Overview

Country or Region: United States
Industry: Manufacturing

Customer Profile

E-Z-GO manufactures golf cars and other utility vehicles that are sold worldwide.

Business Situation

E-Z-GO needed to exchange inventory information between their JBA ERP system (running on an IBM AS/400®) and their new Red Prairie warehouse management system.

Solution

With the help of Microsoft and Innovative Architects, E-Z-GO used Microsoft Host Integration Server and BizTalk Server 2006 to enable communication between the legacy and Red Prairie systems. Now both systems are kept up-to-date with the latest inventory and shipping information.

Benefits

- Preserved investment in existing legacy system.
- Integration required no data migration and minimal custom coding.
- Streamlined, single-point access to assets of both systems.
- Framework provides for reduced number of man hours for additional integration projects.
- Improved monitoring of cross-system business processes, such as shipping delays.

Three companies share resources to create an elegant integration solution to a legacy ERP system.

"By utilizing Microsoft's BizTalk and Host Integration Server Technologies, E-Z-GO will be able to add messaging scenarios to their enterprise very quickly. We're talking about weeks of man time transformed into a few days."

Rich McCraw, Innovative Architects, Principal Architect

E-Z-GO manufactures golf cars and other utility vehicles. E-Z-GO was founded in 1954 in Augusta, Georgia. In 1961, E-Z-GO became part of Textron, a global, multi-industry company. This provided E-Z-GO with access to the resources needed for a massive worldwide expansion. Today, E-Z-GO boasts the largest sales and service network in the industry, with more factory branch locations and independent distributors than any other manufacturer.

To manage the inventory of such a widely distributed network of factories and distributors, E-Z-GO made plans to purchase a warehouse management system (WMS), but before they could fully leverage the WMS, an additional solution was needed. The new WMS had to communicate with E-Z-GO's legacy JBA enterprise resource planning (ERP) system on the AS/400.

With the help of Microsoft and Innovative Architects, a Microsoft Gold Certified partner, E-Z-GO implemented Microsoft Host Integration Server 2006 and BizTalk Server 2006 as a communication layer between the two systems. The solution provided for an elegant and streamlined interface between the systems, providing unified views of manufacturing, warehousing, and shipping across the two disparate systems. In addition, the solution provides a single point of interface for communication to both systems, allowing other E-Z-GO resources to seamlessly access the assets of both systems.

For More Information

Situation

Even as E-Z-GO finalized plans to purchase Red Prairie – a world-class, state-of-the-art warehouse management system – the golf car manufacturer was also searching for another solution. What they needed was a way for Red Prairie to communicate with their JBA ERP system on the AS/400.

The legacy JBA tracked the manufacturing side of their business, and it was essential that both JBA and Red Prairie could communicate with each other. JBA and Red Prairie needed to track inventory as it moved in and out of the business processes handled on the other system.

Solution

Three companies -- Microsoft, Innovative Architects, and E-Z-GO – came together to provide an integrated solution. The group chose the Microsoft Host Integration Server and BizTalk Server 2006 products to manage the messaging between the two disparate systems. In less than a month, the group had coded, tested, and deployed the HIS/BizTalk communication layer – on time and on budget.

As in the past, when a golf car or other utility vehicle is ready to be sent to the warehouse, an employee scans the vehicle's serial number. BizTalk now monitors the legacy system for this action, translates the event, and sends it to Red Prairie. Furthermore, Red Prairie sends a message to the JBA system through BizTalk when the vehicle is actually shipped to a customer, allowing BizTalk to monitor for shipping delays and notify the appropriate department of any delays.

Benefits

Preserved Investment in Legacy Systems

Because E-Z-GO was satisfied with the performance of their legacy JBA ERP system, they saved money by integrating with it instead of replacing it.

Integration Required No Data Migration and Minimal Custom Coding

E-Z-GO saved money, time, and aggravation because no data migration and minimal custom coding was required to integrate their new, state-of-the-art warehouse management system with their legacy system.

Streamlined, Single-point Access to Assets of Both Systems

BizTalk Server 2006 provides a single point of interface to both the legacy system and Red Prairie, which E-Z-GO can leverage for future integration projects.

Reduced Number of Man Hours

E-Z-GO is in the early stages of using Red Prairie, Microsoft Host Integration Server, and BizTalk Server 2006, so it's difficult to estimate direct savings in total man hours. However, projected savings for future modifications or new projects that require communication between JBA and Red Prairie are expected to be significant.

Improved Monitoring of Business Processes

BizTalk monitors each item by serial number, even after it's sent over to Red Prairie. If an item fails to ship within a specified time frame, BizTalk sends a message to the shipping department, which can notify the customer. In the past it was easy for a problem like this, which requires monitoring across systems, to go unnoticed.

Software
- Microsoft Host Integration Server 2006
- Microsoft BizTalk Server 2006
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005
- Microsoft Windows Server System™

Technologies
- Microsoft Visual Studio 2005
- Microsoft .Net Framework - C#