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8th Annual Microsoft RAD Awards



Reaching for excellence in
retail & hospitality solutions
that enhance Business Agility

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Winners Optimize Business Agility for Retail and Hospitality



As the landscape grows increasingly competitive in the retail and hospitality industries, the most successful companies will be those that can adjust to an environment where change is a constant. The ability to discern what customers want, and to be able to provide it to them not only how and when they want it but at a price that maintains a company's margins, has become a challenging proposition in today's rapidly shifting marketplace. It requires a high degree of Business Agility throughout the enterprise, from the point of sale in each store or property to the most complex headquarters-level systems.

Technology has always played a crucial role in creating, and maintaining, high levels of Business Agility. The most successful retail and hospitality companies choose solutions that give them a maximum of flexibility today, as well as the capability to grow and change with tomorrow's business needs—whatever they may be.

This year's Retail Application Developer (R.A.D.) Award winners, profiled in the following pages of this special report, exemplify the idea of leveraging IT to maximize a company's Business Agility within the complex, fast-moving worlds of retail and hospitality.

One of the key technology enablers facilitating these solutions is Microsoft® .NET. The .NET vision—information technology architectures and platforms that bring the right information to the right people, any time, any place and on any device—takes practical form with the solutions offered by the R.A.D. Award winners. They, along with a wide range of other solution providers, are using the .NET framework, Microsoft Windows® operating systems and the .NET Enterprise Server family to bring scalability, flexibility and manageability to their retail and hospitality customers.

The winning solutions are not just technologically sophisticated. They also bring a host of actual, provable business benefits to their retail and hospitality users. In choosing the winning companies, the R.A.D. Award judges took careful note of the business impact of each application. In part because Microsoft's platforms, systems and services provide such a strong base to work from, the application developers were able to focus their energies on creating solutions that produced quick returns on investment while lowering total cost of ownership.

Microsoft thanks the R.A.D. Award judges, and congratulates the winning companies for creating solutions that make Business Agility a business basic.

Tom Litchford
Director of Marketing and Channel
ISG Retail & Hospitality
Microsoft Corp.

Winners

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Sponsors Salute Microsoft R.A.D. Winners



Investments Appreciating for Customers, Partners and Industry

Hewlett-Packard's commitment to serving the retail and hospitality industries can be measured in numerous ways, but perhaps the most persuasive is the significant research and development dollars that HP has been investing. Retailers will see a range of products designed to help them take costs out of their supply chains coming into the market in the next 18 months.

One of the strongest examples of HP's investment in the retail and hospitality marketplace is the rp5000 point of sale system, which combines the best elements of proprietary POS solutions—reliability and a long product life—with the flexibility and low costs of open systems. In addition to providing retail users with the best of both worlds in the mission-critical POS area, innovative products like the rp5000, developed in conjunction with HP's technology partners Microsoft and Intel, give a wide range of companies a terrific platform for their software solutions.

Another important way HP supports the retail and hospitality industries is with its ongoing support of the Microsoft R.A.D. Awards. We are proud to sponsor these awards, which recognize excellence and reflect the investment in innovation that the market needs. I congratulate all of this year's R.A.D. winners.

Robert Corbett
Director
Retail Industry Solutions Marketing
Hewlett-Packard Company



Real-Time Answers for a Fast-Moving Industry

Retailers are in a constant state of change, with new store openings, consolidations, expanded sales channels and quickly changing consumer trends. To deal with this ever-shifting environment, the information technology that retail and hospitality companies use must be flexible and adaptable, to meet business and operations needs as well as provide customers with the optimum shopping experience.

One of the strongest ways retail and hospitality companies can stay competitive is with wireless infrastructures that can deliver information in real-time and enhance customer service, strengthen customer loyalty and eliminate inefficiencies. Along with its technology partners, Intel is delivering the new technology to enable cutting-edge wireless solutions.

Powerful yet affordable technology, built on standards, allows retailers to integrate and scale their business solutions. In addition, the breakthrough mobile performance that Intel® Centrino™ mobile technology provides enables a company's employees to respond quickly to changing market conditions.

New wireless solutions will continue to emerge as retailers address the basic problems of operating economy and customer behavior with strategically applied information. Intel is dedicated to providing the underlying technology that will make these solutions reliable and cost-effective.

Intel salutes this year's R.A.D. Award winners for their dedication to keeping retail and hospitality companies competitive with a wide range of innovative IT solutions.

Jon Stine
Worldwide Retail and Consumer Goods Industry Manager
Intel Corporation



Web-Based Content Management Expands Stores' Signage Capabilities

Microsoft
RAD Awards
2003



AccessVia
Seattle, WA

R.A.D. Award Category:
Retail Store Automation

“We’re in the business of helping retailers communicate with their customers across all channels.”

A Web-based solution that centralizes numerous types of customer-facing communications, from printed shelf-edge signs to in-store electronic displays, has been honored with a R.A.D. Award.

Web dSignShop from AccessVia provides retailers with the centralization benefits of Web-based deployment to manage complex, fast-changing customer-facing communications, according to AccessVia CEO Dean Sleeper. The application allows retailers to centralize content as well as templates for in-store signage of all kinds, maintaining headquarters-level control while giving stores the material they need to merchandise and market products effectively.

Centralization relieves individual stores of the burden of maintaining ever-larger content “libraries” at the store level. “The need to populate those content libraries in the stores is a nightmare,” said Sleeper. A patent-pending data compression technology allows retailers to create content centrally—even data-rich content like color pictures of the product—and send it to the stores without overburdening communication systems.

The ability to make use of significant amounts of data provides retailers with a host of new competitive tools for the store environment. “Effectively, the item file in retail today grew up in a point of sale-centric fashion—it didn’t deal with the other attributes of a product,” said Sleeper. With the Web dSignShop solution, retailers can more easily create signage that includes key reasons to purchase a product, such as comparison data for a consumer electronics item, nutrition information or suggested

Because these information files are created and previewed with Web-based technology, they can also be easily used for other customer-facing technologies in the store, such as handheld devices, kiosks and POS display screens.

AccessVia simplified the tool sets that retailers use, creating a WYSIWIG authoring tool that allows its merchandisers to create a consistent look and feel throughout the store environment.

Another new element of Web dSignShop is its in-aisle execution, allowing store associates to request signs on handheld devices while they are in the store aisles. In addition, AccessVia has added “Mission IS Possible,” a “try before you buy” program that lets a retailer launch a live pilot in a store after visiting AccessVia online or at a trade show. “This lets retailers test the waters and identify the key issues that would happen in a roll-out scenario,” said Sleeper.

AccessVia makes extensive use of Microsoft technology, from its Windows® 2000 Server and Windows Server 2003 for rendering, to its use of Microsoft SQL Server and the .NET ASP page architecture.

“We’re in the business of helping retailers communicate with their customers across all channels,” said Sleeper. “We work very hard to get them to understand that their shelf-edge signs and labels aren’t a special, separate thing, but are just one place to speak to customers about their items and promotions.”

For more information about AccessVia call 206-285-4994 or visit www.AccessVia.com.



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