

POWER & TEL TAKES CORE APPLICATIONS MOBILE TO ENABLE SMART DECISIONS IN THE FIELD



Client



Industry

Telecommunications

Products

Telarik Platform, Kendo UI, OpenEdge

Summary/Integrations

Power & Tel's customers were demanding apps that enable asset tracking out in the field. As a result, the company needed to incorporate mobile app development into its development strategy moving forward. The team leveraged Telarik Platform to extend the OpenEdge infrastructure to create two mobile apps—Mobile App Foundation and Mobile Metrics—providing end users efficient, easy-to-use mobile solutions.

Challenge

Power & Telephone Supply Company (Power & Tel) is a premier wholesale distributor to the global communications marketplace. The company uses Progress OpenEdge as the foundation for several of its core business applications.

Recently, Power & Tel's customers have been demanding apps that enable asset tracking out in the field, prompting a need to include mobile apps in the company's development strategy. "People aren't just sitting behind their desks anymore; they're out in the field, making decisions on the fly," said Tommy James, Project Director for Power and Tel's Managed Inventory division (PTMI), which provides a collection of tools and logistics solutions designed to enhance Power & Tel's customer supply chain. "That's where there's a need for instant data access, and instant tracking on mobile devices."

So, the team embarked on a journey to enable asset tracking in real time, beyond the company's four walls—from the time it leaves their warehouse to the time it's installed at their customer's customer. "The challenge is providing solutions in a timely manner, using the infrastructure we currently have in place," said Jaime Zepeda, Manager of Solutions Development with the Information Technologies Group at Power & Tel.

In addition, there was a need to move core applications to the cloud. “Our customers come to us wanting us to move to the cloud, because of its numerous benefits,” said Zepeda. “The ability to keep up with changing customer demands as well as operational benefits such as rapid provisioning and scalability were key drivers.”

“Kendo UI provides tremendous flexibility to our developers. It enables them to code once and provide multiple ways for customers to use the application.”

Jaime Zepeda, Information Technologies Group, Power & Tel

Solution

To extend its current relationship with customers and provide the desired mobile functionality, the team leveraged Telerik® Platform by Progress to extend the Progress® OpenEdge® infrastructure. “We needed to be able to customize the mobile apps based on customer need, for example, if users were in different geographical locations and needed support for different languages,” said Zepeda. “Using Telerik Platform, we didn’t have to worry about that. All we had to worry about was being able to provide the customer with the business process they needed.”

The resulting applications, the Mobile App Foundation and Mobile Metrics, provide end users efficient, easy-to-use solutions. “We’re designing the apps to be fast and efficient for users, and to drive a level of process discipline they’re not normally used to out in the field—to maintain data integrity regardless of their location, so they can make informed decisions,” said James.

Both mobile solutions, Mobile App Foundation enables customers to track and control assets to the end of the supply chain, beyond the distributor’s typical exit point, and Mobile Metrics provides real-time metrics and a visual status of affairs, enabling Power & Tel’s customers to make timely, critical decisions in the field.

“Our developers saved a great deal of time by taking advantage of the JSDO technologies provided by OpenEdge infrastructure we already had in place, and integrating it with Telerik Platform. We were also able to deploy the same application to multiple platforms, because Telerik Platform allows us to code once and deploy to multiple devices, operating systems and web browsers, without rewriting the code.”

Jaime Zepeda, Information Technologies Group, Power & Tel

Development was aided by JavaScript Data Objects (JSDO), which enable developers to integrate the new application with the OpenEdge backend via REST services. “Our developers saved a great deal of time by taking advantage of the JSDO technologies provided by the Telerik Platform, and integrating it with the OpenEdge infrastructure we already had in place,” said Zepeda. “We were also able to deploy the same application to multiple platforms, because Telerik Platform allows us to code once and deploy to multiple devices, operating systems and web browsers, without rewriting the code.”

Using Kendo UI® by Progress, Power and Tel’s developers were able to provide our customer with different ways of interacting with the application we developed. For example, if users were accessing the app on a mobile device, they

might see a drop-down list; but those with access to optical scanners could scan in values instead. “Kendo UI provides tremendous flexibility to our developers,” said Zepeda. “It enables them to code once and provide multiple ways for customers to use the application.”

Finally, the team used Amazon Cloud Services for deployment because it’s scalable and secure. “The OpenEdge ABL code enables us to collect our customers’ information through an application deployed in the Telerik Platform,” said Zepeda. “We then warehouse the customers’ information and replicate it to multiple datacenters for later use in their ERP.”

“Hosting our apps in the cloud increases efficiency because of the native multi-tenancy capabilities in OpenEdge. As a result, costs are reduced— yearly maintenance is built into the monthly price and we pay only for what we use, avoiding the typical overhead that comes with traditional onpremise equipment.”

Matthew Moye, Director of IT, Power & Tel

“What would have taken nine months takes just three months using Telerik Platform for OpenEdge and integrate our apps to the backend OpenEdge infrastructure.”

Jaime Zepeda, Information Technologies Group, Power & Tel

Results

According to Zepeda, developing in Telerik Platform was surprisingly easy for the team to learn and use. In fact, one of the two developers working on the solution wasn’t familiar with the technology at all, but in less than three months, was able to deliver the application with the desired features and functionality.

“Developing and deploying solutions to our customers using Telerik Platform is extremely efficient, and it doesn’t take very long for us to develop the solution once we have the requirements,” he said. “Even better, we’re able to provide the customer with an application that can be used in multiple platforms.”

Moving its core applications to the cloud has provided numerous benefits to Power& Tel, as well. “Hosting our apps in the cloud increases efficiency because of the native multi-tenancy capabilities in OpenEdge,” said Matthew Moye, Director of IT at Power & Tel.

“We can host as many customers as we need on a finite number of databases, which simplifies backup and eliminates the complexity of managing multiple databases.

As a result, costs are reduced—yearly maintenance is built into the monthly price and we pay only for what we use, avoiding the typical overhead that comes with traditional on-premise equipment.”

Importantly, Power and Tel’s developers have cut project time significantly by leveraging Telerik Platform for OpenEdge. “What would have taken nine months takes just three months using Telerik Platform to integrate our apps with the OpenEdge infrastructure,” said Zepeda.

About Power & Tel

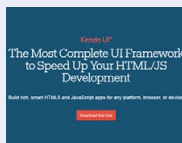
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Founded in 1963, Power & Tel began as a family company and remains that way today. We have an extremely strong reputation as a stable company that is dedicated to helping our customers meet their objectives. This experience and dedication teamed with functionally modern supply chain technology provides you a reliable, yet flexible source for your ever-changing inventory needs.

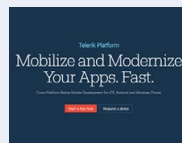
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Rev 16/05 | 160411-0085

