CAS SEVERN

SPRINGSOURCE RESULTS

Groovy and Grails deliver the following business results to CAS Severn:

- Solid Development Standards
- Rapid Developer Ramp Up – 4 weeks compared with months or even a year
- Faster Development Cycle
- Rapid Prototype Turnaround
- Stronger Customer Relationships
- Greater Creativity
- More Available Functionality
- Easier Maintenance

TESTIMONIAL

"In Groovy and Grails it is easy to build a prototype very fast and show it to the client. This is the perfect tool for prototyping."

"A new developer can ramp up on Groovy and Grails in a couple weeks. It would take several months, maybe even a year, to get up to speed on our old in-house framework."

"The great value of Groovy and Grails is less code, which means less maintenance, and that saves time. Because of the conventions, any developer that knows Grails can look at the code and immediately understand what is going on. This makes maintenance much easier."

Cas Severn

CAS Severn, based in Laurel, Maryland, has been working for more than 30 years helping companies, government agencies and education sector customers maximize their IT investments by providing end-to-end technology solutions, as well as IT consulting, infrastructure optimization, enterprise process and content management, and operational support.

Challenge

CAS Severn developed an in-house Java development framework that has been used for many years. Although the framework is powerful, mature, fast, well-built and used successfully in many client applications, there is inconsistent documentation thus, making it difficult to learn.

"Our in-house framework is hard to learn for a non experienced Java developer like our legacy iSeries developers," says Herbert Bäuerle, Software Developer, CAS Severn. "It takes weeks and months of experience for a new Java developer to learn the framework and its usage. A lot of research is necessary to find out all the great possibilities and functionalities which are available in the CAS Severn framework. How can you ramp up in a short time on something that is not really well documented?

"In addition, outside of Java EE, the CAS Severn framework does not force any standards, so developers could use the framework any way they wanted," Bäuerle continues. "Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to maintain existing code, and figure out what former developers were thinking."

Tooling was a similar problem. The CAS Severn framework offered limited tooling, which made it difficult for new Java developers to ramp up quickly.

CAS Severn faced an additional challenge in trying to bring legacy iSeries programmers – who had been with the company 20-30 years – into the web development environment, to maximize use of development resources. The complexity of working in pure Java and the CAS Severn in-house framework proved too difficult for these programmers to master. Other iSeries and mainframe companies are facing the same challenges.

Due to the limitations noted above of CAS Severn's application framework, CAS Severn sought out a new platform that will enable them to develop web applications faster, make it easy for new Java developers and legacy iSeries developers to become productive quickly, and provide standards so that applications could be easily maintained by any developer.

Solution

Herbert Bäuerle was given the task of testing Groovy and Grails as an alternative development environment, and he achieved great success.

"Grails is, after some challenges with the first versions, now a very stable and mature framework," Bäuerle says. "It is well documented now and everyone can learn it easily. This could be a great platform for our company."

Groovy is a dynamic language for the Java Virtual Machine that offers a flexible Java-like syntax that developers can learn in a matter of hours. Grails is an advanced and innovative Web application framework based on Groovy, and built on proven open source technologies such as Spring. Both Groovy and Grails are backed by SpringSource, the leader in Java application infrastructure and management.

Bäuerle's first project developed in Groovy and Grails was an application to handle fees and billing for a Federal Agency, which also leveraged Spring Webflow and Hibernate. The application is in Beta testing and will go into production January, 2010. Other applications using Groovy and Grails include an API that web-enables legacy iSeries applications, and an online web registration system for non profit organizations.

Benefits

GROOVY AND GRAILS DELIVER THE FOLLOWING BUSINESS RESULTS TO CAS SEVERN:

Solid Development Standards
Bäuerle says a major advantage of the Groovy and Grails environment is the solid set of conventions. Groovy and Grails provide a set of guidelines that standardize development and streamline maintenance.

Rapid Developer Ramp Up
"A new Java developer can ramp up on Groovy and Grails in a couple weeks," Bäuerle confirms. "It would take a much longer time, to get up to speed on Java."

Faster Development Cycle
"Grails allows me to set up a project very fast, and the development cycle is definitely faster in the Groovy language," Bäuerle confirms.

Rapid Prototype Turnaround
"In Groovy and Grails it is easy to build a prototype very fast and show it to the client," Bäuerle explains. "This is the perfect tool for prototyping. Conversely, it is not possible to develop a prototype this fast when writing code in pure Java."

Stronger Customer Relationships
According to Bäuerle, the advantages of Groovy and Grails – such as faster development and quick prototype turnaround – also strengthen the relationship with the customer. CAS Severn's clients can be more involved in the development process, seeing the functionality with each iteration, discussing the options, and witnessing the speed and responsiveness of the CAS Severn development team. In the end, this makes the company more competitive.

Greater Creativity
Because Groovy and Grails are flexible and fast, they enable the CAS Severn developers to be more creative and try innovative approaches to solving customer problems.

More Available Functionality
Bäuerle points out that more than 300 plug-ins are available for Grails, which means that many of the functionality challenges are already solved for CAS Severn when they start a new project. On CAS Severn's previous platform, most of this functionality would have to be built by the developer.

Easier Maintenance
"The great value of Groovy and Grails is less code, which means less maintenance, and that saves time," Bäuerle says. "Because of the conventions, any developer that knows Grails can look at the code and immediately understand what is going on. This makes maintenance much easier."

About SpringSource

SpringSource, a division of VMware, Inc., (NYSE: VMW) and the leader in Java application infrastructure and management, provides a complete suite of software products that accelerate the entire build, run, manage enterprise Java application lifecycle. SpringSource employs the open source leaders who created and drive innovation for Spring, the de facto standard programming model for enterprise Java applications. SpringSource also employs the Java and Web thought leaders within the Apache Tomcat, Apache HTTP Server, Hyperic, Groovy and Grails open source communities. Nearly half of the Global 2000, including many world's leading retail, financial services, manufacturing, healthcare, technology and public sector clients are SpringSource customers. For more information visit: www.springsource.com.