



Customer: Darwin Corporation

Country: United Kingdom

Industry: CRM / SMEs

Web Site: www.darwin.co.uk

Customer Profile

UK-based Darwin Corporation develops innovative connected software for the CRM market, in line with Microsoft's SoftwareplusServices vision.

Business Situation

- Wanted to ensure their software would meet their performance and security requirements
- Wanted to gain a competitive advantage by acquiring a deep understanding of the latest Microsoft technologies in the shortest possible timeframe
- Were keen to ensure alignment with the Microsoft technology roadmap

Solution

Darwin engaged Microsoft Services' Application Development Consulting team to give them access to over 20 expert consultants to perform knowledge transfer and undertake performance and scalability testing of their application. The result was an enhanced delivery capability and a ten-fold improvement in performance.

www.microsoft.com/uk/adc

Software Vendor uses Microsoft expertise to deliver innovative CRM product on time

"As developers, one might say we are standing on the shoulders of giants... We take the latest Microsoft technologies and build them into tools that make our customers faster, fitter and more productive. Working closely with Microsoft has undoubtedly helped us to deliver a higher quality and more secure product."

Mike Chatha, CEO, Darwin Corporation

UK-based Darwin Corporation develops innovative connected software for the CRM market in line with Microsoft's Software plus Services vision.

Darwin[®] is a Windows Forms application that stores data, notes, documents, and schedules online and offline, within an easy to use and familiar interface. The user can store data on the fly, using Darwin's evolutionary VisualForm Designer. Darwin leverages the latest Microsoft .NET technologies like WPF and WCF, and server tools such as SQLServer 2008.

The company, whose name was inspired by the famous scientist Charles Darwin, engaged Microsoft Services' Application Development Consulting (ADC) team six months before the planned release date of their software on 12 February 2009 (Charles Darwin's 200th birthday).

They wanted to ensure that their product was secure; would meet their demanding performance requirements; and was strategically aligned with the Microsoft roadmap. Using Microsoft's dedicated

Performance and Scalability laboratory at Microsoft's head office in the UK, Darwin undertook a week-long series of performance and scalability tests, designed to highlight any areas in the application that might prevent them from meeting their exacting targets.

"We worked with our dedicated consultant in the weeks leading up to the tests and described our performance goals," explains Mike Chatha, CEO of Darwin.

"We were delighted that we were able to meet these goals with only a little tuning, and even more delighted when Microsoft helped us to increase the performance of our application by over ten times! In fact the engagement was so productive that we actually finished the process a day earlier than scheduled."

- Scalability targets met and exceeded!
- Raw performance improvement by a factor of x10
- Enhanced customer confidence.

Benefits

Working with Microsoft specialists

Darwin quickly established a trusted relationship with their Microsoft consultant, which was instrumental in the company delivering its product on time, and also meeting its high quality bar.

John Walden, Chief Technical Officer of Darwin said: "We are thrilled to be working with some real subject matter experts. We can now skill up quickly in any area of Microsoft technology, which gives us a real competitive edge".

Access to state-of-the-art tools

Augmenting the deep specialist development skills provided by the ADC team, the Microsoft Services' laboratory offers access to a range of top-end hardware and testing tools. By working closely with their consultant in the lab, Darwin's employees were trained in the use of these tools and ultimately reduced the risk of building and deploying their application. During the lab tests specialist application consultants were brought in specifically to help optimise Darwin's architecture, database, and security.

Chatha says: "The lab tests proved to be a great experience for Darwin, and gave us real confidence that our approach was correct and our application will scale to meet the demands of our largest customers."

Facilitated knowledge transfer

In order to maintain their competitive advantage it is essential for Darwin to live and breathe the latest technology, even before it is released. Having access to a team of

experts who understand Microsoft technologies from the ground up gives Darwin added agility in an ever-changing market place.

Walden says: "The beauty of the ADC engagement is that we have access to over 20 UK-based consultants with close ties to the Microsoft Product Groups in the United States. Furthermore our dedicated consultant understands our business and is able to provide pro-active guidance to help steer our development."

Advocate within Microsoft

In addition to the technical benefits provided by an ADC engagement, Darwin also gained a tenacious advocate who ensured they were able to take full advantage of all the Microsoft support available to them.

"Our consultant provided lots of pro-active advice, linking us with the Microsoft BizSpark and Metro programs which have saved us many thousands in licensing and training costs," explains Chatha. "We are certainly on the fast track. Thanks to Microsoft, Darwin is well placed for rapid growth and a bright future."

Support throughout the whole development lifecycle

"Originally we engaged the Microsoft ADC team to help us drive our product to completion, which was a great success. However we've also realised that their ongoing support will be a tremendous asset throughout the whole development lifecycle," explains Walden. "We're now working closely with our consultant to ensure an optimum

architecture and alignment with Microsoft's technology roadmap for our next release."

Building a reputation

Darwin is quickly building a reputation as a dynamic and innovative software organisation, both publically and internally at Microsoft.

"We have a great product that demonstrates the power of Microsoft's Software-plus-Services vision. We're not afraid of embracing



the latest practices to ensure that we have the best product on the market, and are developing our people to be the best they can be," says Chatha.

"Dedicated 24/7 Microsoft priority support also helps provide our customers with the peace of mind that, in the unlikely event of any problems, their issue will be solved satisfactorily and in the shortest possible timeframe, thanks to the backup we receive from Microsoft."

Microsoft Services

Microsoft Services helps customers and partners discover and implement high-value Microsoft solutions that generate rapid, meaningful, and measurable results. As the consulting, technical support, and customer service arm of the world's leading software company, Microsoft Services enables the successful adoption, deployment, and use of Microsoft solutions and technologies for all customers, from small to enterprise. For more information about Microsoft Services, go to: www.microsoft.com/microsoftservices