



FDM4 MODERNIZES LEGACY SYSTEMS WITH PROGRESS

Client

FDM₄
ERP WMS E-COM CRM
Software to Grow your Business

Industry

Warehouse Distribution & e-commerce

Products

OpenEdge 11.6 and Kendo UI

Summary

FDM4 leveraged OpenEdge and Kendo UI to modernize its complex, legacy ERP application with more than 3,000 screens in about three weeks, improving the customer experience across devices.

Challenge

FDM4 offers software and business management solutions for distributors and manufacturers in various industries, including integrated ERP, warehouse management, e-commerce, and CRM solutions. The company's ERP integrates many functions within client organizations, including forecasting and procurement, inventory, order processing, allocations, freight calculations and accounting.

In business for over 35 years, FDM4 has seen numerous changes. Keeping up with technology to best serve its broad clientele has been challenging, to say the least.

Fortunately, they've been using Progress® OpenEdge® for more than 20 years. "Progress has grown with us along the way as we've transformed with new, modern technologies to serve customers in today's data-driven world," said Mike Cutsey, President, FDM4.

"We have always tried to keep pace with changing technology," said Carl Brewer, Chief Operating Officer, FDM4. "We look at technology as a race with no finish line, and to us, modernization isn't a one-time project; it's an ongoing commitment."

After starting with its ERP, FDM4 developed a B2B e-commerce solution, then added a Graphical User Interface (GUI) about five years later, using .NET and C# for the warehousing and CRM systems. “We were going to add .Net to the ERP, as well, but then we put on the breaks,” said Mike Cutsey, President, FDM4. “It still didn’t look new or modern, and we knew that a browser-based frontend was necessary to remain competitive.”

FDM4 customers serve a younger audience with a strong fashion sense, and they expect aesthetically pleasing, high-performing user experience. “Our customers don’t want to deal with monolithic solutions and processes with old GUI screens—they just don’t think or work that way,” Cutsey added.

But moving to a browser-based interface would be challenging. First off, FDM4’s customers needed to upgrade to OpenEdge 11.6 to take advantage of new features, and to stay compliant with new security requirements. Performance and data integration were also critical considerations, as was optimizing user experience.

“Progress is on the right track. Not only does Progress enable us to meet the demands of our customers and prospects, we can surpass their demands. We’d be crazy to even think about going anywhere else.”

John Cutsey,
CEO of FDM4

Solution

To jumpstart its modernization, FDM4 upgraded its ERP solution to OpenEdge 11.6. “OpenEdge 11.6 integrated easily with our backend architecture, because we were already pulling data to the frontend using connectors we had built in-house,” said Cutsey.

“We were able to overhaul our entire ERP application in about three weeks. To date, we’ve modernized about 2,500 programs and 2,000 screens using Kendo UI components.”

Mike Cutsey,
President, FDM4

FDM4 then used Kendo UI® by Progress on the frontend. Cutsey said Kendo UI made application development effective and efficient. “After buying Kendo UI, we had our prototype completed in less than two days,” he said. The first FDM4 clients to benefit from Kendo UI were TSC Apparel and Gildan. “Kendo UI is quick, fast and efficient, and everybody loved it.”

FDM4 also uses Progress OpenEdge Enterprise RDBMS and Progress Replication Plus for monitoring databases. “Some of our customers have databases with two different systems, in two different warehouses, or a warehouse and an ERP,” said Cutsey. “We’re replicating back to our infrastructure hosting facility for disaster recovery.”

Results

According to Brewer, FDM4’s modernization efforts provide significant business advantages. “End users may not see the backend differences of upgrading to OpenEdge 11.6, but we know they’re up-to-date and moving forward,” said Cutsey. “Upgrades are much easier, they are compliant with current security standards, and they can take advantage of the latest features and improvements in the platform.”

Additionally, Kendo UI provides visual consistency across our platforms and applications. The ability to reuse controls enables faster development, improved productivity and a shorter learning curve for developers.

“Using Kendo UI, we can easily pop in built-in controls such as grids, and propagate the change across thousands of screens,” Cutsey said. “It provides a common look and feel for a better user experience, and I only have to touch the control one time. Plus, our application has greater appeal to our audience with a more aesthetically pleasing look and feel that they now associate with FDM4.” Cutsey added that Kendo UI will help FDM4 bring in new employees and simplify training.

Importantly, the combination of OpenEdge 11.6 and Kendo UI has enabled FDM4 to “liberate data,” meaning they can now make the information customers need available at their fingertips through any device. “We now provide a structured application that enables business users to see and take action on data remotely,” said Brewer. “We’ve taken the experience of interacting with our application outside the enterprise, making it mobile-friendly and easy to access anywhere, anytime—quite literally transforming the customer experience.”

Brewer’s team has a process in place to migrate all customers to OpenEdge 11.6. Additionally, they’re leveraging the translation capabilities in OpenEdge to serve a large Japanese customer. Meanwhile, the company’s modernized ERP frontend is driving competitive advantage.

“We are a market leader in technology adoption, because our competitors don’t have Progress solutions and can’t keep up with the pace of change. Progress in our toolbox, we can stay at the forefront with leading-edge technology solutions.”

Carl Brewer,
Chief Operating Officer, FDM4

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About FDM4

FDM4 International Inc. has been in the technology industry since 1978, and has since specialized in becoming a leading provider of integrated ERP, WMS, E-commerce (B2B/B2C), CRM, PLM and Mobile Applications. FDM4’s robust, scalable solutions are easy-to-use industry-specific applications for Distributors and Manufacturers in various industries, including Apparel, Fashion, Footwear, Accessories, Consumer Products and Hard Good’s Industries. For more information, visit <http://www.fdm4.com/>

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OpenEdge:



What’s New
in Progress
OpenEdge 11.6



How Will Digital
Transformation Impact
Your Business

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About Progress

Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) is a global leader in application development, empowering the digital transformation organizations need to create and sustain engaging user experiences in today’s evolving marketplace. With offerings spanning web, mobile and data for on-premises and cloud environments, Progress powers startups and industry titans worldwide, promoting success one customer at a time. Learn about Progress at www.progress.com or 1-781-280-4000.

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