



“We are realizing revenue we never would have seen without Sybase technology. Sybase is tied to our sales and marketing strategy. It’s part of our integrated Internet strategy. We want to leverage this technology to our greatest advantage.”

—Paul Reaume, director of Information Systems for Brewster Transportation and Tours

Brewster Transportation and Tours Case Study

foundation

- Overview:** Owned by Arizona-based Viad Corporation, Brewster Transportation and Tours is the largest tour operator in the Canadian Rockies. For nearly 110 years, Brewster has served tour companies, travel agencies and individuals. Brewster decided to augment their existing Sybase client / server reservation system to keep ahead of competitors and automate its processes. To do that Brewster established a Web-enabled booking system with a Sybase solution that leveraged existing systems and set the stage for future advancements.
- Business Challenge:** Lack of Web automation, pressure from competitors and management requirements for international opportunities contributed to Brewster’s need for a technological infrastructure allowing worldwide tour bookings over the Internet. Its existing legacy systems and PowerBuilder development base required that Brewster did not re-write applications or build a new back-end system, but instead integrate existing applications with a powerful, open server platform. Brewster needed a Web-based environment incorporating advertising and online booking that was scalable and open to future technologies.
- Industry:** Tourism
- Business Solution:** Application Server to establish Internet framework and sustain ongoing development
- Architecture:** Web-based infrastructure with database, servers and development software on three Compaq Proliant Servers, all running Microsoft NT 4 Server
- Products Used:** Sybase Enterprise Application Server (EAServer) 3.6.1; Sybase Adaptive Server Enterprise (ASE) 11.92; Sybase PowerBuilder 7.0.3; Microsoft IIS 4.0
- Development Resources:** In-house resources include project manger and developer Brad Morgan and developer Norman Neil, led by director of Information Systems Paul Reaume. Sybase Professional Services in Western Canada provides technical assistance, supplying resources such as Sybase developer Vijay Allam as needed. Also Brewster executive sponsorship was key to the successful commitment of resources and capital required. This came from David G. Morrison, President and Chief Executive Officer, Terry Holt, Vice President Finance, and Jim Fraser, Vice President Marketing and Planning.
- Benefit:** Sybase’s e-Business Solution helped Brewster stay competitive, automating its booking process without application re-writes. Concise, single point of entry delivered via reliable Internet service was the result. This provided additional revenues for Brewster via increased global visibility, an increase in new business and time saved processing bookings. Sybase also positioned Brewster for revenue increases from future technological development.

Brewster Turns its Technology Investment into a Web-enabled Tour Booking System using Sybase EAServer

Riding a Snocoach to the top of a glacier, enjoying some of the best skiing in the world—Brewster Transportation and Tours has organized adventures like these since 1892. The Banff, Alberta-based company is the oldest, most distinguished tourist service provider in world-renowned Banff National Park. Serving Canada and the western United States, Brewster offers transportation, sightseeing, hotel accommodations and two attractions.

Web-enablement is Essential to Stay Competitive

Two years ago, Brewster did not offer online tour booking. Many competitors—much smaller organizations—did. Brewster wanted to use the Internet for communicating with its wide range of customers, both for bookings and advertising. By expanding its presence through Web-based technology, Brewster could retain its competitive edge.

Brewster also needed to automate. Brewster's methods made it less than convenient for customers to learn about and do business with Brewster. Customers had to use fax or file transfers for bookings, which were entered manually. This was cumbersome for all parties, particularly Brewster agents.

Communication across time zones was also an obstacle. According to Paul Reaume, director of Information Systems for Brewster Transportation and Tours, "Brewster deals directly with wholesalers in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Germany, and other international companies. We work with large travel consortiums in North America, as well as individuals. An international company, we had no mechanism for doing internet business internationally."

The Solution must Safeguard the Existing Investment

In seeking an e-business solution, Brewster wanted to avoid re-writing applications and re-entering its stores of historical data. Brewster needed an application server compatible with its PowerBuilder development tool that could integrate with Brewster's legacy systems and entire infrastructure. However, many vendors required a new back-end system.

"In late 1999 we started a Web-enablement project with Versata, formerly Vision Jade," said Reaume. "After spending large sums on licenses and consulting services, we found that it could not accommodate our business. Our data model had to change for the tool—we couldn't restructure just for one application. We halted it and picked up the pieces."

Brewster persisted in seeking the right solution. Worldwide business transactions meant Brewster needed a robust, scalable system allowing reliable online reservation booking and account access around the clock. The system had to support PowerBuilder as well as Java, offering scope for new features and expansion into more advanced technologies.

Brewster Finds a Partner for Industry-Leading Web-enablement

In May of 2000, Reaume and other Brewster executives attended a Sybase presentation about e-business and portal technology. They came away impressed.

"Our developers downloaded Sybase EAServer and realized it would be easy to create a demo to test it. We were considering a portal, which would also require EAServer, so it fit very well," Reaume commented. "We contacted Sybase Professional Services and began the project."

Brewster began to see Sybase as a solution provider that could make Brewster successful—Sybase was equipped to advance Brewster into the e-business world.

“In two weeks we built an EAServer demo with the same functionality it took three months to build using Versata,” said Reaume. “Right away we decided on Sybase. We didn’t have to re-architect anything or add third-party tools. I had PowerBuilder developers on staff. All I needed was EAServer experience, and Sybase Professional Services met that need.”

Sybase saved Brewster time and effort. “Versata wanted a new data model and database, separate from our existing reservation system. We wanted a single system exposed internally and externally,” said Reaume. “Had Versata’s plan succeeded, we still wouldn’t be as successful as we are right now with Sybase.”

EAServer interpreted native PowerBuilder from Brewster developers, integrating Brewster’s vast stores of business logic. Sybase Professional Services of Western Canada helped with technical issues.

“We relied more on knowledge transfer than training. Sybase brought in a resource with extensive EAServer experience, and soon we were comfortable supporting the product and making changes on our own,” said Reaume. “The right tool is important, but you also need the right people to implement it—Sybase Professional Services made my job a lot easier.”

A Two-Phase Plan Helps Brewster Achieve its Goals

To ensure Brewster’s success and maintain cost-effectiveness, Brewster devised a two-phase plan. Completed in the fall of 2000, phase one established online read-only service so wholesalers could view accounts, itineraries and bookings. Phase two, completed in the fall of 2001, deployed an interactive Web site so wholesalers, travel agents and individuals could book online.

“Online bookings are a daily reason to celebrate. Recently a family booked a \$7,400 train vacation directly, online. That’s revenue we never would have realized without Sybase, because that customer would never have looked for us with a travel agent,” said Reaume. “The value of the system will prove itself over time—and it already has, from my perspective.”

Brewster launched its branded Web site with built-in marketing tools and a professional, encrypted booking engine.

“Tentative sales are tipped in Brewster’s favor because everything is available immediately,” said Reaume. “An Australian wholesaler, Adventure World, usually shows future tourists their itineraries to secure buy-in. Earlier, this wouldn’t work for Brewster. Now they show the customer our site and sell our product. They print the invoice and itinerary, closing the deal on the spot.”

Brewster Looks Ahead

Brewster is considering a future portal implementation, and also hopes to incorporate an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) component integrating larger customers and partners.

“We want to add personalization and make the site international—multi-lingual, multi-currency,” said Reaume. “EAServer is the first step toward Sybase portals, so we have a head start in portal technology. We can move on this when the time is right. EAServer is Java-compliant and portal-ready. We won’t have to pull out our middle tier and put another tool in its place.”

Conclusion

Sybase answered Brewster’s need for a scalable solution providing Web enablement and openness to future technologies. Brewster realized excellent results with a reliable solution from an established vendor. As Reaume stated, “The site has been almost flawless since we launched it.”

For more information about Sybase e-Business Solutions and EAServer, please contact 1-800-8-SYBASE or visit www.sybase.com.



Sybase, Inc.
Worldwide Headquarters

5000 Hacienda Boulevard
Dublin, CA 94568-7902 USA

Tel: +800 8 SYBASE
www.sybase.com

Copyright © 2002 Sybase, Inc. All rights reserved. Unpublished rights reserved under U. S. copyright laws. Sybase and the Sybase logo are trademarks of Sybase, Inc. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners. ® indicates registration in the United States. Specifications are subject to change without notice. Printed in the U.S.A.