

AgWorks cuts costs in half by using WebMAP automated migration technology



Web**MAP** offers substantial savings vs a manual rewrite – plus has ongoing savings with Microsoft Azure implementation









Introduction

AgWorks is a leader in providing agronomy software for farming operations and retail agriculture. They have developed a comprehensive agronomy solution for order management, inventory, crop planning, grower access and more. AgWorks customers are billion dollar companies and use the AgWorks software solution to handle millions and millions of transactions and billions of dollars.

AgWorks software needs to be bulletproof and cannot have any margin of error. The VB6-based, desktop application developed for managing farms and needs to be usable on a desktop as well as out in the middle of a field was cumbersome to install and support and didn't have the ability to run in the cloud.

After internal review of all the options available, they turned to Mobilize. Net's Web**MAP** to modernize the 137,000 lines of VB6 code, converting it to HTML5 for simple and flexible web deployment with a proven architecture that is cloud-ready.

Using Web**MAP** to convert source code automatically is 4 times less expensive than a ground-up rewrite. Additionally, new code on average contains 10-50 bugs per 1000 lines of code (KLOC). As always, Mobilize.Net was able to provide AgWorks with a fixed-price project with a guaranteed delivery date, which they hit. Now AgWorks customers can use the AgWorks solution with little or no IT support and work from any connected or disconnected device.

Background

Headquartered in Davenport, Iowa, AgWorks builds software for ag retail operations.

AgWorks handles agronomy operations for the nation's largest agronomy retail businesses which do fertilizer and crop.

protection sales and applications for farmers. AgWorks was founded in 1992 in Preston, lowa and currently serves more than 450 ag retail locations in 27 states across the U.S. The staff at AgWorks has more than 100 years combined experience in agricultural retail ownership, operations, and farming. That experience provides the foundation necessary to create effective unified agronomy software.

VITAL STATS:

LINES OF CODE	COMPLEXITY	DURATION	BENEFITS
137,000 VB6 code	Very high – required five 9s of reliability	6 months	Successful migration in 6 mos vs \$1Million investment plus 1.5 years and a failed attempt at manual rewrite
			Deployment takes minutes vs weeks/months
			No retraining of agents because UX stayed consistent
			Internal resources focused on higher-value projects vs migration
			Costs cut in half

Situation

A farmer by background, Greg Duhachek, CEO of AgWorks was in a tough situation. AgWorks' technology was written in Visual Basic 6.0 – a programming language that was not only obsolete and unsupported, but also hopelessly out of date with current technologies and nearly impossible to update.

"The world has gone to the cloud," said Duhachek. "We were spending so much time getting our customers updated that we knew we needed to get to a web application immediately." His team had spent a year and half and nearly a million dollars trying to rewrite the app from scratch. Unfortunately, as with so many large-scale software projects, they were nowhere near complete and looking at years of continued development.

They needed a browser-based, cloud solution as soon as possible.

Solution

To modernize their critical application, AgWorks first reviewed all options and decided on Mobilize. Net's WebMAP offering to convert their existing code base.

The project involved creating an exact version of the existing application in HTML5 so it could be deployed as a web application hosted on Microsoft Azure so that it's available from virtually any browser on any platform.

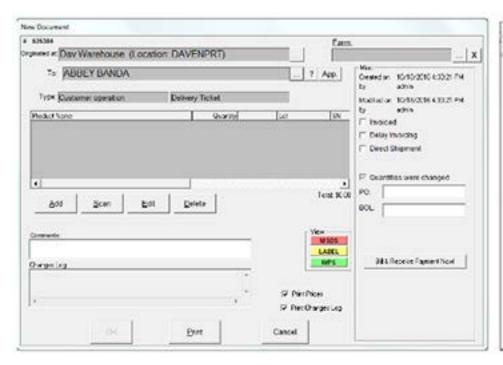
Converting 137,000 lines of VB6 source code using WebMAP was no problem for Mobilize.Net, who relied on the two decades of experience converting millions of lines of source code to more modern platforms.

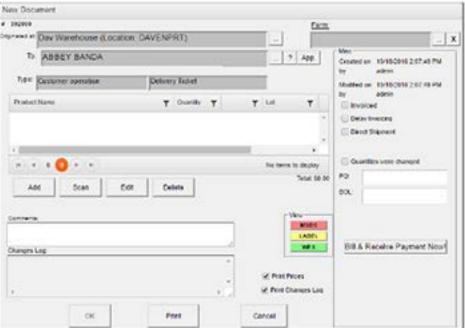
The end result?

A more efficient, easily deployed ag application that required no re-training of customers and which is re-tooled to handle future requirements.

Before and after screens of AgWorks application.

The application in HTML5 uses Kendo to ensure consistency from VB6 to HTML5 so that re-training costs are kept to a minimum.





Hvard and Soft ROI Summary

Hard ROI	Before WebMAP	After WebMAP	Benefits
Centralized automated deployment	Decentralized, manual deployment VB6 app required manual installation by IT staff which took weeks and in some cases months since many employees work from home.	Unified, cross-platform codebase with ability to deploy at the touch of a button, in minutes, even seconds.	Four-fold savings over prior implementation.
Reduced support	Outdated VB6 code on old PC systems required more people, buggier, outdated system with security vulnerabilities.	Centralized, automated deployment plus access to newer, more secure technologies cut down support and maintenance requirements. System no longer vulnerable to malware.	Increase in productivity for support and development teams over previous labor-intensive processes requiring significant staff time.
Successful migration	Spent 1.5 years and \$1 million on a failed manual rewrite	6 month effort with Mobilize Web- MAP and have a fully converted native code application	Annualized savings: \$25,200 per year. Highly labor-intensive manual deployment was eliminated.
Soft ROI	Before WebMAP	After WebMAP	Benefits
Solution flexibility and extensibility	Brittle system with limited ability to make significant feature additions Competitors were able to move quicker.	Ability to quickly update and deploy the app, from planning to develop- ment to deployment, yielding direct insight into business performance.	Improved performance of business.





Quotes and Observations

"Mobilize tools create readable, maintainable, quality code," said. "Mobilize uses familiar architecture and patterns which made it easy to immediately step into the code."

Matt Gropel, Director of Technology at AgWorks Software

"Mobilize technology is actually cheaper than a manual rewrite in time and dollars. It cut our costs in half."

"Mobilize has done so many modernizations – they have a total command of the modernization domain space."

Greg Duhachek, CEO at AgWorks,

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