



Case Study > Enterprise Applications Standards Portal

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CXI worked with a large **Financial Institution** to deliver a Web based portal to aid in the creation, management, and communication of the client's enterprise standards for hardware, software, and technology platforms. Called ea web, for Enterprise Architecture, the portal is based on an IBM WebSphere platform and services the client's offices across the U.S.



The ea web system helps the large financial institution manage the Enterprise Standards process. It also houses the Enterprise Architecture Program, to nurture planning and create common strategies across the organization. The goal is to develop consensus for IT direction through collaborative, cross-discipline, and representative communities of practice.

CXI began working on ea web in 2006 to provide Java development for enhancements to the existing system, which had been developed a few years earlier. As we learned the business, our role grew. Ultimately, it led to our current effort where we have been an integral part in the requirements gathering, analysis, design, development, and deployment of the redesigned solution.

We are engaged with the client on both the business and technical aspects of the project. We worked with client staff on setup and deployment of the IBM WebSphere Portal Version 6 clustered environment. To enhance the users' experience, CXI made architectural changes that led to dramatic performance improvements over the original system and redesigned the application interface.

CXI was active in the complete lifecycle of requirements gathering, analysis, design, coding, testing, and deployment. The project scope was to migrate ea web to IBM WebSphere Portal 6, Microsoft SQL Server 2005, and Enterprise Directory and in the process, streamline the application to improve performance, scalability, ease of use, and the user experience.

CXI provided business analysis, portal application architecture, data modeling, Microsoft SQL Server Integration Services, Microsoft SQL Server programming (stored procedures), Java programming, IBM WebSphere Portal development and administration, and configuration management, and Autonomy IDOL integration for a standards-compliant enterprise search.

> Goal

Develop a consensus for IT direction and standards through communication and collaboration.

> Challenge

Find a technology platform that met the current and future needs of users across the enterprise.

> Solution

WebSphere Portal

> Results

The portal provides a consolidated platform for standards. A streamlined application improves performance, scalability, and ease of use.



A prototype of the ea web portal redesign, leveraging IBM WebSphere Portal.



Business Challenges

Initially the project was going to use IBM WebSphere Content Management, but after considering requirements and other available tools, a decision was made to implement an initial phase to provide basic functionality in the current tool and a subsequent phase to provide the full functionality using WebSphere Portal. The interaction between the client and CXI is one where we are working together to devise the best solution to any issues that arise. We are always open to providing alternatives and taking into consideration aspects such as cost/benefit and risks.

Collaboration

The client assigned a project administrator, responsible for formal communication and coordination. The CXI team participates in regular meetings to discuss requirements, progress, and issues as they arise. We also have a close working relationship with the client and have less formal reviews of progress and feedback that help the development process, yielding results that meet or exceed the client's expectations.

The CXI team worked closely with the users in requirements gathering and communicating our views on opportunities for improvement and bringing to their attention technology that can have an impact on the application in terms of usability, performance, and scalability. We have a long and successful history with the financial institution and understand the business and technical environment under which they operate. Our solutions have undergone risk management process reviews and have been tested for vulnerabilities by Information Security, yielding successful outcomes.

Focus > Technology Platform

The ea web portal's technical environment includes:

- IBM WebSphere Portal version 6
- JSR 168-compliant portlets
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005 database for application data
- IBM DB2 database for internal portal database
- Sun Enterprise Directory for authentication and security
- Separate 2-node clusters for development, QA, and production environments
- XMLAccess for deployments between environments to transfer object definitions and permissions
- IBM Rational Application Developer for the integrated development environment
- Telelogic CM/Synergy for source code version control
- Autonomy IDOL server search engine

Results

The IBM WebSphere Portal provides a consolidated platform for the organization to manage and collaborate on enterprise standards. The financial institution has a platform to meet their current and future needs. CXI streamlined the application to improve performance, scalability, and ease of use, and continues to support the client with enhancements and additional development.