

Snapshots *in Productivity*



BCD Business Computer Design

Ten Questions for

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on

ProGen WebSmart: iSeries-Web application development/deployment tool.

Bristol Hospital in Bristol, Connecticut, is a full service healthcare facility that offers 24-hour emergency services, advanced diagnostics, and an award winning intensive care unit. The main hospital has 134 beds, and smaller facilities scattered throughout the community offer convenient access to a wide range of services. A 128 bed skilled nursing facility is also part of their network. Bristol Hospital uses an IBM iSeries model 820 with McKesson Series 2000 as its core hospital management system.



BCD: ***What types of applications did you develop with WebSmart?***

Machado: "They are dashboard or portal types of applications that run on the iSeries OS/400 Apache HTTP server. One application is a phone directory of all hospital employees; another provides an instant hospital census-- now management doesn't have to make phone calls to find out how many patients we have. We also developed a drug formulary inquiry system for the pharmacy. Another application front ends a Series 2000 application and lets doctors review a list of their patients currently in house. It provides links for past visits, lab results by date, lab results by type and date, allergies, etc. The VP of finance has one that lets him review daily revenue with a summary header for a 90-day average. Another program provides him with accounts not billed summary tables broken down by different key indicators."

BCD: ***Was any training necessary?***

Machado: "I loaded WebSmart and built the census and formulary before I went to class. I am the kind of person that likes to get things going before I read the manual. If I can do that then I really like a product-- imagine what I can do after reading a manual! I need to say the class is a must-- it gets you on the right track very fast. You're shown a number of

options available to you within ProGen Macro Language, which is WebSmart's powerful programming language. I attended a training class after writing these applications and lots of other things started to make sense. The trainer was really good, and you get a nice manual and source code. They don't hold back anything. "

BCD: ***What led to your selection of WebSmart?***

Machado: "I looked at many competitive products and selected WebSmart. It was the easiest and most intuitive option."

BCD: ***What are a few things you really liked about it?***

Machado: "The templates are supreme. You can develop things just by clicking and the end results really impress people. To write real applications though, you need to learn PML. Also a background in HTML is a plus, especially to add your own look and feel to the page created by the template, place images and so on. Some of my applications are pretty complex and you need to know your way in and out of WebSmart programs to write them-- you need to understand SMURFS-BCD's version of cookies, parameter passing in web pages and a number of concepts native to web development no matter what the tool used. If you are doing a straightforward application that lets users add, delete and change data in a DB2 table you can do it in a few clicks and you're done."

BCD: ***Did WebSmart generate 100 percent of the executable code?***

Machado: "You start with the template that generates the WebSmart program source code in PML. You then modify that PML code to introduce your unique requirements. The IDE provides tabs to work with either the PML or the HTML. Once you are done, you take an option to "generate" the program. The generation option actually creates 100% of the CGI program."

BCD: ***Were any hardware upgrades required?***

Machado: "Definitely not. If I had gone the Microsoft route instead, I would have had to purchase an IIS server, do all the programming in Visual Basic, and then get a Sequel Server since Microsoft products cannot run on just one server. Since one person can't run all of this I would have to hire more people. I would then have had several servers to maintain, all susceptible to viruses and all in need of Microsoft patches every other week. In contrast, the combination of the WebSmart solution running on the iSeries is a plus for our organization's bottom line."

BCD: ***Are you using any other BCD products?***

Machado: "I have Catapult and I love it too - it's great. And ProGen. We got ProGen years ago."

BCD: ***Did BCD's Technical Support team give you satisfactory answers when you called?***

Machado: "Support is deteriorating across the industry but BCD's support is second to none. These people are very helpful and they don't get bogged down. They talk to you; they get back to you, and keep you posted. This is opposed to some companies that don't even acknowledge you. They also have a nice email magazine that they send out with tips and techniques."

BCD: ***Please grade your experience with BCD and WebSmart using the scale A through F.***

Machado: "A plus plus plus plus. No question about it-- not even a hint of an inclination of doubt in my mind."

BCD: ***What would you like to tell others about your experience with WebSmart?***

Machado: "What are you waiting for! Download WebSmart now and start developing web-based applications."

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