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THE 2013 .NET Component BUYERS GUIDE & Visual Studio SOURCEBOOK

A SUPPLEMENT TO
SD Times SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT
JUNE 2013

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Jump onboard with Visual Studio 2012, Windows 8 and HTML5

Click! Microsoft-based technology is advancing at an ever-increasing pace. Consumers and enterprises are learning how to use—and appreciate—the advances seen in Windows 8. The Surface has launched Microsoft into the computing hardware business, big time. Windows RT is finding a strong niche in power-aware applications. The mobile market is seeing Windows Phone 8 emerge as a strong competitor to Google's Android and Apple's iOS. Plus, HTML5-based applications, built using Microsoft tools, are appearing on phones, tablets, notebooks and desktops.

What's driving computing? For many organizations and developers, it's Microsoft, in the face of those platforms and Visual Studio 2012. What drives Visual Studio? In many shops, productivity is enhanced by leading third-party solutions, including tools, component sets, quality-assurance services and more.

This special Supplement to SD Times, "The 2013 .NET Component Buyers Guide & Visual Studio Sourcebook," will introduce you to the leading solutions providers in the Microsoft ecosystem.

Alan Zeichick

The combination of Microsoft's Visual Studio and the .NET Framework, together with third-party reusable components, tools and plug-ins, creates an unbeatable combination for enterprise developers and independent software vendors supporting the Microsoft platform.

We'd especially like to call your attention to reusable component libraries, some of which are featured in this Supplement. It's easy to make the business case for licensing components. When you look at the ROI, compared to creating their functionality from scratch, it makes perfect sense.

The non-financial aspects of components can be even more compelling: The leading component suppliers provide comprehensive technical support, sample code, and frequent updates. In many cases, the component supplier even provides cross-platform support that would be impossible to replicate in-house.

When you subscribe to full component suites, new functionality appears on a regular schedule. And the code quality is superb, offering all the features and functions your projects require.

As we look forward to the forthcoming release of Windows 8.1, we encourage you to examine the solutions offered by all the companies featured here, and to contact them to discuss your specific project requirements.

We hope you enjoy this special Supplement to SD Times.

Alan Zeichick, Editorial Director

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THE 2013 .NET Component BUYERS GUIDE & Visual Studio SOURCEBOOK

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Aspose Makes Business File Management Quick and Easy

Aspose provides .NET, Java and SharePoint development components as well as rendering extensions for Microsoft SQL Server Reporting Services (SSRS) and JasperReports. For the past 11 years, the company has continued to expand its offerings, which has resulted in a growing customer base that now exceeds 200,000 users. Meanwhile, Aspose has been enhancing its developer support by sponsoring 28 user groups around the world and adding 78 new training videos to its YouTube channel.

Using Aspose components and rendering extensions, developers can add Microsoft Office capabilities to their applications without having to install Microsoft products on the server and convert files from one popular format to another. Aspose supports Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations, Visio diagrams, Project files, PDF documents and a lot more.

"When applications need to access files, Aspose is the easiest, most reliable solution on the market," said Danny Cooper, Associate Director of Aspose's North American business operations.

"Because no one knows how technology is going to shake out in the next five years, the cloud has been a nice option."
—Danny Cooper

Comprehensive File-management Capabilities

Aspose.Total includes all the file-management components and rendering extensions Aspose offers for .NET, Java, SharePoint, SSRS and JasperReports in one complete package. It is compiled daily to ensure customers have the most recent versions of components, including Aspose.Cells, Aspose.Words, Aspose.Slides, Aspose.Pdf, Aspose.Barcode, Aspose.Tasks, Aspose.Email, Aspose.Diagram, Aspose.OCR, Aspose.Imaging, Aspose.Pdf.Kit, and Aspose.Metafiles. Some of these components, such as Aspose.Cells, Aspose.Words, Aspose.Pdf, Aspose.Slides and Aspose.Barcode, are common across all platforms. Others are platform-specific, and some are available on multiple platforms.

Using Aspose.Total, developers can easily add powerful file-management capabilities to their applications. For example, Aspose.Cells, Aspose.Words, and Aspose.Slides for .NET and Java let .NET and Java applications create, modify, render and print Excel spreadsheets, Word documents, and PowerPoint presentations, respectively, without using Excel, Word or PowerPoint.

The same components for SharePoint convert Excel, Word and PowerPoint documents into multiple formats from within a SharePoint application, while Aspose.Cells, Aspose.Words and Aspose.Slides for Reporting Services allow reports to be exported from SQL Server Reporting Services info various formats.

Aspose.Total component suites can be licensed individually for .NET, Java, SharePoint, SSRS or JasperReports. Alternatively, customers may purchase an individual component such as Aspose.Words for .NET. Aspose also offers several Product Family Packs that provide a particular type of functionality (such as Aspose.Cells) across the platforms.

"If you're going to purchase two component suites, for a few extra dollars you can get Aspose.Total and get every component we offer," said Cooper.

Lulu, an e-book and print-on-demand book publisher, transformed the quality and predictability of its publishing system using Aspose.Words for .NET. The company had been using Microsoft Word Automation to convert the documents authors sent into PDFs that for printing.

However, Lulu found that output was unreliable and the system was difficult to scale. As part of a new solution, Lulu integrated Aspose.Words, which only required 10 lines of code. Now Lulu can automatically convert the documents it receives into PDF files that can be printed by any of Lulu's printing partners. The finished printed products appear exactly as they were intended.

Cloud-based Development

Last year, Aspose announced a new venture called Saaspose, which is now being rebranded Aspose for Cloud. It is a cloud-based document-generation, conversion and automation platform that provides a set of REST APIs developers can use to exercise total control over documents and file formats. Like other Aspose products, Aspose for Cloud is available directly from Aspose, but unlike the other products, Aspose for Cloud is available on a subscription basis based on volume.

"Because no one knows how technology is going to shake out in the next five years as it relates to platforms and devices, the cloud has been a nice option because it allows people to develop applications that can be consumed by a number of devices," said Cooper. "Aspose for Cloud lets people work with files on cloud-centric networks such as Azure, Amazon Web Services, Salesforce and Google App engine. If you have an existing Web application that does not provide that capability, now you can add it."

Another successful Aspose venture launched in the last 12 months is GroupDocs, which is an online service for document management and collaboration. It provides a visual interface for working with files. Using GroupDocs, users can store and convert documents as well as assemble, share, annotate and compare them. It also supports digital signatures.

"File accessibility is a challenge. If you have Word, Excel or PowerPoint files and you want to view them in a browser, you can't do it [natively]," said Cooper. "We have rendering technologies that convert those file types to PDF. GroupDocs allows you to render documents in a viewer so anyone can see them."

For more information about Aspose's offerings, visit www.aspose.com. ■

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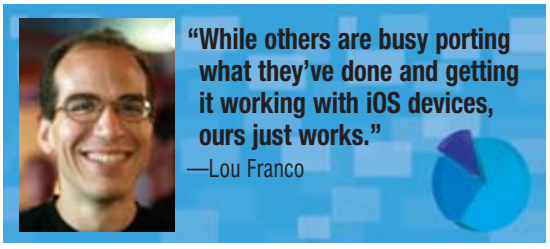
Atalasoft Boosts Web Imaging and Scanning

Developers and end users want tools that make them more productive. Using Atalasoft's SDKs, developers can rapidly create capture applications that streamline business processes and improve customer experience.

Microsoft .NET developers use Atalasoft's flagship product—DotImage—to power document management, electronic content management (ECM) and electronic medical record (EMR) applications. Now, Java developers can do the same with Atalasoft JoltImage. Also new is Atalasoft WingScan, which allows both .NET and Java developers to add Web-scanning capabilities to Web portals.

"Atalasoft image-enables your application," said Lou Franco, vice president of Atalasoft. "If you build a website using our toolkit, it will integrate with your .NET or Java infrastructure so you can be sure that your customers' devices will work with that website and it will take care of all the imaging functions."



Add Imaging to Java Applications

Atalasoft's JoltImage is a Java document-imaging SDK for viewing, processing and annotating images and PDFs. It provides the same viewing and annotation features as Atalasoft's DotImage product for .NET using a nearly identical codebase. With JoltImage, end users can view and annotate large, multi-page documents instantly over the Web. They can also reorder, delete and edit TIFF pages, view PDF business documents, and convert documents from PDF, TIFF, PNG and JPEG into other formats.

"Most of the code is written in JavaScript, which is usable in Java and .NET, so JoltImage is based on a mature, deployed base," said Franco. "Instead of providing an ASP.NET Web control, which would be the usual way to do a .NET toolkit, we provide a Java servlet that can be fully integrated into people's websites. Most of the code you're using is the same as DotImage, with the exception of a servlet piece that was ported."

JoltImage, DotImage and Atalasoft's entire tool suite were updated when Atalasoft 10.3 was released in January 2013. JoltImage and DotImage now include support for Safari and Chrome, touch interfaces, zooming, pagination, and more.

"We wanted to be fully integrated with the touch gestures that are in iOS and Android so that user experiences are really natural," said Franco. "That way, you can zoom into the areas you want and do things you expect using those browsers."

JoltImage was also enhanced with a Java barcode reader add-on that supports the same 1D and 2D barcode sets included in DotImage. It can automatically detect the orientation of a recognized barcode, return a bounding polygon and get the string value of a barcode. The add-on, which can be used for Java server or desktop apps, is a native port so it doesn't use a .NET bridge or .NET.

"Our heritage is the Web. We were the first to market with a .NET imaging toolkit, the first to market with AJAX-based Web controls, and first to market with AJAX-based Web annotations, so we're fully committed to the AJAX-HTML-Javascript way of bringing imaging to the Web," said Franco. "While people were debating about Flash, Silverlight, ActiveX and Java applets, we argued the future was HTML, so while others are busy porting what they've done and getting it working with iOS devices, ours just works."

Add Scanning to Custom Applications

WingScan, another new Atalasoft offering, is a minimal footprint Web-scanning client that integrates into any ASP.NET or Java website with minimal coding required. It is completely integrated with DotImage and JoltImage, and like those products, dramatically reduces development time.

With WingScan, end users can scan documents without leaving an application's UI. Users can simply choose a scanner, scan a document, validate it, and then submit it to a repository such as SharePoint, Kofax Capture or a custom database. Users also have the ability to control scan settings, such as the resolution, color depth, paper size, file format, document type and location.

"WingScan is all about scanning from the Web," said Franco. "We allow you to get to the repositories and content in SharePoint, and edit the manual index fields."

With WingScan, it is possible to scan a document from a website and store it in SharePoint. Alternatively, information can be pulled out of SharePoint and displayed on a non-SharePoint website. Either way, WingScan improves Web-to-repository document workflow with minimal coding.

"A SharePoint document has three things associated with it: a repository, a content type, and a list of data entry fields that could be associated with a document," said Franco. "If a user scans an invoice, all that information gets into SharePoint in the right repository with the right content type and the right index fields. It's a complete capture solution."

WingScan also improves document readability by automatically rotating flipped or misaligned pages, and cleaning poorly scanned images for more effective OCR and barcode recognition. It supports Internet Explorer, Chrome and Firefox with lightweight browser extensions that securely interface with the scanner so IT departments no longer have to manage third-party scanning apps.

For more information about JoltImage, WingScan and DotImage, visit www.atalasoft.com. ■

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LEADTOOLS 18 Is Ready for Visual Studio 2012

When it comes to imaging, one component vendor stands above the rest. The value LEAD Technologies brings with its superior products, experience and service is unparalleled by anyone else in the business. With a rich history of more than 20 years, LEAD has established itself as the world's leading provider of raster, document, medical, vector and multimedia imaging toolkits. The newest edition of LEADTOOLS, Version 18, furthered that reputation with new development platforms for Visual Studio 2012, Windows 8 and more.

LEADTOOLS is as comprehensive as they come, both in features and development interfaces. Digital imaging is a vast and diverse sector of the software industry, and LEADTOOLS covers it in atmospheric fashion. From its trademark support of more than 150 image formats, to modern-day marvels like CT and MRI scanners, you have probably interacted with LEADTOOLS without even knowing it. Its most popular technologies include PDF, OCR, Forms Recognition, Barcode, Document Cleanup, Annotations, DICOM, PACS, image processing and compression; but there is hardly any limit to the kind of application you can develop with LEADTOOLS.

LEAD's reputation as the world's leading imaging SDK is also built on its encyclopedic offerings of development interfaces for Visual Studio programmers. Their C++ libraries are extremely efficient, their high-level .NET components are top-notch, and developers can use LEADTOOLS in just about every platform Microsoft has to offer.

Visual Studio 2012 and Everything Windows 8

We mentioned WinRT earlier, and that's not just a feather in the cap for LEADTOOLS. They were the very first imaging component vendor to support development for the new Windows Store, releasing their WinRT SDK the same day Microsoft launched Windows 8. Then, within a few short months, LEAD added support for Windows Phone 8. Once again, LEAD showed why it's the world's leading imaging SDK by quickly covering the gamut of desktops, tablets and smartphones that have a Microsoft Windows backbone.

There's more than meets the eye when it comes to what LEADTOOLS has done for developers targeting the new platforms afforded by Windows 8.

Anyone who has developed a Windows Store app, or for any other mobile application store for that matter, knows there are strict guidelines and approval processes to follow in order to get your app in front of customers' eyes. Therefore, a major question a developer must face is whether or not a third-party SDK will hinder or help that process. LEAD was on top of that question from the get-go, and published several free demos and utility apps to the Windows Store for the latest desktops, tablets and Windows Phones running Windows.

Beyond Microsoft with Cross-Platform Technologies

Microsoft platforms are LEAD's bread and butter, and they aren't going away any time soon. However, if there is one thing that has driven the company's success for more than two decades, it is their ability to recognize emerging markets and meet demand with impeccable timing and quality products. This characteristic has expanded LEAD's development efforts in Version 18 to include a hefty investment in cross-platform imaging SDKs for a wide variety of platforms from Microsoft and other organiations, including HTML5, iOS, OS X, Android and Linux.

That cross-platform development investment is already paying off with real-world success, especially the LEADTOOLS HTML5 SDK. The growing popularity of tablets and smartphones is well documented, and developers everywhere are rising to the challenge to rapidly develop applications to meet demand. In an effort to reach the widest range of devices with the least amount of code and maintenance, many commercial and enterprise developers have turned to HTML5 and JavaScript to create zero-footprint, cross-platform solutions that work on any desktop, tablet or mobile device.

LEAD has outdone themselves with Version 18 by not only creating a solid toolkit for developers to use, but also by including the source code to a fully operational, OEM-ready Web application. LEAD's customers can customize it as much as they want, but many simply hit the ground running with a rebranded solution.

In fact, several high-profile medical imaging providers and educational networks are using the LEADTOOLS HTML5 DICOM Viewer and remote PACS solution to collaborate and share images across the country with ease and simplicity. Without the need for installing large applications or porting that application for each platform, medical professionals and educators are able to use whatever devices they have at their disposal to quickly access studies and patient information.

For educators, embracing zero footprint is an incredible value as it allows more flexibility and a greater variety of cases that can be shown to students. With success stories like these, it is safe to say that LEAD is having an exponentially positive effect on the future of our world.

LEAD Technologies is creating a strong challenge to the common phrase, "You can't make everyone happy." That's why, whether you're venturing into new horizons on Microsoft Windows 8 with Visual Studio 2012, creating innovative applications while .NET is in its prime, or writing multi-platform apps for as many mobile devices as you can imagine, LEADTOOLS is in your corner. You can rest assured that LEAD will make a way for you to take advantage of the world's greatest imaging software development toolkit.

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rooms	$707.00	209,714
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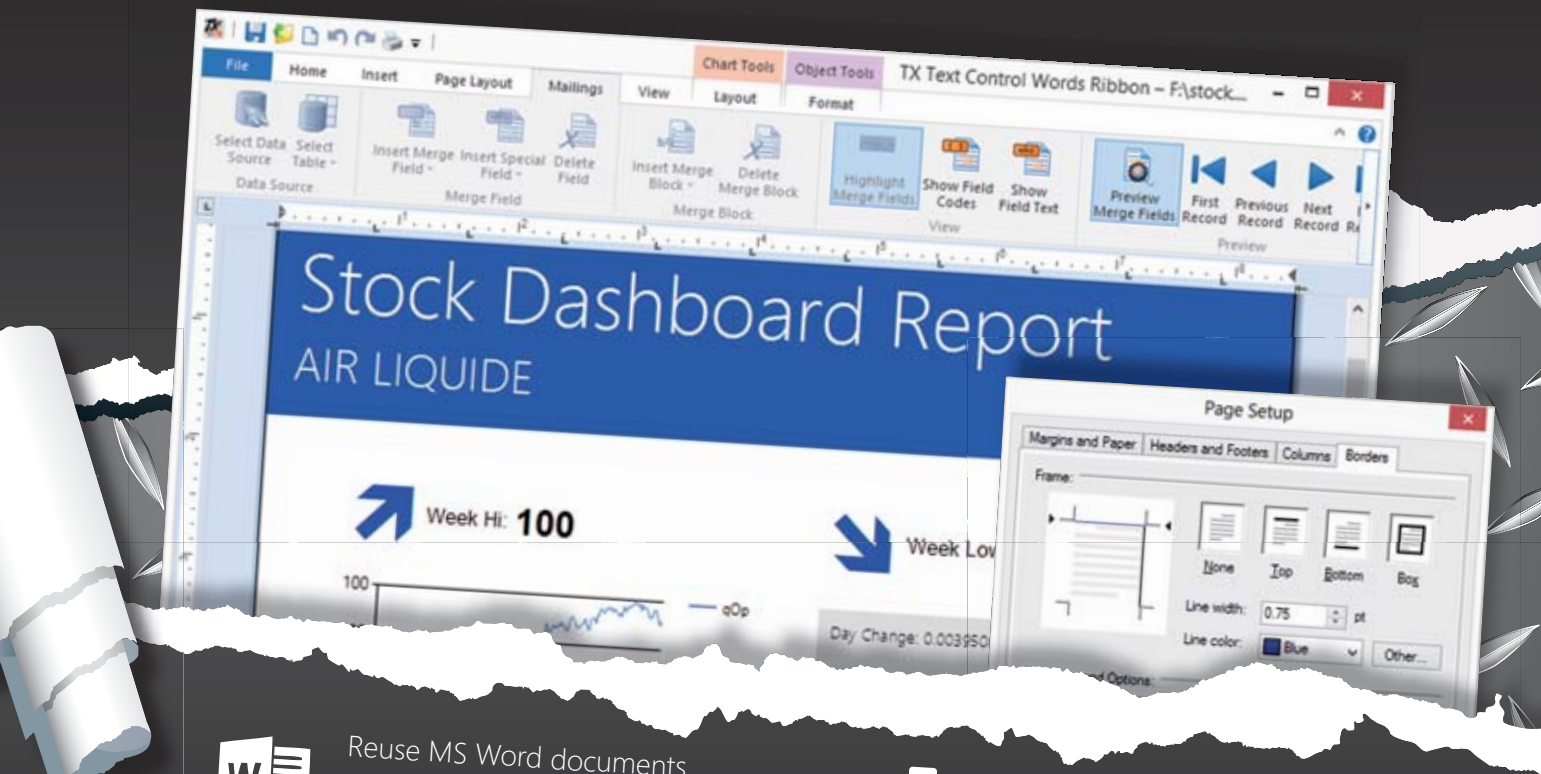

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As traditional report designers continue to become more complex, end users are experiencing more errors that developers have to fix. Ideally, developers should not have to fix report templates or even create them in the first place. They should be focusing on higher-value tasks such as application development. Using TX Text Control, developers can allow end users to create their own report templates as easily as writing a letter in Microsoft Word.

"Text Control has been focusing on word processing for more than 20 years now," said Björn Meyer, President of Text Control, LLC USA, and responsible for Product Management. "Instead of using complex reporting tools and designers to create invoices, proposals, form letters or shipping labels, you can use our powerful and easy-to-use controls to automate document, report and label creation."

With TX Text Control, Word documents can be reused as reporting templates that include features such as headers and footers, images, and page columns. In addition, developers can take advantage of Master-Detail relationship views, barcodes and charts to simultaneously deliver rich functionality and ease of use.

"Instead of using complex reporting tools and designers, you can use our easy-to-use controls to automate report creation."
—Björn Meyer

Get More Power and Control with TX Text Control X9

TX Text Control X9 is a complete reporting package that gives developers everything they need to integrate Flow Type Layout Reporting into .NET-based applications. This powerful new version includes several improvements such as headers and footers for odd and even pages, barcode support, context menus with more than 400 usable icons, new dialogs, new visualization of headers and footers in the editor, and even more Word compatibility. Its WYSIWYG Flow Type Layout Reporting capabilities make report writing easy and intuitive so developers no longer have to waste time explaining complex report designers to end users. Like Word, the WYSIWYG simplicity allows users to view the results of their designs instantly.

"TX Text Control X9 is a big milestone," said Meyer. "It improves developer productivity while delivering the power and flexibility end users expect."

The TX Text Control Words Template designer comes with full sources so Visual Studio projects can be completely customized or integrated into applications. When TX Text Control reporting capabilities have been integrated into an application, users can create templates that include typical word-processing features like tables, images, headers and footers freeing up precious developer time. Users also can import Word documents from various formats such as DOC, DOCX, RTF or PDF, and add powerful data visualizations to reports when applications take advantage of TX Text Control's 30+ fully programmable diagram types.

TX Text Control X9 includes three client component suites and three server component suites for word processing. The client components are designed for Windows Forms, Windows Presentation Foundation and ActiveX while the server components include ASP.NET with Windows Forms, ASP.NET with WPF, and ActiveX Server.

All client and server component suites include improved headers and footers for odd and even pages as well, as a new frame style with an information area that can be included in headers and footers. Also included are built-in context menus and icon sets; a new table-insert dialog; support for Word content controls; anchor support characters; and advanced Word-compatible page numbering.

The WinForms and WPF suites include anchor support control characters and native support for 1D and 2D barcodes from the newly released TX Barcode .NET. "The barcode components are entirely new," said Meyer. "They're very fast and accurate."

Easily Integrate Barcodes into Documents

TX Barcode .NET is available for Windows Forms and WPF. It allows developers to integrate barcodes into reports, invoices and mail-merge templates. Using TX Barcode, .NET, developers can integrate popular 1D and 2D barcode types such as QR Codes or Intelligent Mail Barcodes. In addition, barcode images can be created programmatically.

"TX Barcode .NET for Windows Forms has been designed for integrating fixed-size barcodes into documents," said Meyer. "It allows you to control the actual barcode size and alignment."

The barcodes can be used as placeholders in reporting templates so unique barcodes can be assigned to documents such as invoices. Each barcode object is assigned a unique ID and name so the actual data can be visualized during the merge process.

TX Text Control X9 ships with a barcode setting dialog box as a standard feature. Because TX Text Control X9 and TX Barcode.NET are deeply integrated, it is possible to change the type, text, color or angle of a barcode. Barcodes can also be customized programmatically such as changing the foreground color, background color, rotation, alignment and text rendering.

"TX Barcode .NET is the first barcode component designed for reporting and word-processing requirements," said Meyer. "Because it's deeply integrated with TX Text Control, both products work perfectly together."

Meyer said his team is investing aggressively in new word-processing technologies and innovations. For example, the company is adding hyphenation and other spelling capabilities to its incredibly fast and powerful spell-checking component.

For more information, please visit www.textcontrol.com. ■

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Build Better Security into Your Software with (ISC)²

Too often application security becomes a priority after the fact. While most software professionals acknowledge the need for better security, most of them lack the knowledge, time and organizational support they need to build better security into products. To overcome these challenges, both private and public organizations are turning to (ISC)² for much-needed guidance, training and certification.

"Our research over the last five years confirms that application security continues to top the list of information security concerns. With the number of apps available, it's becoming a larger problem," said W. Hord Tipton, executive director of (ISC)². "Flawed software continues to be the leading cause of breaches."

"If you use our materials properly, you can improve security in all phases of software development regardless of methodology."
—W. Hord Tipton

Security—or the lack of it—is a technical problem and a business problem. Software teams are under pressure to deliver products and iterations faster, while business leaders fail to recognize the high cost of application security breaches. Tipton said software maintenance represents about 80% of the cost of software, and when security rework is necessary, the costs can be astronomical.

"You've got software released, it's been signed off and tested to some degree, but if it has to be retooled and the requirements have not been built in on the front end—particularly in the design phase—it can cost you 30 to 100x the total system cost to go back and do that because it could take months or years. Software development is seriously flawed, which is why we're working hard to turn that around."

(ISC)² is the largest information and software-security professional association in the world. The not-for-profit consortium boasts 90,000 certified members in 137 countries and has 100 chapters established around the world. (ISC)² currently offers the following certifications: Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP) and CISSP concentrations in Architecture, Engineering, and Management; Certified Authorization Professional (CAP), Systems Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP); and Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP).

The Need for Better Security

Software breaches can and do happen. Time-to-market trumps security and breaches are accepted as a cost of doing business.

"Developers aren't specifically trained in security, and those responsible for security don't get involved in the actual development process," said Tipton. "If General Motors sells a million cars with faulty brakes, they have to issue a recall, which just doesn't happen in the software world. If software companies had to incur costs like that, they'd have a better appreciation for the TCO of rectifying security breaches."

Not surprisingly, security risks are not treated equally. When developers build software, they may test it against vulnerabilities identified by CIOs or CSOs. If the vulnerability has not been rated seven or above on a scale of 1-10, they don't fix it, Tipton said.

"This is why you still have SQL server injections and cross-site scripting. Those were identified as threats back in 1998," he said. "CIOs never rate those at a level at which they'll get attention, so the applications are not tested for that."

(ISC)² works hard to ensure that its collection of best practices, policies, and procedures are the most comprehensive offerings available. Its training and certification products are written by international subject-matter experts who continuously update the taxonomy of information on security topics.

"If you use our materials properly, you can improve security in all phases of software development regardless of what methodology you're using," Tipton said.

What Makes (ISC)² Certification Different

There is no shortage of security training and certification programs, but not all of them are equally effective. (ISC)² certification combines theory, practice and continuing education to ensure that certified members maintain high levels of competency. To become certified, a candidate must pass a rigorous, psychometrically based exam and have his or her technical expertise and experience endorsed by another member of (ISC)².

"We require two to five years of hands-on experience, depending on the credential and the domains that you're testing for," said Tipton. "You also have to subscribe to the (ISC)² Code of Ethics, which will make you stop and think before you perform a lot of tasks." Certified members must be recertified every three years by earning up to 120 continuing professional education credits (depending on the certification) specific to an area of technical expertise.

"We strive to keep the level of integrity high," said Tipton. "Once the validation is complete, we are confident we have produced a person who has a greater understanding of holistic security considerations throughout the entire software life cycle and not just the development piece of it."

Another (ISC)² Certification Coming

(ISC)² is working closely with the Cloud Security Alliance to develop an internationally certified cloud credential, which will launch in June 2014.

"Once you have a problem, it's too late," said Tipton. "All an expert can do at that point is tell you what you should have done. We have credentials that allow you to manage security proactively."

Learn more at www.isc2.org. ■

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Master Modern Application Development with ComponentOne

From WinForms to WPF, ASP.NET to Silverlight and HTML5, each new platform represents a technology shift and a new UI paradigm. In order to deliver apps to the maximum number of end points, savvy developers choose ComponentOne.

"For decades, ComponentOne has been known as the UI experts who provide unsurpassed application development tools," said Todd Schick, director of Business Development at ComponentOne. "Our tool sets, which we call 'studios,' allow developers to focus on their applications' business logic rather than the nuances of the underlying UI technology standards."

ComponentOne, a division of GrapeCity, offers studios for HTML5, Windows Forms, WPF, ASP.NET, MVC, Silverlight, Windows Phone, .NET Compact Framework, ActiveX and mobile controls, which are collectively available in Studio Enterprise. The company also sells ActiveReports reporting components, Excel-like spreadsheet components in Spread Studio for .NET, jQuery widgets, and a help-authoring tool.

Developers, designers and architects use ComponentOne's controls and solutions to build Windows, Web and mobile applications. Recently, the company has been placing growing emphasis on HTML5, jQuery, JavaScript and Windows 8 tools.

ComponentOne Leads the HTML5 Tool Space

Two years ago, ComponentOne introduced Wijmo, a complete kit of more than 40 UI widgets for HTML5, JavaScript and jQuery, which range from powerful grids and charts to the newly released enterprise-ready spreadsheets.

Based on an Adaptive Widget Framework, Wijmo supports jQuery UI and jQuery Mobile, including ThemeRoller and Themes. It also includes full jQuery spreadsheet support, and has an AppView Widget that is ideal for building a single application for both phones and tablets. The AppView widget includes built-in navigation, AJAX-loaded content, and a responsive layout system as well as an extended jQuery Mobile ListView and Breeze Data Adapter.

An education software provider serving 8,000 schools nationwide uses Wijmo's charting widgets, which render identically across Internet Explorer 6+, Chrome and Firefox browsers. Using Wijmo, the company simplified the migration of its Flash dashboard to HTML5 and was able to reach more users on more devices.

"One of the trends in application development is the use of JavaScript, jQuery and HTML5 technologies to create responsive and rich Web applications. There are many low to no-cost controls that are available out there," said Schick. "But you get bit in the end because of the lack of quality, features or support. We address all of those shortcomings with Wijmo."

Wijmo Enterprise 2013 v1 uniquely allows developers to build mobile and desktop applications using a single set of controls. Schick said Wijmo's jQuery technology will influence the evolution of the ComponentOne developer tool stack, including ComponentOne's flagship Studio Enterprise product.

Get Compelling Report and Spreadsheet Options

As part of the GrapeCity acquisition, ComponentOne now offers GrapeCity ActiveReports and Spread products. ActiveReports is an award-winning .NET reporting tool that provides .NET developers with familiar Visual Studio-integrated designers and components. Using ActiveReports, developers can create form-based transaction and analytical reports.

"When you develop an application, reports are a common requirement. That's why ActiveReports is such an important addition to the developer toolbox," said Schick. "It includes a powerful yet user-friendly designer, and can programmatically be altered through an extensive API. With ActiveReports, developers are able to quickly create sophisticated reports that meet the needs of their users."

ActiveReports supports fixed page layouts as well as continuous page layouts that have the flexibility to support any number of records. It includes an extensive and flexible API for data retrieval, transformation, layout and rendering as well as cross-platform viewers for WinForms, Flash, Silverlight and HTML5.

Spread Studio for .NET is a cross-platform toolkit that includes spreadsheet components for WinForms, ASP.NET, WPF, WinRT and Silverlight. SpreadJS, a full-featured spreadsheet built on jQuery, is also available as part of Wijmo Enterprise.

Develop Windows 8 Apps Your Way

ComponentOne's Studio for WinRT XAML and Studio for WinJS give developers access to data visualization and UI controls for Windows 8 app development. Using the component suites, developers can speed up the delivery of high-performance, visually appealing apps while conforming to Windows 8 Store UI guidelines.

A software development company needed to build a new Windows 8 application that would dynamically respond to large, fast-changing data sets. At the same time, the company had to respond to a fast time-to-market as well as the Microsoft approval process for inclusion in the Windows 8 Store. By utilizing custom controls provided by ComponentOne and its Studio for WinRT XAML product, the company was able to meet these challenges and even lay the groundwork for deploying its application across more devices and platforms.

For more information, please visit www.componentone.com. ■

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INTEGRATION YOUR WAY

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RSSBus: 'Integration Your Way'

The word "Integration" is often met with uncertainty and fear by many developers, DBAs and IT managers. Many envision integration in the context of large-scale, complex enterprise systems that require an army of consultants and costs to match. But integration is really about connecting systems, automating tasks, and increasing efficiency.

RSSBus offers a straightforward approach to integration, with easy-to-use data providers, drivers and tools accessible from almost any technology that treats remote data sources like traditional databases. This approach allows businesses to realize the tremendous benefits and cost-savings of integration while reducing complexity and expense.

"If you know how to access a SQL database, then you can use our Data Providers to access sources like Salesforce, SAP, SharePoint or Dynamics CRM through familiar tables, views and stored procedures," said Eric Madariaga, VP of Marketing at RSSBus. "We offer developers bidirectional data access from any development technology with native ADO.NET Providers, JDBC Drivers, ODBC Drivers, and Web Connectors. Likewise, non-developers can access data through platforms like SQL Server (SSIS), BizTalk, Microsoft Access, Excel, and virtually any other application or ETL Tool that supports ODBC, JDBC, OData, SQL (TDS), or MySQL."

"Instead of forcing your customers to read reams of documentation, give them database tables and a familiar relational pattern."
—Eric Madariaga

RSSBus data providers are available for QuickBooks, Salesforce.com, Dynamics CRM, SharePoint, Google apps, OData Services, SAP, Excel files, Open Financial Exchange, Facebook, Twitter, e-mail, LinkedIn, Highrise, and more. Plus, the RSSBus extensibility model lets developers build custom drivers and data providers.

Extensibility: Build Your Own Data Providers & Drivers

RSSBus' Core Provider SDK enables developers to create custom drivers and data providers for proprietary databases, applications, and Web APIs.

"Our Core Providers give you a framework for creating your own drivers and data providers," said Madariaga. "Instead of forcing your customers to read reams of documentation for your proprietary Web Services APIs, give them database tables and a familiar relational pattern that they all understand.

"To most consumers, tables are self-describing," continued Madariaga. "Anyone can look at a table of customers, for example, and immediately understand what the columns mean and how to work with the data. There is no need to understand complex object models, Web Services or API calls."

The Provider SDK includes the tools and runtime software necessary to implement drivers for the target source. Developers simply implement a custom data source as a new extension using a set of Provider APIs that make the data source accessible from any RSSBus Provider Core technology. What's more, developers need no prior knowledge of ADO.NET, JDBC or SQL to build a custom provider.

"Once you build an extension, you will automatically be able to supply customers with ADO.NET, JDBC, ODBC, SSIS and Excel Add-Ins for your data," said Madariaga. "Anyone who is creating a Web API can facilitate the use and consumption of their data through these straightforward interfaces."

A Database Interface to Web APIs

The RSSBus Web Connectors are lightweight server-side applications that act as proxies for the underlying data sources they connect with, through standard database interfaces like MySQL, OData and SQL Server TDS. They are available for .NET and Java, and can be easily run on-premise on Windows, Unix or Mac OS, or in the cloud through Windows Azure, Google App Engine, Amazon EC2, etc.

"The Web Connectors provide a consolidated interface to your data that can be accessed from any development environment or client software that can access MySQL, SQL or OData Services," said Madariaga. "All Web Connectors include easy-to-set-up security and access management capabilities; with a single connection point, it is easy to monitor, manage and control access to data."

Web and mobile app developers will find the OData interfaces exceptionally appealing as the OData services can be accessed through JSON. Web developers can interact with application, database and service data through these OData Services with zero client-side requirements beyond standard JavaScript.

The MySQL interfaces open up new possibilities for developers and information workers that work outside of Microsoft technologies. The MySQL database is widely supported by developer tools, and there are dozens of client libraries for working with it from .NET, Java, PHP, Objective-C, Python, Ruby, etc.

"We have customers that are using freely available tools like MySQL Workbench to download Salesforce.com account data, manipulate the data, and then push it back up to Salesforce," said Madariaga. "Customers are even using simple MySQL backup utilities like mysqldump to make local backups for data archiving."

Developer Subscriptions Now Available

RSSBus subscriptions include unlimited access to RSSBus data provider and driver technologies for a single technology platform such as ADO.NET, JDBC, SSIS, etc. With a subscription, developers can leverage the same database-centered development approach to build applications that access data from QuickBooks, Salesforce, Dynamics CRM, SAP, SharePoint and more.

"Our subscriptions are truly the best way to buy RSSBus products, offering a tremendous value to developers," said Madariaga. "Not only do developers receive royalty-free distribution rights for a complete array of data sources, but they continue to receive new data sources and updates to existing data providers and drivers throughout the year."

For more information, please visit www.rssbus.com. ■

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