eDocBuilder
Empowering Web-to-Print

ALEYANT SYSTEMS

Mimeo Taps Aleyant for Template/VDP Technology

Company Background

Mimeo was founded in 1998 by Internet entrepreneurs to address the complex business document printing needs of organizations, particularly those with mobile workers and distributed organizations. The privately held company is headquartered in New York City, and has production facilities adjacent to FedEx hubs in Newark, New Jersey, and Memphis, Tennessee. One hundred percent of its orders are received online and most are shipped next-day to over 4,000 customers, including 20% of the Fortune 1000. The company has frequently been recognized for technology, innovation and rapid growth.

Out of necessity the company has invested significant resources in the development of proprietary technology focused on print, with a large number of programmers located in the United States, as well as a team in China.

Challenge

To ensure its continued technology leadership position in B-to-B digital document printing, Mimeo needed to accelerate its rate of bringing innovations to market. One opportunity identified was to quickly evolve Mimeo Marketplace, an easy-to-use tool that lets customers create customized online storefronts, publish documents, and let others do the ordering. Mimeo wanted to add both versioning and variable data capabilities to the service. The company was seeking a partner who was equally innovative and could support Mimeo's fast time-to-market requirements.

Solution

Mimeo chose to utilize Aleyant's eDocBuilder technology to power Mimeo Marketplace. Aleyant and Mimeo both employ the Microsoft .NET framework and PDF workflow, ensuring good alignment from a technological standpoint. Further, Aleyant had the desired versioning and VDP capabilities, which allow users to customize materials at the time of order, and its solution was compatible with Mimeo's advanced infrastructure.

Mimeo Marketplace is unique in the Web-to-print world, according to Chuck Gehman, Vice President of Product Platforms for Mimeo. "Most Web-to-print solutions started with a storefront catalog," he explains. "But Mimeo has always been strongly focused on the needs of document creators and content owners, only recently turning our attention to document users by creating Marketplace as an addition to our suite of applications. Thus our document creation capabilities within the core Mimeo site are quite sophisticated, and we needed a variable/versioning engine that could match that sophistication. eDocBuilder fit that bill nicely."

Results

Using Aleyant, Mimeo was able to launch the VDP functionality on an accelerated timetable that exceeded expectations. The Mimeo Marketplace VDP application quickly offered Mimeo customers a

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platform that was reliable, scalable, and much more affordable and functional than many other variable data offerings in the market.

"We were delighted with Aleyant's collaborative work process as we executed against requirements," says Gehman. "We were able to include some capabilities that are proprietary to Mimeo while still taking advantage of Aleyant's ongoing product development and common code base. Aleyant was efficient and easy to work with, quickly understanding and implementing against our requirements without any rework."

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the training. They can store the manual contents as one file and the cover as another. With eDocBuilder a third party can then easily customize the cover to reflect its own branding, apply that cover to the training manual, and order printed copies. The content owner is relieved of the need to customize the cover each time a third party orders one, twenty or fifty manuals."

Mimeo also plans to take advantage of eDocBuilder's full variable data capabilities as it continues to enhance both Marketplace and the core site. Gehman explains, "With eDocBuilder running in the background, a PDF can be brought into Mimeo, and document owners can easily work with our team to add the variable fields with a very functional and easy to use Mimeo interface. We are looking forward to adding that capability in the near term. In addition, we have big plans for eDocBuilder in the future; it is an exciting part of what we are doing. The way we jointly implemented, it is extremely reliable and scalable."

Gehman points out that Mimeo has an elaborate production environment and operates three redundant data centers serving its more than 4,000 customers. High reliability of any and all systems is vital. Aleyant was very responsive in ensuring that eDocBuilder could be seamlessly integrated with both the front-end and back-end Mimeo infrastructure and could function reliably within the high availability Mimeo environment.

With the eDocBuilder and its robust set of functionality coupled with Mimeo's own development teams, Mimeo expects to continue to lead the industry in new print services, features and functionality.

"One of the most important reasons we selected Aleyant," continues Gehman, "is that the system is exposed as standards-based Web services, and that fits in fantastically well with our architecture, which is also Web services based."

Beyond the technology challenges, one of the most important and differentiating features of Mimeo Marketplace versus other storefront/catalog Print ecommerce solutions is that it is entirely administered by Mimeo's customer. "All Mimeo documents are built from one or more files from a variety of applications," he says. "For example, a provider of training services may want to make training manuals available to third parties who will deliver