

Bravo Store Systems reduces client costs with a new generation of point of sale solution.

Challenge

Obsolescence of software systems, a price rise of their support and transition to the new technology has always been a serious problem for business.

The founders of the Bravo Store Systems were engaged during the last ten years in maintenance of large chains of pawnshops and have already released 3 generations of pawn systems for points of sale. Since 2001, the last generation system has successfully operated in more than 50 pawnshops in 5 U.S. states and is recognized by such companies as eBay and Microsoft as the best innovative solution for pawnshops brokers. However, with business growth the company faced the fact that the system support was not effective and was costly.

“PRIMA was designed as an enterprise system for managing a large network of stores. PRIMA’s architecture and delivery systems prohibited our ability to affordably deliver our solutions to smaller businesses,” – says Kelly York, Director of Software Development at Bravo Store Systems.

Besides, having invested more than \$20 million over the decade in R&D points of sale and gained valuable experience, Bravo Store Systems saw a market opportunity to go out of the niche segment of pawnshops and to offer integrated POS solution for small and medium businesses for buy, sell and loan in the segment of used products.

Using the vision of its leadership, Bravo Team conducted a business analysis of this market opportunity and according to the results it has designed new software product, its software architecture and the project plan. The new generation of the product needed a complete change of the software system architecture and transition to the Software as a Service (SaaS) platform. After that it was necessary to proceed to the implementation phase. To assist in this purpose the company needed a qualified contractor.

“Bravo is our fourth generation development of our point of sale system, but it is the first time we’ve implemented it using SaaS architecture,” – says Steve Mack, CEO of Bravo Store Systems. *“Like James Cameron’s patient making of Avatar, the opportunity became a reality because of creation of new technologies and efficiencies afforded by SaaS and cloud-based hosting.”*

Solution

For implementation of the new product, Bravo Store Systems conducted an extensive search of software development companies and chose AltexSoft as the most competent company in SaaS systems sphere. The decisive factor was the integrated approach of the AltexSoft team to client’s business, personal approach and commitment to the tasks assigned.

“AltexSoft management took care to listen to our needs and to make sure we are getting the correct value for the service provided. Their leadership recognized our requirements, their groups efforts materialized. It became a cohesive relationship,” – says Kelly York, Director of Software Development at Bravo Store Systems.

Bravo Team has chosen the “dedicated team” approach as most preferable for the project, because it allows keep management staff on the client side and still have all software engineers in hand and 100% full time focused on project.

The project got a code name "Bravo" and for its implementation AltexSoft engaged professionals from several departments. The product was done according to the project plan:

Iteration Path	Description	Sprint Start (Scrum)
\Release 1\Sprint 1	Login / Licensing	3/1/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 2	Framework prep for outsource workers: session / workstation	3/18/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 3	Finish framework prep: Dynamic key generation. Error handling. Unit tests. Setting up the test environment.	4/3/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 4	Estimator Search Model Architecture Define the methods / queries for the estimator interface. Functioning mfg/ model search.	4/17/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 5	Finish Advanced Search -- Add unit tests Continue B-good Estimator Development --PK screen --New Item Acquisition	5/3/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 6	Add new item / existing screen	5/17/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 7	Finish Add Item screen. Finish main screen mock-ups. Start Jewelry Screen. Start transaction screen.	5/31/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 8	Finish add item screen, mockup all remaining screens.	6/14/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 9	Complete openers and closers, finalize schema for fees and interest. Convert to 2010	6/28/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 10	Implement The system Configuration Screen	7/12/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 11	Continue development of system configuration screen.	7/26/2010

	<p>Improve look and feel of product for demos to investors or other interested parties.</p> <p>Finish bugs in system configuration screen.</p> <p>Finish mockup of dashboard.</p>	
\Release 1\Sprint 12	Finish mockup of jewelry search/builder	8/9/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 13	Sale transactions	8/23/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 14	Continue Sales -- returns, -tags, misc tools, layaways	9/6/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 15	Finish layaways, taxes. Start Tendering. POS voids.	9/20/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 16	Finish Sale Trans other than holds / firearm sales start Tender Screen.	10/4/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 17	Finish retail tender screen, start customer screen	10/18/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 18	Finish customer screen, start firearm sales.	11/1/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 19	Finish Firearm Sales / POS Voids / Gun Book / Start Pop	11/15/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 20	Start POP / Inventory Management & Pricing / POS Receipts	11/29/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 22	View Pawn / Holds Loan Extensions / Firearm Pawns	12/27/2010
\Release 1\Sprint 24	Start Estimator / Layaway Management / Loan Management / Task Board	1/24/2011
\Release 1\Sprint 25	Finish layaway management, loan management, task bar, estimator configuration tabs Finish atf sales / atf pawn updates. Start reports.	2/7/2011
\Release 1\Sprint 26	Finish most of Estimator back office. Gun book and ATF reports.	2/21/2011
\Release 1\Sprint 27	Finish: Edit Models, Jewelry Builder, Purchasing	3/7/2011
\Release 1\Sprint 28	Missing Items Process. Test leads. Finish Jewelry Builder.	3/21/2011
\Release 1\Sprint 29	Finish missing Items / Reimbursement. Scrap management	4/4/2011
\Release 1\Sprint 30	Global customer, global till.	4/18/2011

“It took slightly over one year of development with four developers, one project manager, one and a half quality assurance resources, and part time data base administrator and systems analyst assistance,” – remembers Kelly York, Director of Software Development at Bravo Store Systems.

SaaS "Bravo" was implemented on the basis of the following technologies: Microsoft .NET, WPF, WCF, Entity Framework, Dev Force. The main task of the AltexSoft Team of engineers was not only the assistance in implementation of the new architecture, UI and testing of produced product, but also a need to inherit information from the database of the previous PRIMA generation.

New user interface of the “Bravo” SaaS.

The screenshot shows the Bravo Jewelry Builder interface. The main configuration area includes:

- Item Weight:** 6.0dwt, 18K - .750, White, Metal Value: \$251.50
- Diamonds:** Brand (Near White), Additional Information (Slight Tint, Lt Yellow, Yellow/Dark), Images (Absolute W., Near White, Slight Tint, Lt Yellow, Yellow/Dark)
- Diamond Cut:** HEART, IF-VS2, VS1-VS2, SI1-SI2, I1, I2, I3 (Few Spots W&W/Out Loupe)
- Weight Calculator:** Diamond Count (3), Diamond Size (each) (0.06 carats), Width (mm), Length (mm), Depth (mm), Stone Value: \$63.50

The right sidebar shows transaction options (Pawn, Buy) and a price summary:

Lady's Diamond Solitaire Ring	Estimated Pawn Amount	\$315.00
Pawn Amount		\$315.00

Benefits

- **Reduced Client Costs.** No need for hardware for a local SQL server at the store. No need for an expensive router or VPN to connect to the network (works via the Internet). No need for a local backup and/or off-site storage of the backup.
- **Smaller Installation and Deployment footprint.** Using .NET framework, client`s upgrades, deployments and installations are simple and quick.

- **99.95% uptime.** By running in the “cloud” and using load-balanced WCF web services with a SQL-Server Cluster, there is not a single point of hardware failure. We can scale the system as needed.

“We’ve drastically reduced client’s costs by reducing or nearly eliminating the IT footprint on site and reduced overall risk by having a single client version and a data center with a consistent schema,” – summarizes Mike Wishart, Technical Director at Bravo Store Systems.

Product Development with AltexSoft

AltexSoft offers a complete development cycle of SaaS and Cloud solutions for e-commerce, tourism, oil & gas, marketing & retail, as well as dedicated teams of various software specialists to participate in IT projects.

AltexSoft provides professional consulting on project management, architecture of information systems and quality assurance of software products.

Information on other projects implemented by AltexSoft you can find on the page:

<http://www.altexsoft.com/portfolio>

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