

SUCCESS STORY

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*- Jeff Stumpf,
Technology Consultant.*

“I based my job on this product and it could do what it had promised, it delivered.”

Mazda North America Operations Drives Key Dealer Package Operations with activePDF Solutions

Company: Mazda North America Operations

Industry: Auto Manufacturing

Product(s) Used: activePDF Portfolio

Objective

Implement an on-line Dealer Package Processing System that merges multiple and single documents and to present this information in a consistent format widely adopted by the general business community.

Company Overview

Mazda Motor Corporation, headquartered in Japan, manufactures a diverse line of passenger cars and commercial vehicles. Mazda's vision is to create new value for customers and produce the best automotive products and services. Mazda North American Operations is responsible for the sales and marketing, customer parts and services support of Mazda vehicles in the United States. This includes the development of all marketing systems, both Legacy and client server. Based in Irvine, California, MNAO has more than 700 dealerships nationwide.

Business Challenge

Jeff Stumpf, a Technology Consultant with Mazda North America, along with the MIDAS team, is responsible for developing internal web based applications that assist dealer development and field applications. Selling automobiles to a dealer body of over 700, MNAO needed to implement a highly efficient user-friendly online dealer package processing system. The users of this system include Mazda Corporate Dealer Development, Mazda Regional Dealer Development across the US as well as the applicant (Accountant, Lawyer, clerks, anyone that has access). Within this fast paced environment, dealers would typically be required to complete anywhere from 15 to 150 forms – custom forms mostly legal, financial, holdings, employment history, document catalogs and basically any information required by an applicant/dealer to obtain a franchise at Mazda. These forms were typically in Microsoft® Word® or Microsoft Excel®. Mazda needed to find a way to automate a manual non-structured approach to data collection, while presenting and distributing the information recorded in a universal file format, that is platform indifferent, and one adopted by the general business community. The Portable Document Format (PDF) was the obvious choice.

activePDF Solution

Mazda successfully implemented an online web-based system with activePDF DocConverter handling the dynamic conversion of the Word and Excel documents to PDF and activePDF Toolkit being used to merge multiple and single documents into one PDF. The end users being either Mazda dealers or an applicant are granted a password and user id, then once inside the Dealer Package System code named MIDAS (Mazda Internet Dealer Application System) they can either view individual documents on-line or create the entire package at once, which combines all the documents plus a tracking document. Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0 is the main component used as the wrapper of the toolkit object. "We developed a DLL that exposes our custom calling API's to ASP pages that instantiate the DLL and hence create our PDFs as either file based or memory streams," Jeff explained. "This allows us to build a file-based PDF for the final production and assembly of about 30 individual PDF files that are created individually then merged into one deliverable file that has bookmarks of the individual documents."

Why they chose activePDF

"The flexibility to adopt the COM interface as either a web based ASP application or an internal Visual Basic application was one of the main reasons we chose activePDF to complete the task at hand," stated Jeff. "Cost played another major role and we were looking specifically for simple database integration into a final PDF document. If you or a member of your organization is familiar with Visual Basic, C++[®], etc., then this product will get implemented with ease. It comes with examples and good documentation and will get the right person on track in a short period of time." Mazda anticipates the eventual need for electronic signature capability. Jeff concluded in saying, "I based my job on this product and it could do what it had promised, it delivered."

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