

WRQ® VERASTREAM™ IMPROVES GLOBAL EQUIPMENT TRACKING

New web interface slashes response times, boosts productivity

ORGANIZATION

- Nortel Networks

BUSINESS NEED

- Support rapid business growth with better tracking of worldwide installations and service projects

SOLUTION

- Verastream Integration Broker™ provided a web-based platform for global interactions

RESULTS

- Information tracking reduced from two to five minutes down to 30 seconds
- Speed and quality of customer service improved
- Worldwide assets and equipment managed more effectively

A global communications leader, Nortel Networks is in the process of creating a high-performance Internet with optimized reliability and speed. Annual sales of telecommunications and computer networking equipment in excess of \$30 billion give Nortel plenty of installation and service projects to track. In fact, the database system that monitors those jobs constitutes a project of its own. With the help of WRQ® Verastream Integration Broker™ and WRQ Consulting Services, the tracking system is now faster and more effective than ever.

But system responsiveness wasn't always that good. The legacy system, used in four locations worldwide (Monkstown, Northern Ireland; St. Laurent, Quebec, Canada; Richardson, Texas; and Research Triangle Park, North Carolina), consisted of an Oracle database with interfaces and applications created in Motif, a graphical toolkit for the X Window System environment. Like many legacy systems, its poor speed and performance detracted from the value of the information in the system. For example, receiving data from Nortel's Ireland location could take up to five minutes, which in turn delayed responses to customer inquiries and requests.

What Nortel Needed

The Ireland connection in particular pointed to a need to streamline operations, create a single repository for global data, and reduce restraints on bandwidth and network speed. Tim Thomas, project leader, wanted a web browser interface that would be easier to use, maintain, and upgrade without disturbing the underlying applications that hold the installation and service data.

To meet the challenge, Thomas turned to the legacy-to-web expertise of WRQ and the advanced technology of Verastream. Verastream is more practical than application re-engineering and more reliable than a quick fix. Unlike other integration tools, Verastream

enables the complete integration of ERP, CRM, host, and database systems with each other and the web.

How Verastream Delivered Outstanding Results

The critical components of the Nortel solution were Verastream's universal integration engine, Java Presentation Agent, and Oracle database connector. Here's how Verastream works:

- Verastream Integration Broker is composed of a powerful integration engine, database adapters, and technology connectors. It serves as the translator of the integration infrastructure, combining diverse IT systems at the business-process level. Using Verastream's graphical point-and-click tools, you tell the integration engine what to do. Then the engine uses Verastream database adapters, application adapters, and technology connectors to access data from the appropriate locations.
- The Verastream Java Presentation Agent is a Java applet that enables a web-based user interface to interact and integrate with back-end systems via Verastream's integration engine. In Nortel's case, the JPA provides a graphical interface that is executed via a URL. The URL prompts the downloading and start-up of a JPA component that provides the user interface.

- Verastream's Oracle database adapter exemplifies the solution's openness and flexibility. Verastream supports more standard and custom databases than any other integration software. And while competitive products use middleware to connect databases, Verastream provides native database connections and requires no third-party software.

The Nortel project involved a deadline that required rapid turnaround. WRQ consultants conducted a one-week scoping, analysis, and design process at the Nortel site in Research Triangle Park. Then Thomas, together with the clients and subject-matter expert Jeffrey Johnson, reviewed and agreed to WRQ's plan for the new interface.

Meanwhile, WRQ consultants developed an understanding of the existing system by reviewing the database and business process rules with Johnson. The WRQ team developed the application over the next four weeks and turned it over to Nortel for deployment and testing at the four sites. WRQ met the deadline and the new system met the challenge. (Shortly thereafter, Nortel outsourced portions of the IT department, including legacy system support, to Computer Sciences Corporation, a Fortune 500 consulting firm.)

Waiting Times Slashed with Streamlined Access

The new system, called WebIQ (short for Web-based Installation Query) provides streamlined access to the Oracle database. Information is extracted seamlessly, providing almost instantaneous response times to requests.

The bottom line for Nortel? Waiting time for retrieval of requested data was slashed from two to five minutes down to 30 seconds or less. The fast turnaround has improved business cycles and productivity. It has also opened the door for a second- and third-phase integration effort involving Baan and SAP applications.

Thomas was impressed with the power of the Verastream solution. "It did exactly what we needed it to do," he said. "It provided a platform for the international and domestic locations to efficiently access the data and cut down the delays experienced in the predecessor C/Motif applications."

Making It Happen: WRQ Consulting Services

The skill of the WRQ consultants complemented the Verastream technology, Thomas added. In addition to consulting, the WRQ Consulting Services group provides software deployment, custom programming, and enterprise integration.

WRQ Consulting Services also works with its network of business partners as required to offer a full complement of skills to fit an organization's needs. The highly trained WRQ staff consists of project managers, consultants, and systems engineers. "They did an excellent job," Thomas said. "Two words: They're super."

About WRQ

WRQ provides innovative technology for solving the most challenging business problems. For more than 20 years, WRQ has been helping Fortune 500 companies access and integrate information, so they can transform the way they do business. With more than eight million users worldwide, WRQ is one of the top software companies in the U.S. and is consistently recognized for its award-winning products. A privately held company, WRQ is ranked as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work for" by *Fortune* magazine. The company offers its software and services in 51 countries through a global network of business partners. For more information, visit the company's web site at www.wrq.com.



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