SILVERPEAS

"As long-term users of NetBeans IDE, we started the process of migrating to the new Java EE specifications with RESTful Web Services and an HTML5 frontend. With NetBeans IDE and its HTML5 tools, our backend Java engineers and frontend web designers are able to use the same IDE, which simplifies and speeds up pur development processes. Finally, the whole team is able to 'speak' the same IDE."

Company: Silverpeas

Location: Grenoble, France

Url: http://www.silverpeas.org/

Industry: Portal Development

Oracle Products & Services:

- NetBeans IDE
- Java EE
- Java Server Faces
- EJB 3.1
- JPA 2.0
- JAX-RS 1.1
- Jersey

Related Software:

- Spring 3.1

Executive Summary

Silverpeas is a collaborative portal solution for creating intranets in just a few clicks. Founded in the '90s, the company narrowly survived the dot-com crash of the early 2000s—shrinking from 40 developers to two. In 2008, a new team reignited the project, opening its code under AGPLv3, and modernizing its architecture, GUI, and features.

Silverpeas is used as a solution by public organizations such as the Conseil Général de l'Aude, the Conseil Général de la Dordogne, and l'Institut National de Recherche Agronomique, but also by private companies, such as Michelin and ADEF Résidence.

Organization

Silverpeas is developed by Silverpeas SAS, an organization based in France. The majority of the development team focuses on the core of the product, with a smaller group customizing the solution for customer needs.

The Business Issue

Silverpeas saw the need to move from the outdated J2EE 1.3 specification to the Java EE 6 specification and to completely refactor the Silverpeas project build system—moving to a simplified and modernized solution, away from Apache Ant and Eclipse.

Key Challenges

- Updating the technology stack from J2EE 1.3 to Java EE 6.
- Writing tests for the huge amount of code that did not have them—unit nor integration tests—was an important task to confront.
- Refactoring from Apache Ant and Eclipse to Apache Maven.
- Moving from CVS to Git.

Solution

- NetBeans IDE stays up to date on the technologies; when Silverpeas began moving old EJB 2.0 BMP classes to JPA 2.0, the company appreciated having a tool that could support both the old and the new technologies.

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- As Silverpeas modernized its architecture and GUI—abandoning their old JSPs and moving to REST web services—the standard integration of Jersey and NetBeans IDE proved useful. The structured view in the IDE's Projects window allowed them to see all their current exposed RESTful web services.
- Because of NetBeans IDE's integration with Apache Maven, the team migrated to NetBeans IDE. They found that with the IDE they were able to simply open an Apache Maven project, just as any another project. In Eclipse they had to import the project and often had to reimport to get it working. Only NetBeans IDE was able to load all 135 projects that comprise the Silverpeas application.
- The move from CVS to Git was seamless as a result of the IDE's integrated Git support.
- Running tests in NetBeans IDE as similarly done with Apache Maven is an advantage the IDE has over other tools because Silverpeas can debug applications without any interference from the IDE.

Business Value

- The biggest value for Silverpeas is the ability to use the latest technologies in a development environment that naturally supports them.
- Silverpeas is no longer tied to a specific IDE, since it has moved its code base from Apache Ant to Apache Maven.
- Developers find it easy to open and work with their large project base.
- Introducing new developers to the project source base is much simpler than before because the code is cleaner and easier to maintain.

Credits:

Emmanuel Hugonnet

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