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DAN HERRMANN | LOGISTICS SYSTEMS MANAGER

Xerox Canada Ltd.

Xerox Canada gains total system solution with RFgen Mobile Development Studio.

At a glance...

Industry

Document Management
Manufacturer

Application

Warehouse
Management

Environment

Legacy System with
Oracle Database

Xerox Canada Inc., headquartered in Toronto, Ontario, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Norwalk, Connecticut based Xerox Corporation, the world’s leading enterprise for business process and document management technology. Products include printing and publishing systems, digital copiers, laser and solid ink printers and fax machines. Support services feature in-house production, mailrooms and online document repositories. Xerox Canada employs a workforce of 4,000 people and was recently chosen as one of “Canada’s Top 100 Employers for 2012.”

The Challenge

Xerox Canada had a Legacy mainframe system that was antiquated and closed. “Our Legacy system had older technology that was no longer supported,” explained Logistics Systems Manager Dan Herrmann. “Everything was failing. Each time there was a problem, we’d have to figure out how to recover so we could continue doing business. It wasn’t a visible system within the organization. We needed to move on.”

Xerox Canada was planning to open up and mobilize their Legacy system on the back end with web services. In addition, their warehouse’s wireless network and handheld devices were out of date. “We also needed a new application for receiving and inventory moves within the warehouse that would be compatible with the new environment,” added IT Project Manager Michael Milne.

A Xerox colleague in Washington State recommended RFgen as a possible solution.

The Solution

According to RFgen’s Senior ERP Consultant and Project Lead Paul Hanson, RFgen’s ability to interface with their Legacy system via web services was the most appealing benefit for Xerox Canada from a technical standpoint.

“Even though interfacing with web services on the back end is not a typical interface for us,” said Hanson, “it illustrates RFgen’s ability to be flexible. Being able to connect to different systems is the real power of RFgen’s mobile framework.”

Also important to Xerox Canada was RFgen’s ability to connect to their Oracle database. In fact, RFgen is able to connect to a variety of databases like IBM, DB2, and Microsoft SQL, as well as enterprise systems like JD Edwards, SAP and Microsoft Dynamics.

RFgen provided a total solution for Xerox Canada that encompassed Xerox equipment on one side and replacement parts on the other side. “We built a complete system from the ground up for shipping, receiving and inventory using the RFgen tool set,” said Hanson.

Even though RFgen is well known for its off-the-shelf applications that are easy to customize, over 2,000 RFgen customers, like Xerox Canada, buy the RFgen Mobile Development Studio so they can build their own applications.

The Result

RFgen Benefits for Xerox Canada:

- Tremendous savings - A Xerox IT person now supports the RFgen tool set. "When we need a minor enhancement," Mike Milne explained, "our own IT person can do it. We are able to do additional programming work on all of the applications very easily."
- Quick development time - When ideas for new applications come up, Xerox Canada turns them around fast. "We don't need months of development," said Dan Herrmann, "Sometimes, new applications have taken just weeks, even days, to develop. That's been very important for us."
- Reliability - "From the IT side, RFgen is very reliable software in terms of how it integrates with our system," Milne said. "It's very easy software for developing applications."
- Short learning curve - "Any time you transition from an old system to a new system, there is usually a learning curve," Herrmann said. "RFgen delivered a very short learning curve."
- Productivity gains - Xerox's "business case" was to get rid of old technology. However, Milne emphasized, "Productivity gains drove the whole project."
- Ease of training - RFgen gave warehouse workers the ability to quickly become comfortable and productive with the new technology.

- Good communications - Both Milne and Herrmann were very pleased with the high level of competence of Project Lead Paul Hanson as he worked with them each day on the new RFgen system. They were also pleasantly surprised by the regular phone calls they received from RFgen senior management. "I was very impressed that a RFgen executive kept in touch with us throughout the project and was actually tracking what was going on," said Herrmann.

In 2012, Xerox Canada looks forward to undertaking a tremendous expansion of RFgen software applications. "With just a little training," Milne said, "we're confident we'll be able to greatly expand the uses of RFgen software next year."



About RFgen Software

Incorporated in 1995, California-based RFgen Software provides flexible and reliable mobile supply chain solutions that solve real-world business challenges. As a certified Oracle, SAP, Microsoft, Deltek and Vocollect partner, RFgen actively seeks companies facing challenges managing their internal supply chain operations and solves them using real-world experience, industry best practices, and state-of-the-art technology. RFgen's Mobile Framework division specializes in development tools for mobile, wireless and voice environments and provides open standards based connectivity to a multitude of systems (database, SOA, legacy, etc.). RFgen's ERP Integration division focuses on providing certified, open-source transactions and integration expertise for Oracle E-Business Suite, Oracle JD Edwards, SAP, Deltek Costpoint and Microsoft Dynamics solutions.

RFgen's Mobile Framework is an open systems development platform that speeds the path from idea, to proof-of-concept, to solution deployment. RFgen provides built-in, native functionality for extending real-time and on-demand access to enterprise data to almost any mobile device available today. RFgen's Mobile Solutions are currently installed in more than 35 countries, in over 2,600 locations, and are supported by a certified group of over 125 solution partners.

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