

CASE STUDY

Company

MDL Information Systems

Department

Global Consulting Delivery and Sourcing Team

Industry Information

- Computer Software
- Research & Development

Technologies

- Visual Basic.NET
- ADO.NET

Overview

MDL's Discovery Framework solution area provides core technology and applications that power scientific research. The solution area contains the new generation MDL Isentris products and industry-standard MDL® ISIS products. With a modern 3-tier architecture designed to support a range of scientific information including chemistry and biology, Isentris ensures researchers can access the right information in the right context with the right people at the right time.

MDL's Global Consulting Delivery and Sourcing Team is responsible for tailoring and customizing the Discovery Framework to meet the needs of its individual customers. This team needed to understand Microsoft's .NET Architecture in order to develop additional middle tier services and build customized front-ends to the Discovery Framework.

MDL chose SetFocus as their .NET training partner because of their extensive knowledge and experience with the customization of Microsoft Official Curriculum. SetFocus recommended, designed, and delivered a five-day personalized course covering best practices for programming with Visual Basic.NET and developing .NET Applications for Windows using VB.NET.

MDL Consultants and Field Application Scientists who attended the course gained a greater understanding of Microsoft's .NET Technologies and found an immediate return on their investment.

Question to MDL Consultants and Field Application Scientists:
What are your recommendations, if any, for the instructor that will improve his or her effectiveness in delivering this course in the future?

Q & A

Answers:

No recommendations - Wayne was a terrific instructor - knowledgeable about the materials & underlying technologies, and able to clearly relate them to the class.

...One of the best training classes I've had in 10 years at MDL!

Excellent job - highly motivated and spent quite a bit of time beyond class hours working with us.

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Company Backgrounds

Founded in 1978, MDL, a subsidiary of Reed Elsevier Group (the Anglo-Dutch media giant) is the pioneering leader in discovery informatics. They offer software, reference databases, consulting services, and other resources for managing scientific data during research and development processes. Over 1,000 life science companies supercharge their discovery engines with MDL software solutions to generate fresh ideas and make breakthrough discoveries. By synchronizing and streamlining the sharing and management of vital information and knowledge, MDL enables scientists to work more efficiently.

SetFocus, established in 1997, has been providing quality training solutions to consumers and organizations since its inception. The mission of its Corporate Services division is to help companies make sense of the emerging trends in technology and offer practical solutions that will allow an organization to be more effective, productive and competitive with Microsoft .NET Technologies.

The Challenge

MDL's Global Consulting Delivery and Sourcing Team needed to meet the needs of its customer base, through the customization of additional middle tier services as well as building custom front-ends to the Discovery Framework.

"Without Microsoft's .NET, we would be severely handicapped in our ability to use the middle tier capabilities in our Discovery Framework and help our customers achieve their goals. MDL is a company that strives at being a leader in discovery informatics. We provide software to allow our customers to make ground breaking scientific discoveries. If we are not on the leading edge, then they are not on the leading edge..." stated Barry Peacock, MDL Consulting Manager.

The Solution

Barry Peacock met Stacey Uhrig, a Partner with SetFocus, at a Microsoft Event; Code Fest 2003. It was there that Stacey became aware of Barry's immediate need for his team to get up to speed with .NET. A few weeks later they met at MDL's Morristown, NJ office where more information was gathered regarding their specific goals and objectives. Stacey along with James Arendt, a SetFocus .NET Instructor, designed a curriculum that would fit within their budget and timeline.

Prior to the delivery of the 5 day training they designed, Uhrig arranged for a Microsoft .NET Evangelist to present a 4 hour .NET Introductory Seminar to Barry's team both on site and abroad. Members from California, Chicago, Basel Switzerland, and Paris France attended via web conferencing. According to Peacock, "The .NET Seminar helped set the expectations for the course." In addition, SetFocus provided valuable links and additional references to all of the MDL team members in advance of the course.

Top Reasons MDL chose SetFocus:

- Expertise with customization of Microsoft Official Courseware (MOC).
- Flexibility on location of delivery.
- Willingness to act as a Partner with MDL, versus just delivering standard training. SetFocus listened to MDL's needs and built a program to help them accomplish their specific goals and objectives.
- Price structure: ability to work within MDL's financial budget and time constraints.

Testimonials

"One of the best technical instructors I've had. Great course!"

"Wayne is the best instructor for any Microsoft course I've taken, and best overall for any computer-related training anywhere. Well done!"

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“Just in time training”

Following the Introductory .NET Seminar, SetFocus delivered a five-day customized course, focusing on best practices for programming with Visual Basic.NET and developing .NET Applications for Windows using VB.NET.

During the five-day training course, one of the member's of Peacock's team had the opportunity to implement some of his new found knowledge on a project, in real-time.

“The timing and content of the training couldn't have been better. The fact that we were equipped to handle a .NET requirement during the training, speaks volumes. There is no doubt, it was a worthwhile investment.” states Barry.

All of SetFocus' training programs are hands-on with practical exercises throughout. The emphasis on personal attention and customization means that MDL, like all SetFocus clients, were able to focus on the elements that were most pertinent to them.

To find out more information on this and the wide range of services that SetFocus' Corporate Services Division offers visit www.setfocus.com/corporate.aspx or call 973-889-0211.

Built upon a philosophy of Quality Developer Training, SetFocus has been providing Intensive, Integrated, Developer Training covering over 250,000 Developer Training Hours, since its inception.

100% .NET Focused

100% Developer Focused

100% Training Focused

SetFocus is the host and sponsor of the Northern NJ .NET User Group (aka N3UG).