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Solutions for the Real World

PDSA Special Report

Why Purchase a Framework

Custom vs Pre-Built

Many of you have remodeled a kitchen sometime in your lives. When it came to the cabinets, you probably didn't have a carpenter build them from scratch out of raw lumber. If you're like most of us, you chose them pre-built from a cabinet store. Why? Because it was quicker and cheaper to do so, and you didn't have to give up any quality. In fact, the quality was likely better than if the cabinets were custom built, because all the little mistakes in cut angles and nail positions and hardware choices had been worked out in the design phase. You didn't have to pay for those mistakes, but you benefited from the results.

The same goes for software development. If you can purchase portions of your application that have already been built and tested many times in other applications (in the form of a good Application Framework), you can build your application faster and cheaper. And it will work better. Contained in this article are reasons why a good application framework is worth the price.

Save Money Now

While your own developers can probably create a Framework, it will take them time to do so. Time means money, not only in their salaries but also in time they are NOT spending creating the application you want done so your company can be more productive. PDSA has invested over 5,000 hours in our application framework. Do you have 5,000 hours to spare? Most likely not.

Save Money In the Future

Consider the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of software. To calculate a TCO you must analyze the lifetime of the application. First is the lost revenue or cost reductions in not getting a product to market in a timely manner. Second is the cost of programmer salaries while you are paying them to develop the software. Third (and often overlooked) is the cost of bugs and problems that arise in the software. This means more time for programmer salaries and downtime for your workers. Fourth is the cost of maintaining the system over the life of the application. If you need someone to maintain the software

because it has too many bugs, then your TCO goes up. If you have purchased a framework, these bugs will be reduced because your developers can start with a good base.

Build Once, Use Many Times

If you are a lawyer, you most likely never write a Will, a Contract, or a Living Trust from scratch; you reuse one you have written before. If you are an architect, you most likely do not design homes from scratch, you pull from existing drawings you have done before and reuse them. Developers should be doing the same thing. The problem is developers like to code—AND they like to code differently for each software application. While this is fun for them, this does not contribute to a business' bottom line. While lawyers and architects are thinking ahead to other clients, developers often think "in-the-moment". Thus they never truly accomplish reusability like these other professions.

This causes you a lot of problems. First, each project now takes longer because developers are pulling routines from several projects and rewriting them to fit into the new project. What a waste of your time. Second, you're left with a high TCO because if a bug is discovered in one application, it takes the developers longer to find it in all applications. Because they did not reuse the exact same code, they have to search through a lot of modified code in each application to find the bug.

Get Skills for a Fraction of the Cost

The reason you hire a lawyer or an architect is because you can't take the time to learn all the things that they know in a reasonable amount of time. The same goes for an application framework. Not all developers are created equal and thus they may not know how to create a generic security system, configuration management, or menu system that can be used over and over again. When you purchase an application framework you get all those things as a part of the purchase price. This means your developers can increase their skills in a fraction of the time it would normally take them to figure these things out on their own. Make sure you purchase a framework that is extensible, comes with live and video training and has good real-world documentation. With these items, your developers can become productive with this framework and learn how to create their own framework in no time at all.

Summary

There is always a "make versus buy" decision that you have to make when embarking on a software project. When you realize you have to build custom software, make sure you have a good Framework and methodology in place prior to starting that application. This will greatly increase your chances of success and lower your total cost of ownership.

The PDSA .NET Productivity Framework

PDSA has developed a professional, enterprise-ready application Framework (the PDSA .NET Productivity Framework) that is used by our consulting staff in the creation of every software project we develop. We use this framework every day and constantly add new re-useable components as we learn new techniques. By purchasing our framework we pass on this knowledge to you in the form of e-Books, articles, video snippets and updates to our DLLs. We provide email and phone support by our knowledgeable staff. This is all part of the purchase price of our Framework. For a Free demo call (888) 899-PDSA (7372) or email us for more information at Sales@pdsa.com.

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