

A CLIENT SUCCESS STORY

NETROUTER, INCORPORATED

A SIMPLE SOLUTION TO COMPLEX DELIVERY AND DISTRIBUTION PROBLEMS

THE CLIENT

NetRouter, Incorporated has developed software to solve complex route optimization and distribution problems. NetRouter, Incorporated is the developer of NetRouter™, a sophisticated application for truck routing, distribution modeling, distribution planning, performing “what if” analysis for the best location for a distribution center, and determining the best assignment of distribution centers to customer locations. NetRouter, Incorporated’s total business is the development, marketing and support of the NetRouter software product.

NetRouter, Incorporated’s expertise is in designing, developing, and consulting with companies with their own private truck fleet, or service call vehicles, to optimize the distribution function such that costs are minimized, while maintaining a high-level of customer service. NetRouter can be used for optimizing service calls, deliveries and irregular routes in both metropolitan areas and between cities/towns.

THE CHALLENGE

In July, 1998, NetRouter, Incorporated received a grant from IBM, Lotus and the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) to implement NetRouter as an eBusiness application for route optimization in an internet- and web-based environment. The objective was to use the Lotus Domino server as the interface to the proprietary route optimization engine that had

been in use for many years. The challenge was to minimize software modifications to the route optimization engine while providing a completely new user interface for ease of use on the web. It was necessary for the web-enabled graphical user interface to collect customer and order data, as well as user-defined parameters, that could be passed on to the route optimization engine.

THE APPROACH

The Austin-based Lotus Notes consulting unit of Renaissance Worldwide, Incorporated was selected to design the web site for NetRouter, as well as the Lotus Domino database and applications to interface with the route optimization engine. The IBM RS/6000 running under AIX 4.3.2, Lotus Domino R5, and Lotus eSuite were all used, along with JavaScript and language compilers, to develop NetRouter. Renaissance’s proven track record delivering other Lotus-based solutions, made the Austin team a trusted partner in the project.

THE SOLUTION

A company can define its entire distribution network to NetRouter, setting parameters and constraints, and plugging in various cost values associated with distribution and transportation to run their business. As part of the initial setup, the customer will provide street addresses of customer delivery locations, or the street addresses of customers that require a service call.

This might be called their "Customer Master File," or "Customer Master Database" in their own computing environment. The customer locations will be geocoded with an automatic process that will provide specific location data to NetRouter.

Then, on any frequency basis required to operate their business, they provide "order entry data" as it pertains to the order/service call consolidation problem to be solved. NetRouter will deliver the order/service call consolidation solution that provides optimization to minimize their cost, while providing the highest level of customer service to their customers. In addition to order/service consolidation and route optimization, NetRouter will provide other applications such as assigning the best distribution center to customers in a multi-distribution center environment; also, optimum location analysis for the best location for a distribution center to serve the customers in the their distribution network.



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THE RESULTS

A simple solution to complex route optimization and distribution problems. NetRouter solves complex distribution modeling, distribution planning, and route optimization problems. NetRouter also addresses capacity planning, fleet assignments and other route optimization variables. A Web-based application that can save up to 25% of delivery and service call costs through optimization of distribution and route assignments, NetRouter now combines the power and simplicity of the Web with the proven experience of a workhorse desktop application. "NetRouter is very fast, solving a 500-order routing problem in 30 seconds," says Buddy Bradford, President & CEO of NetRouter, Inc. NetRouter can be used for solving routing problems for many industries or services, in small, medium or large companies. In addition to obvious applications such as medium and long haul food deliveries, it is applicable to typical short haul service industries such pest control or HVAC contracting.

ABOUT RENAISSANCE

Renaissance Worldwide is a global business and technology consulting firm providing Focused Solutions for Breakthrough Performance™. With over 6,400 professionals in 100 cities around the globe, Renaissance is uniquely qualified to deliver Concept-to-Completion® information technology and management consulting solutions. Our clients range from the Global 100 to emerging growth companies, served by Renaissance's Business Strategy group, Enterprise Solutions group, and IT Consulting Services group.

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