

America's Major Chemical Distribution Company

Project: 'UVX Application' Support

About the Customer

The customer is a major chemical distributor, headquartered in Redmond (WA), USA. The company helps chemical manufacturers to move products to end-customers more efficiently. It also provides third party logistics and integrated sourcing, procurement and warehousing services.

Background & Business Drivers

UVX is a business critical system for the customer that manages various business functions including financials, retail and supply chain. It is the heart of customer's business managing information on end customers, products, regulations, inventory, purchasing and more. The tools and data structures that comprise UVX were developed in 1989, at the time when customer acquired another chemical business and merged it into Van Waters & Rogers Inc. to create the United States' leading distributor of industrial chemicals.

The main objective of the customer was to outsource support of the Distribution Control System (DCS), which was part of the UVX system for managing the supply chain. DCS managed the full supply chain cycle including sales order processing, shipping & billing, inventory & warehouse management, purchase order processing, repackaging and blending. The customer was very keen to improve the support level for the application and reduce maintenance costs.

InterralT's Value Proposition

InterralT showcased its capabilities by successfully executing 2 pilot projects on mainframe and Java framework. Pilot project was delivered first time right and completed within the estimated time and budget. Support for DCS started with the successful completion of these pilot projects. An annual contract for DCS support & maintenance was awarded to InterralT in Jan 2003. The DCS support team has now grown from a fledgling 2 member team to a strong team of 7 members as all responsibilities and system ownership has been transferred primarily to Interra IT support team.

Scope of services & Solution

InterralT transitioned the support activities from customer's employees and fairly quickly assumed full responsibility for DCS support. Interra IT supports the application on a 24x7 model, which includes dedicated onsite support during US business hours, dedicated offshore support during India business hours and onsite on-call support covering the remaining hours of the day. The support activities include:

- Resolving Remedy Tickets within the strict SLA set by the business users
- High priority Batch abends handled at Onsite and lower priority sent to offshore
- Functional Enhancements

User requests are routed through customer's helpdesk system 'Remedy'. Based on the priority of requests, tasks are assigned to onsite support personnel or offshore delivery team to be delivered within agreed SLAs.

Along with 24x7 production support, the team also delivered the following enhancements for DCS which helped in adding new functionality as required by the business

- CAMS
- Export Control
- VERTEX upgrade
- Gross Margin
- Product Approval Hierarchy

Business Challenges

- Complete application maintenance lifecycle covering current state analysis, knowledge transfer, transition of support, continuous support and enhancement were to be executed from offshore
- Resource ramp-up and knowledge transfer had to be accomplished in a short span of time
- UVX was an extremely diversified, highly customised and complicated application with very limited documentation which was technically and functionally not in sync
- Most of the deliveries being from offshore, conversation and discussions with users were limited to emails/phone

Pay offs

InterraIT won quite a few accolades from the customer on the successful transition and taking up the primary support of DCS in record time. Some of the benefits to the customer include:

- High customer satisfaction with the level and quality of support
- Continuous process improvement (CMM Level 5) and value addition
- Reduced cost of support on account of offshore deliveries

Technologies

- IBM S/390 mainframe with z/OS, Enterprise COBOL, CICS, VSAM, JCL and DB2.
- Reporting tools – Easytrieve, View Direct.
- G2 Framework Java/J2EE
- WebSphere Message Broker, WebSphere Application Server