

ASNA Case Study

JH Rudolph keeps budgets current with ASNA Visual RPG and XML

J. H. Rudolph has been building driveways and highways for 65 years throughout Indiana and Kentucky . Its work extends from paving a small private driveway all the way to pouring a fifty-mile stretch of interstate highway.

J. H. Rudolph uses an IBM i for all its back-end data processing. Its construction estimating and field management software (provided by HCSS, Inc) runs on Windows PCs in local and remote offices (and soon in the field). To keep its large projects under budget and on time, J. H. Rudolph needed a way to integrate the HCSS Windows software to its IBM i database. To solve this problem, J. H. Rudolph turned to ASNA Visual RPG for .NET and an interesting use of XML.

Getting data into the IBM i

As you might imagine, keeping large construction jobs on budget and scheduled appropriately is a huge task. The general way that J. H. Rudolph handles this is that when a job is first secured the master budget and schedule are entered into HCSS. On a daily basis, construction supervisors update the HCSS budget and scheduling information with the latest information. When the job is first secured, and then on a recurring, timely basis, this data needs to find its way to the IBM i for integration with other backoffice functions such as accounts payable, accounts receivable, job costing, and general ledger. IBM i reports are then printed and distributed to project managers to keep the apprised of the big picture on the project.

Says J. H. Rudolph IT Director Ruth Best, "In the old days, we imported from comma-separate ASCII files. Then, using a file transfer product, copied that file up to the IBM i. This process was error prone, took several steps, didn't offer immediate feedback if something was out of balance, and was hard to fully automate.

"In the spring of 2005, I took an ASNA Visual RPG class and was

AT A GLANCE

Customer Profile

For more than 65 years, J. H. Rudolph has been building driveways and highways throughout Indiana and Kentucky. Its work extends from paving a small private driveway all the way to pouring a fifty-mile stretch of interstate highway.

Situation

To keep its large projects under budget and on time, J.

H. Rudolph needed a way to integrate the HCSS Windows software to its IBM i database.

Solution

Using AVR for .NET they created an interactive Windows application that reads the XML data (using the .NET Framework System.XML namespace) and writes that data directly to IBM i data files. No batch file transfer, no clunky job scheduling, and no manual data verification is necessary.

Benefits

The new process runs much quicker-in a single step, it is vastly more reliable, and provides instant feedback as to the validity of the data.

Products

AVR.NET, DataGate, IBM i, OS/400, DB2/400, Visual Studio .NET



introduced to some of what it could with XML. When I returned to my office, I discussed the possibility of exporting data directly from the HCSS application in XML—and subsequently reading that XML data and processing it with an interactive AVR for .NET Windows program. Being an interactive application, if this approach worked, the AVR app would offer instant feedback as to the validity of the data.”

An outstanding success

Ruth and her HCSS representative rolled up their sleeves and got busy. HCSS was intrigued with the idea and helped out on their end making it easier for the HCSS product to export the XML appropriately. With just a little help from ASNA's tech support, Ruth wrote the AVR for .NET Windows application to process the incoming XML and get it directly posted to the IBM i.

“Six months ago I couldn't even spell XML, and now, with AVR for .NET and ASNA's help, I've quickly solved a large problem for our organization!”

AVR connects directly to the IBM i through ASNA DataGate. Offering superb response times and obeying all IBM i-imposed security, AVR and DataGate gave Ruth the pieces she was missing. Her interactive AVR for .NET Windows application reads the XML data (using the .NET Framework System.XML namespace) and writes that data directly to IBM i data files. No batch file transfer, no clunky job scheduling, and no manual data verification is necessary with her new application.

Ruth Best, J. H. Rudolph IT Director

The result? An outstanding success! Ruth says, “The new process runs much quicker—in a single step, is vastly more reliable, and provides feedback right away if something isn't correct. This process essentially makes what was once a frustrating, batch process and transforms it into a modern, interactive application.”

Ruth declares, “Six months ago I couldn't even spell XML, and now, with AVR for .NET and ASNA's help, I've quickly solved a large problem for our organization!” declares Ruth.

About ASNA

ASNA, provides comprehensive and flexible solutions for modernizing IBM i applications to the Microsoft .NET platform. ASNA enables companies to integrate and extend their solutions to .NET, the Web and beyond, while preserving investments in IT and human resources. ASNA solutions are distributed worldwide and used by more than a million end users.

ASNA is a Gold Level partner of Microsoft's Partner Network, Microsoft Visual Studio Industry Partner, and an Advanced Tier Member of IBM's PartnerWorld for Developers. ASNA is also a gold level partner of Microsoft's Platform Modernization Alliance.

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