been reliable, its main user interface has always been a "green screen." In January 2009 the company decided to explore ways to update the interface to a more modern, browser-based application without having to rebuild its existing code.

Implementation

MaddenCo CEO Kim Angermeier says that, "Our system was originally built in COBOL on an IBM S34 platform. The green screen works very well, but there is a steep learning curve for new employees who are familiar with modern operating systems. As a result, when our customers hired new staff, they had to spend a lot of time training them - our goal was to create an interface that would let them get up to speed as quickly as possible. At the same time, we didn't want to waste months on our end re-coding our existing software - we just wanted to put a great-looking GUI on top of our system as quickly and easily as possible."

After considering several options, MaddenCo selected **Seagull Software's LegaSuite to update their IBM i green-screens with a browser-based GUI.** "We looked at three companies, but Seagull was the only one that integrated directly with the DDS, rather than just screen scraping our existing system," Angermeier says. "And it was so easy to use that we were able to have our support team - not our developers - design the GUI, which saved us a lot of time and money. In addition, we were really impressed with how easy LegaSuite was to use and how quickly we completed our implementation — it was completed months before we thought it would be, and it worked perfectly. We made a decision to go with Seagull in March, and we rolled it out on July 1!"

Benefits

According to Angermeier, "Our customers absolutely love it. We went to one of our customers to get them to try it, and within 10 minutes the manager was hooked - and within two hours. They requested to have the GUI interface loaded on all PCs at their headquarters. It really sells itself, and one of the main reasons is that it dramatically reduces training time for new employees who already know Windows but have never used a green screen before. For example, the new GUI doesn't have the complex function keys that are used on the AS400, so it's a lot more intuitive. Of course, a lot of folks still like the old system, so we're keeping that available, too."



Key benefits:

- Fast implementation
- True integration with DDS, not just screen scraping
- Implementation can be done by support staff, not developers
- Strong training program
- Fast implementation

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—Kim Angermeier
CEO, MaddenCo

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