

Netherlands Chamber of Commerce means business, thanks to IBM Business Partner Metaware and Solutions Builder Express

Overview

IBM Business Partner: Metaware, provider of intranet applications, portals and workflow solutions that support quality control, document management, knowledge management, complaint management and continual improvement.

Client: The Netherlands Chamber of Commerce

IBM PartnerWorld offerings:

- Training and certifications
- Solutions Builder Express

Where does business go when it needs vital information, a regional presence and a voice at the table of government? The local chamber of commerce, of course. In the Netherlands, 21 regional chambers operating through 60 offices provide such essential services to businesses throughout the country.

Although the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce is decentralized to respond to local issues, its units must work together to fulfill a mandate set by the Dutch government: to implement economic laws introduced so that businesses can benefit from reliable information recorded by an impartial organization. Central to this role is the management of the national trade register, which records some 1.4 million businesses, associations and foundations. In performing this enormous task, along with providing other information and resources to both business and government, the Chamber of Commerce operates a single quality management system that ensures consistency of service across its organization.

And that's where IBM Business Partner Metaware enters the picture. With its intranet and workflow management solutions, Metaware provided the Chamber with a highly cohesive network, one that connects "branches" across a far-flung organization and supports their overall quality initiatives. When the Chamber wanted to innovate still further and sought a portal that would give employees access, anytime, anywhere, to its stores of information, Metaware was able to win this new business through a compelling sales presentation. Created with IBM Solutions Builder Express, the presentation demonstrated with great effect the portal solution's functionality, affordability and quick deployment.

Presenting solutions

Metaware has been highly effective in its market by recognizing that small and medium-sized businesses (SMB) succeed or fail according to how well they leverage information. Accordingly, Metaware has built deep expertise in developing, implementing and managing Lotus Notes / Domino applications, ranging from simple workflow procedures to integrated customer information and quality management systems that encompass quality control, document management, knowledge management, complaint management and continual improvement.

Metaware has earned certifications to demonstrate the firm's depth of knowledge and expertise in Lotus Notes Domino and WebSphere Portal. It is also pursuing certification as an On Demand Business solution advisor. The firm's clients appreciate Metaware's skills as well as the fast deployment of its solutions, thanks to the IBM WebSphere Express offerings.

Dynamic, flexible and easily managed, Metaware's applications are available as a total package or in separate modules. Simple design makes the modules easy to integrate and adapt to different specifications. Armed with everything that appeals to the SMB market, Metaware relies on IBM Solutions Builder Express for practical resources that help clinch the sale.

The SBE Portfolio offers horizontal and vertical industry solutions aimed at helping IBM Business Partners focus on mid-market customers through a range of enablement resources. The portfolio consists of more than 30 different Solution Starting Points, each featuring a solution overview, solution planning guide, solution implementation guide and demo toolkit. The related technical assets include resources for solution architecture and recommended software, hardware and tools; implementation planning; customization information; technology simulators; and sample code, data, scripts and configuration for a quick start. Advancing the sales process, the demo toolkit offers a customizable presentation to be used with the end customer, video clips of the solution and a "how-to" document.

Clarity and impact

"The demo toolkit, with its charts, flash video and PowerPoint decks, enables us to present the concept and benefits of our solutions with impact and clarity," says Ad Voets, president, Metaware. The flexibility of the toolkit is especially attractive, as Metaware can adapt the presentation materials with its own branding.

Business Partners find SBE resources especially beneficial in reducing time-to-value and reducing the risk associated with delivering a solution, as proven practices are embedded into each and every solution starting point.

"In the case of the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce, we were able to present quickly and clearly a solution for our customer with which they were unfamiliar," says Voets. The solution consisted of a personalized portal, complete with individual mailbox and agenda items, and newly built Lotus Notes applications that display news and articles from national and regional newspapers. In the next phase, the portal will connect employees to the business-critical trade register as well as several existing Lotus Notes databases.

Like an ace in the pocket, Solutions Builder Express is helping Metaware score an advantage early in the sales cycle – and building confidence among clients like the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce that choosing Metaware solutions is simply good business.
