

ITWorx, a Trusted Development Arm for Microsoft Learning Gateway



Microsoft

Country:
Worldwide

Industry:
Education

Customer:
Microsoft

Executive Summary

As a trusted ISV for Microsoft Corporation and Microsoft EMEA, ITWorx has been chosen by Microsoft as a development partner for Microsoft Learning Gateway (MLG). ITWorx history with MLG goes back to updating MLG 2003 and developing MLG 2005, and culminates in contributing in the development of the new generation of MLG; the MLG Refresh 2007 for MOSS (Microsoft Office SharePoint Server) 2007.

The Customer

Microsoft Corporation active and continuous development in the education field engages a wide variety of academic institutions, supporting numerous programs that emphasize corporate responsibility and community participation. Microsoft is constantly launching new updates for its e-learning software products; all of which contribute to an enhanced education experience.

The Challenge

Microsoft Learning Gateway (MLG) is a Web-based collaboration, communications, and content delivery framework designed for the ultimate goal of education reform through the use of technology. To prepare students to meet the dynamics and complex technological mandates of the workplace, Microsoft continuously seeks to create new generations of MLG; empowering it with latest Microsoft products and technologies in order to create an integrated, secured e-learning environment.

Microsoft Corporation commissioned ITWorx to contribute in the development of MLG Refresh 2007, incorporating new and updated functionality as well as new server technology. ITWorx was previously commissioned by Microsoft EMEA to update MLG 2003 to deliver MLG 2005, in addition to delivering waves of technical workshops for the 2005 framework and providing its support throughout the region.

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ITWorx brings great value through its agility, responsiveness and ability to capture business requirements and produce quality customer-centric software solutions. The Microsoft Learning Gateway 2005 is yet another success story that highlights ITWorx great contribution to EMEA Education through its education development and support services.

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Naser Ziadeh,
Microsoft Industry Strategist in
the UK and EMEA

Technologies and Software

- Microsoft Windows Server 2003
- Microsoft Meta Directory Services
- Microsoft Office Communication Server 2005
- Microsoft Class Server 4.0
- Microsoft Information Server (IIS)
- Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) 2007
- Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services (WSS) 3.0
- Microsoft SharePoint Learning Kit
- Microsoft Exchange Server 2007
- Microsoft Internet Security and Acceleration (ISA) 2006

The Solution

Building on ITWorx previous development knowledge of MLG 2005, its experiences in MLG deployments in EMEA, and its ISV competency in delivering customized and co-developed industry-specific solutions, ITWorx was the candidate for the job.

For the 2007 Refresh of MLG framework, ITWorx employed the newest platforms Microsoft was introducing to the market; namely Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 replacing SharePoint Server 2003, and SQL 2005 replacing SQL 2000. The new MLG platform also included ISA Server 2006, Windows SharePoint Services 3.0, and Exchange Server 2007.

ITWorx directed intensive application development efforts to improve MLG features and functions, as per the requirements of Microsoft, including new and updated web parts, a fresh look & feel, as well as new site definitions, all of which are considered to be major differentiators of MLG Refresh.

To support Microsoft efforts, ITWorx was also commissioned to develop a comprehensive deployment guide and a Demo VPC to aid MLG Refresh for MOSS 2007 deployment. ITWorx Education team delivered MLG technical workshops in EMEA on behalf of Microsoft to familiarize partners with the new MLG features and benefits.

Microsoft also entrusted ITWorx to technically support both MLG 2005 and MLG Refresh for MOSS 2007 framework globally in addition to supporting Class Server and SharePoint Learning Kit.

The Benefits

Advanced features

MLG Refresh offers teachers a richer set of features that allows them to create online assignments more easily for classes or individual students, and can automatically grade assignments. Parents have access to parent sites to monitor their children's progress and provide an open channel of communication with schools and teachers.

Easier integration

The open standards used in building MLG enable easy integration with other software and boost the existing technological infrastructure in the education institution. The new MLG platform leverages MOSS 2007, one of the latest Microsoft technologies set to enrich and simplify the user experience.

Enhanced security

By using the latest security features offered through ISA, the MLG authentication and security framework provides a private, secure system for students, parents, teachers, and administrators to collaborate through e-mail, text, and video conferencing.

Richer content

MLG framework enables academic institutions to place and share more educational materials at the student's fingertips than ever before – regardless of where they are located; enabling students to study at their own pace.

Increased adoption

MLG Refresh stresses on collaboration, security, scalability, and integration. Education institutions worldwide are more and more adopting and migrating to the new platform.

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