

Green Mountain Consulting Case Study

Green Mountain Consulting Raves

About WebORB! Industry Leader

Green Mountain Consulting (GMC) uses WebORB to create and power a comprehensive parcel spend management solution that helps some of the largest companies in the world save on their shipping costs. WebORB is their key to providing customers secure, reliable, scalable and highly responsive access to their data. For some customers, that means instant access to nearly half a billion rows of data in a single database.



Business Overview

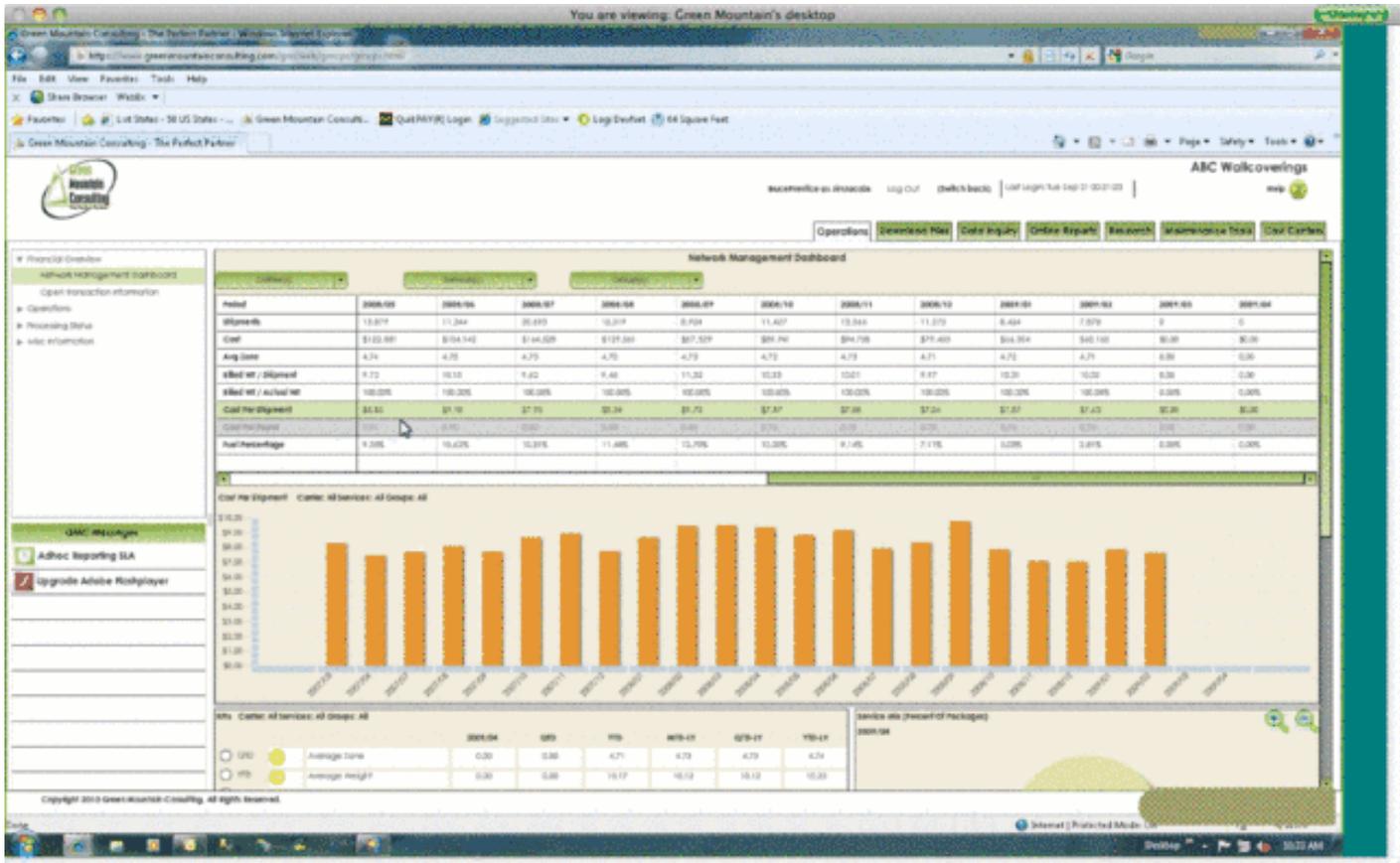
GMC built a proprietary billing and rating technology, parcel industry experts, and market intelligence to strategically partner with the largest parcel shippers in the world to manage parcel spending. They essentially provide a Business Process Management (BPM) solution that combines software and consulting services not available from any other provider of transportation audit and payment or spend management services. The richness of their service includes managing carrier invoice processing and payment, analyzing and optimizing customer networks, identifying waste and inefficiencies, implementing and tracking cost savings, and helping to implement carrier agreements which optimally support their customers' parcel strategy and network. On average, GMC's consulting services and WebORB-powered software help reduce their customers' parcel spending by 20%, netting a 300% plus Return on Investment (ROI).

Application Overview

GMC's application is utilized by their entire customer base to help them analyze their parcel spend. The client is written entirely in Flex and SSL is utilized for all network traffic, including file download and upload. The server is built on .NET 4.0 framework, and is called via Flash remoting. Dynamic calls are made to multiple databases consisting of nearly half a billion rows of data for some databases on the backend. ASP State Server is used for session management and WebORB integrates it all together very simply.

The application currently runs on a single machine, running Windows Server 2003, with

only 2GB of memory. They've supported a maximum of 50 concurrent Nearly 100% of GMC's traffic consists of registered users, utilizing login credentials.



The Problem

GMC's number one problem in attempting to upgrade their website was figuring out how to incorporate eight years worth of modifications and customizations to the existing website. All of those modifications had to be carried forward into the new site. Before the GMC team found WebORB, the team knew they wanted to transition away from Cold Fusion to more of an MVC-based architecture, but they didn't know where to start. They were resigned to keeping the then current ColdFusion backend and just hosting a new Adobe Flex front-end. The problem with this was that their development team had extensive .NET experience, but only one developer maintained and understood Cold Fusion. On top of that, the team had very little experience with Flex, remoting and ASP.NET.

After going nearly 100% down this path, the team found WebORB and realized they could convert over from Cold Fusion to .NET without having to make any code changes to the Flex client.

The Solution

The team, consisting of one Flex developer and one .NET developer, evaluated both WebORB and FluorineFX and according to Prentice, “FluorineFX couldn’t even come close to the simplicity of integration and deployment that WebORB offers. We were up and running with a simple application connecting to real data within hours and we were able to fast track our development effort using WebORB.” From the time they found WebORB, it took them just six months to convert Cold Fusion code over to .NET and move into production. Most of 1.5 year coding effort was for the Flex client application. One thing the developers consistently found themselves saying when developing with WebORB was, “That worked! First time!” One of the features that has been invaluable to them is the invocation test drive, which enable them to test the classes written in .NET right in the WebORB console.

The team is now modifying the interfaces between their client and server to allow a more fluid backend process. They did their first transformation and had it production ready in one afternoon. “We can’t say this about too many other products,” says Prentice.

Benefits

Ease of Development - Having the ability to quickly create server-side code and integrate it with the Flex application, meant the team could fast-track their development and get to market faster. “We literally could produce new functionality, test it and go live in a day, instead of weeks” says Prentice.

Better Performance - WebORB supports the AMF protocol, which enabled a very compact data transfer mechanism for requests and responses. This has improved the responsiveness of their application and has eliminated the bandwidth and memory problems they experienced with the old application.

Reliable/Scalable Solution - GMC has been using WebORB for two years and has not had one problem - no issues, no server crashes and no exceptions thrown by WebORB. GMC is able to scale their business cost effectively starting with WebORB Community Edition, which is FREE, and when they need to expand to more servers they will be moving to Enterprise Edition.

Increased ROI - WebORB is highly optimized with no latency effects and consumes very little bandwidth, which means GMC can support more concurrent customer connections on a single server.