

Spare parts distributor speeds towards IBM i-based tablet application

ERP

IBM i

Mobile App

Founded in 1973, the company is one of the leading motor vehicle spare parts importer and distributor in its country. It sells tens of thousands of original and OEM parts to government institutions, commercial vehicle fleets, garages, insurance companies, and rental car companies. Its state-of-the-art call service center is connected to a logistics center, helping agents give customers up-to-date information and assistance at any time.



The Challenge

The company's core ERP application for managing orders, inventory, and fulfillment resides on an IBM i platform. Recently, the company decided to migrate off of the IBM i platform. It is currently in the process of determining which ERP system to upgrade to.

The company employs a distributed sales force. During the sales process, salespeople visit customers across the country and take orders in person. They then call the call center to find out if the requested parts are in stock, and place the order over the phone. At the beginning and end of each working day, they connect to the ERP platform through a terminal and upload final order quantities.

In order to further improve customer service and increase sales efficiency, the company decided to upgrade its salesforce user experience. Specifically, it decided to enable mobile connectivity to the mission-critical IBM i ERP application, in order to enable sales personnel to check inventory and place orders in real time, on the go, without the need to call the call center or find an emulator to connect to the IBM i.

This project was of high strategic importance to the company, and the company decided not to wait until migration to the new ERP system was complete.

However, the impending migration made it even more crucial for the new mobile application to be developed quickly and cost-effectively.



The Solution

The company used OpenLegacy to develop a tablet application connected to the IBM i ERP platform. All relevant IBM i screens were converted into screens in the tablet app.



OpenLegacy created a tablet app connected to our iSeries ERP with zero changes to our IBM i environment: No code modifications to the ERP application, and the IBM Bluemix cloud deployment meant that we didn't need to allocate new server resources on our end. As a result, the development process was lightweight, fast, and inexpensive.

CIO, Auto Parts Importer/Distributor

Within three months, the entire system was up and running, deployed in the cloud using IBM Bluemix cloud infrastructure. All sales people now use the tablet app on Google Nexus 7 tablets to access the ERP application at any time, wherever they are. Instead of the previous time-consuming process of calling the call center and using the terminal at the end of the day, all functionality is now available through the always-connected tablet: The sales team now creates new quotes, generates custom discounts, and submits orders—all over the country, instead of calling the call center or using a terminal.



The Result

Increased sales, improved sales productivity

A sales process that used to take 15 minutes, now takes two. The upshot? More productive salespeople, and more sales. Customer satisfaction improved as well, with customers having their orders confirmed on the spot.

Cost savings & faster time to market through a non-invasive, cloud-deployed solution

The new app was developed in a few days thanks to OpenLegacy's fast and intuitive mobile development environment. By unlocking its IBM i assets and



OpenLegacy increased our sales within three months, by letting all our sales people access our IBM i ERP system at any time, from any place. Customer satisfaction also improved as a result.

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making them available in the mobile world, the company remains competitive in the market by making sure its sales process is optimized.

Unlocking the magic of mobile

The core business functionality of getting inventory levels and creating new orders was previously locked in IBM i "green screens." Now it is easily accessible through a tablet application. Productivity, speed, and ease of use all improved as a result.

By effectively using the OpenLegacy Platform to be a pathway in combining the best of the "old" application world with the "new" mobile demand, the customer not only was able to leverage the security, stability, cost effectiveness and investment of their IBM i environment, but now have a revitalized view of IBM i as a critical and vital component of their overall long term IT strategy.

About OpenLegacy

OpenLegacy's Digital-Driven Integration enables organizations with legacy systems to release new digital services faster and easier than ever before. Connecting directly to even the most complex core systems, OpenLegacy automatically generates the digital-ready components needed to integrate legacy assets into exciting new innovations. With OpenLegacy, industry-leading companies release new apps, features, and updates while spending a fraction of the time and resources, so they quickly and easily become digital to the core.