looksoftware™

Critical issue

▶ Inability of existing dealer application to exploit modern technologies including web-enablement, web services and application integration

Solution

▶ Modernisation strategy to reuse existing business systems

▶ Browser-based web enablement

▶ Web services support

▶ Application extension and integration with other desktop and server applications

Results

▶ Improved dealer service levels

▶ Extended life of applications by at least 5 years

Strategy to reuse existing IT investments cuts costs and improves dealer performance.

Background

Beesd Automotive & Automatisering BV, (www.beesda2.nl) provides a Car Dealer Management System to more than 100 outlets in the Netherlands. BeesdA2 was recently awarded best DMS supplier in the Netherlands.

Challenge

Approximately 100 Volvo dealers, running the Volvo DAS applications, had used a combination of legacy S/36 and AS/400 applications running on 50 AS/400's to support established business processes.

Volvo evaluated replacement options and found the alternatives all required extensive modification to meet the evolving needs of their dealers. Volvo decided the best solution was to reuse the existing systems that supported the proven dealer business processes. The evaluation concluded that a modernisation strategy presented the least risk and lowest cost and could deliver a modern solution that the dealers could continue to rely on for the foreseeable future.

Solution & Implementation

The steps involved in the upgrade process were: first to convert and upgrade the S/36 code to native mode and ILE, followed by refacing the green screens and integrating the business applications with external applications such as Microsoft Office. Finally, the rejuvenated application would be relaunched as IDAS!

This approach resulted in extending the functionality of the original applications and importantly, allowed Volvo to be more readily able to meet any subsequent development needs that might arise from their dealer channel in the future.

The TARGET/400 tool automated the conversion of database and business logic from its original S/36 format to the native iSeries format. Around 300 database files and over 500 programs were converted to complete the first phase of the project.

Improvements

looksoftware's modernisation tools were selected for webfacing and application integration. The dynamic rules-based architecture generated customised, web-based smart client UIs for the 400 screens, with no changes to the underlying code.

BEESDA2
Beesd Automotive & Automatisering bv

modernises Volvo dealer applications

VOLVO

Modernised IDAS Application
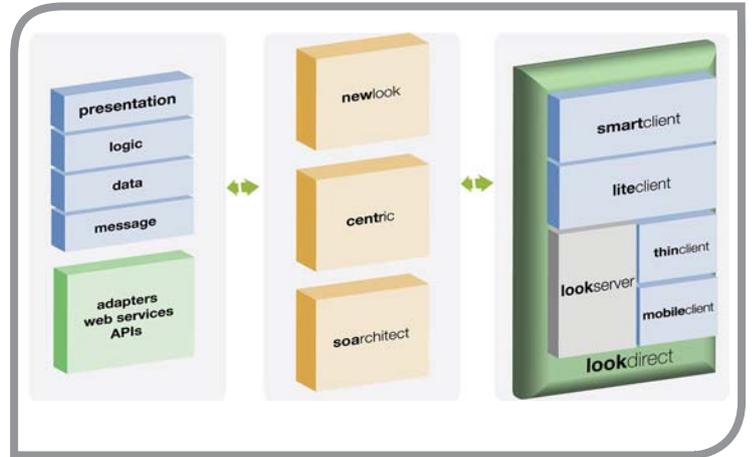

looksoftware Modernisation Suite

Additional functionality including support for web services, direct database integration and when required, support for thin clients and wireless devices, provided a platform for long term enhancements.

The browser-based UI included simpler navigation and a unified interface. For example, related screens were combined together on tabs providing instant access to key information without needing to know function keys and codes.

The rules-based architecture allowed a consistent look and feel to be generated for both S/36 and AS/400 screens.

The dealers rely on Microsoft Office applications including Word and Excel, so providing transparent integration between the core DAS application with the desktop was important. The dealers are now able to generate and send MS Word proposals from within the DAS application.

The application was also extended to use web services for postal code validation, eliminating the need for Volvo to maintain its own postal code database. A planned enhancement is to generate SMS messages from the IDAS application directly to the customers to notify them that their car is ready!

Tjeu Bollen, IT Manager for Dealer Systems said, "The enhanced dealer applications have improved our dealers' service levels. The new IDAS platform supports web services and easy integration and extension with other desktop and server applications - we have extended the useful life of these applications by at least 5 years. Importantly, this reuse strategy has enabled our dealers to continue to benefit from the business processes that have evolved with their input. Changing our processes to fit a particular package would have eliminated or reduced this competitive advantage."

"The enhanced dealer applications have improved the dealer service levels and have extended the life of applications by at least 5 years."

Tjeu Bollen, IT Manager

Contact us to arrange a live webcast and see the difference a dynamic architecture can make to your productivity.