

Omnis Web Client Technologies

White Paper



July 2007

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"The outstanding productivity of the Omnis Web Client technology enabled us to develop the Best-Buy-Online system in a short time and with relatively few resources. We would not have been able to achieve such high functionality and performance over the Web with any other development environment."

Holger Küchenmeister, Senior Developer, comTeam

See the Appendix for further developer comments and case studies.

Introduction

This white paper is about the client-side technologies in Omnis Studio that enable developers to create interactive and highly functional business applications for the Web. It focuses specifically on the so-called Ultra-thin Client and the Web Client plug-in technologies available in Omnis Studio. This paper does not delve deep into the programming techniques needed to implement any of these technologies (these are documented in the Omnis manuals and associated technical notes), rather it examines the pros and cons of using each technique, and places them into some context within the Web application development market.

A Tangled Web...

There are a great many ways of developing applications for the Web. Some have been around for many years, some are still under development – this is a constantly changing area of software development and one that presents many difficult challenges, not least the challenge of deciding which technology is relevant to your needs now *and* in the future. The Internet has become so pervasive, so much a part of business and our leisure time, that more-or-less any software development project will require some kind of Web functionality. Indeed, those applications that were traditionally deployed to desktops may now be better deployed as Web based applications.

The rich have got richer...

When the Web began back in the early 1990s, many Web sites were constructed from simple, static Web pages written in very basic HTML. In 1996, the Flash Player was released (by Macromedia, but now owned by Adobe) for displaying animated graphics, whereby Web sites became a lot more attractive. However, "serious" users and developers began to demand more functionality and so the HTML language was further extended, Javascript and VBScript were added, and Macromedia added ActionScript to Flash. There was also a demand for real business functionality in which data could be displayed and changed in the browser, whereupon Web design and application development began to merge, and development tools, such as Coldfusion, and other development frameworks were released.

This brings us right up to date with Web technologies such as Adobe Flex, which allows developers to create highly interactive applications (often referred to as Rich Internet Applications or RIAs) deployed via the Flash plug-in. Many Web applications are created with a combination of programming languages including ASP, JSP and PHP, or they are written in Java and deployed as Java applets. Throw into the mix Web Services, XML, and most recently AJAX (which offers an extension to Javascript for client-side scripting), and you have a very scattered and bewildering set of options for Web application developers.

So where does Omnis fit into this?

Well, Omnis is none *AND* all the above, in so far as it can achieve the same results as many of the tools or technologies mentioned above – it can cater for all or most situations whether you want to create applications for the Web or for desktop deployment. Omnis Studio “grew up” as a tool to create desktop and LAN based (client-server) applications, but with the introduction of various Web technologies has increasingly been used to create all types of business applications for the Web.

Omnis Studio has its own proprietary programming language, its own development environment, its own set of ready-made Web components, and its own drivers to connect to all popular databases. It therefore requires some time to get to know, but once you have learned to program in Omnis, most application development tasks, including those for the Web, can be achieved relatively quickly and easily. (Don’t just take our word it; see the case studies and developer comments in the Appendix later in this paper).

Why create Web applications?

Maybe you’re still wondering whether or not the Web is for you, but as we’ve suggested it cannot be ignored nowadays and can, in fact, provide many practical and technical benefits over the traditional means of deployment.

The main advantage of creating Web-enabled applications is the ability to install, update and maintain such applications without installing software on hundreds or even thousands of end-user’s computers. When a Web application uses HTML alone, of course there’s nothing to update on the client: each time a Web page is accessed a “new copy” of the page is sent to the client. Even using a browser plug-in means a relatively small, one-off installation that the end-user can either perform themselves or can be controlled by a company’s IT department – once the plug-in is installed, no further software is required (in fact the Omnis Web Client plug-in updates itself once installed). With all Web applications, the application is located on the server and can be updated as many times as the developer likes, and end-users will “see” any modifications the next time they use the application.

Web applications also remove or neutralize many platform considerations or incompatibilities often found with desktop applications. Web applications only need to support common Web browsers such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Safari, under the most widely used platforms; namely Windows, Mac OS X and Linux – if your Web interface supports all of these browsers and platforms, then in effect so does your application! Most applications written for the Web require Javascript or the Flash plug-in, but while you can use Javascript to augment your Omnis Web application, it is not an absolute requirement to run your application and very basic HTML can be used to present your Omnis application in a Web browser.

The customer (client) is king!

And where is the future? The short answer is: on the client... The end-user is taking over the Web, and this cultural revolution is being enabled by a technological one in which more processing power and interactivity is being given to the client. With technologies such as AJAX, and Omnis, client-side scripting is enabling more functionality to occur in the end-user’s browser with less need for interaction with the server. With careful programming, applications can become highly interactive and provide the same functionality as desktop applications. Omnis Studio has supported client-side scripting for many years and it has enabled many of the Web applications written in Omnis to succeed.

Thin or Ultra-thin, in one tool

First, a few definitions: The term ‘Ultra-thin Client’ was coined to describe a technique in Omnis of using HTML only for creating the interface to a Web application. This is to distinguish it from the Omnis Web Client, a browser plug-in, which has always been regarded as a ‘thin client’. Before we had the possibility of developing thin client applications in Omnis Studio, we only had ‘thick clients’ – these are applications that can only be accessed by end-users on the desktop or local network and require the Omnis Studio runtime (a cut-down version of the full Omnis Studio executable) in order to run. And just to make it even more confusing, the IT industry often regards terminals without CPUs as ‘thin clients’ (or ‘dumb terminals), but in the context of Omnis we refer to our Web browser plug-in as a ‘thin client’.

Both the ultra-thin and thin client techniques can be achieved using the *same integrated development environment* in Omnis, and no one application interface should be considered better than the other, rather they are suited to different tasks. Indeed, some real-world applications may employ both techniques for different parts of the application. Add to these different Web capabilities in Omnis, the ability to connect to all major databases and to deploy across all platforms (Windows, Mac OS X, Linux), then hopefully we’ll show you that Omnis Studio is a very flexible and versatile development environment for creating Web applications.

A well defined architecture

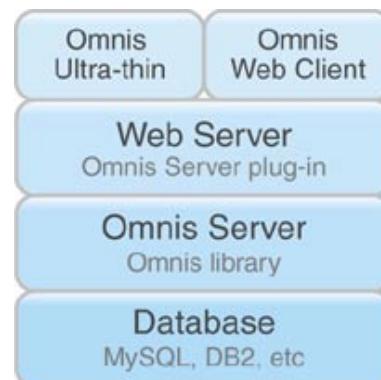
So what powers the Omnis Web Client technologies?

The server side of an Omnis-based Web application comprises a standard Web Server (either Apache or IIS), the Omnis Server that runs your Omnis library, and your Database Management Server (DBMS).

The Web Server stores your entire Web site, including your regular Web pages of information as well as HTML pages used with your Omnis Ultra-thin or Web Client application. For Web Client applications, you will also need to provide some way for users to download the plug-in either via the automatic Win32 cab file or a download page. The Web server should also contain our own server plug-in which brokers requests and transfers data between your client(s), the Omnis Server and in turn your database.

The Omnis Server can run on a Win32, Linux, or Mac OS X system and is serialized to allow a maximum number of users, that is, the number of clients that are allowed to connect to your application over the Web at any one time. The Omnis Server runs your Omnis library, which contains all the class definitions (forms and remote tasks), methods and other objects required in your application. A *remote task* is a type of Omnis class that handles the connection between the Web Clients and your Omnis application and in effect performs the real processing in your application.

The Database Server can be an industry-standard DBMS such as MySQL, DB2, Oracle, Sybase, Informix, or any JDBC or ODBC compliant database. Omnis even has its own database that can be used over the Web in certain situations.



Ultra-thin, based on HTML standards

The Ultra-thin approach in Omnis lets you use standard HTML forms to create the interface for your Web application. This allows you to use the default field types such as text fields, multi-line fields, check boxes, dropdowns and buttons, providing a familiar interface for Web users and one that is virtually guaranteed to work in any browser, on any platform. Your HTML forms should contain a number of special hidden parameters, including the location of the Web Server plug-in, the remote task name, the Omnis library name, the port number of the Omnis Server, as well as the specification for the other fields in the form. Omnis provides a number of wizards to help you build various types of form, including the hidden parameters required to connect to the Omnis Server.

When a form is submitted, the form parameters and data are sent to the Omnis Server via the Web Server plug-in. Omnis creates an instance of the specified remote task class and calls its \$Construct() method which, from thereon, controls what happens in your library – for example, you could: lookup some data in your database, insert a record, lookup another Web page/URL with a standard response, or you could construct some HTML from text and data in your database and return a temporary page to the user's browser.

Omnis Web Client, a versatile application player

The Omnis Web Client provides a rich environment for you to build Web applications and a more interactive experience for your customers than plain HTML. The Web Client itself is a browser plug-in capable of presenting a complete application window as a single form (remote form class) within the user's browser. Web applications delivered in the Web Client plug-in look and behave just like desktop applications, only they are for the Web. The Omnis Web Client plug-in is in fact an ActiveX component (for Internet Explorer browsers) or a Netscape type plug-in (for other browsers including Firefox and Safari) that has to be installed on the end-user's computer. A simple script can be used in your HTML page to load the correct type of plug-in for the current browser and platform. The Web Client code can be embedded in a simple HTML wrapper (like any browser plug-in) using the <object> or <embed> tag.

The Omnis Web Client, or more specifically the Omnis remote form, could be considered as a "black box" in the sense that the end user cannot get "inside" the application or form that is presented in their browser – indeed, if the end-user views the source of a page containing a Web Client application, all they will see is a very simple HTML page containing the <object> or <embed> tag with one or two parameters. This actually provides security benefits since the end-user cannot reveal any substantial source code and the plug-in itself cannot be attacked or compromised in any way, providing the server hosting the application is protected in the proper way.

Which do I choose?

As with any project or task, you try to choose the most appropriate tool or technique for the job, and application development is of course no different. When assessing the needs of a project you should look at your audience – after all, they are the people who will use your system and it has to fulfil their particular needs. When developing a Web application, considering your audience is very important: who are your customers or end-users, what level of IT skills do they have, what specification of computer and type of Internet connection do they have, what type of Web browser do they have, and so on.

One of the most important questions to ask yourself is: Does your client allow their end-users to install software off the Internet? The answer to this question will affect whether or not you can use the Omnis Web Client or any other browser plug-in at all, but again it all depends on who your audience is and what they are using your Web application for.

Public or Private

In technical terms, there are many pros and cons to using the Ultra-thin technique or the Omnis Web Client plug-in, but to employ a very crude assessment, an Ultra-thin Web interface is probably best suited to public Web sites that require access for potentially large numbers of remote users (such as the general public), whereas the Omnis Web Client is best suited to a closed user community or some kind of intranet scenario.

It all depends on what you want to do and in what context you are working – for example, very few people would be prepared to install a browser plug-in simply to book a theatre ticket, but members of a business association or alliance may be prepared to install something like the Omnis Web Client if it means they have access to member-only services that allow them to run their businesses more successfully.

Conclusion, it's up to you...

To summarize our discussion of the client-side technologies available in Omnis Studio, we shall present the pros and cons of using the Ultra-thin or Thin Client, and let you decide which is suited best to your situation.

Pros and Cons of using Ultra-thin?

Arguments FOR...	Arguments AGAINST...
HTML is a relatively simple language to use and understand	Limited to standard controls – you cannot use tree lists, sliders, calendars, and other “rich” or interactive components
HTML code or files are small in file size, therefore quick to load over low bandwidth or on a low-spec PC or mobile device	Relatively limited possibilities for layout of application, although quite a lot can be done using images and styles (CSS)
Uses standard form controls such as buttons, fields, lists, check boxes; these are ready-made and built into the browser or operating system on the client	No possibility of processing in the browser; control has to pass back to server for every method (function) to be processed
Provides a simple, familiar interface for end-users	Any functionality “behind” standard controls needs to be coded from scratch
Works with virtually any browser, even older versions, on any operating system	
You can use Javascript or other extended features of HTML to add interactivity to your application	
HTML can be constructed on the Omnis Server dynamically using templates and data from your database and/or returned from the client	

Pros and Cons of using Web Client?

Arguments FOR...	Arguments AGAINST...
Provides a rich application interface which allows you to build virtually any type of application; applications created for the Web Client look and behave the same as desktop (thick client) applications	Requires the customer to install the Omnis Web Client plug-in, although this is only around 1 MB and can be installed automatically under Windows using a signed cab file
As well as standard field types, the Omnis Web Client has many other ready-made components, e.g. sliders, calendars, graphs, tree lists, icon arrays, etc; these components would be virtually impossible to code in pure HTML or using Javascript – and you can create your own Web components	The Omnis Web Client (and indeed Omnis itself) is a proprietary development and programming language – applications written for the Web Client plug-in cannot be ported to any other client such as Flash or HTML
Methods can be <i>executed on the client</i> so the user interface is “richer” and more interactive – this also means control does not pass back to the server every time a method is run, and therefore network traffic is reduced	Some companies do not allow employees to install any kind of software off the Internet, including browser plug-ins, so the Web Client may have to be installed by IT staff or not at all
Once the Web Client plug-in is installed it is updated automatically, including new and updated components	

Omnis, a good solution for the future

Finally (...and here's the plug for Omnis), if you choose Omnis Studio as your development tool, you can provide for all (or most) scenarios – using Omnis you can create applications for the desktop/LAN or Web access, as well as any mobile device that has a Web browser, using the same development environment. And you are not bound to any one platform: you can deploy your application on any of the most popular platforms including Windows, Mac OS X and Linux, again on any number of different devices. If you design your application in Omnis correctly, you can entirely separate the application and database layers from the presentation layer, which means you can satisfy virtually any potential customer, however and wherever they need to access your application, now and in the future.

Further reading

For more information about developing Web applications in Omnis Studio, please see Chapter 6 in the *Omnis Programming* manual, available from the Omnis Web site: www.omnis.net

In addition, you can download an **Evaluation** copy of Omnis Studio or sign up for one of our regular **Webinars** on the Omnis Web site.

For more general information about Web applications and application development tools, see various pages on Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_application
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rapid_application_development
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rich_Internet_Application

Appendix: Case Studies

This appendix illustrates a few real-life case studies showing how companies have used the Omnis Web Client or Ultra-thin Client interface to create successful Web applications.

comTeam/ElectronicPartner – Online product comparison tool for large electrical retailer

Omnis technology used: Omnis Web Client plug-in

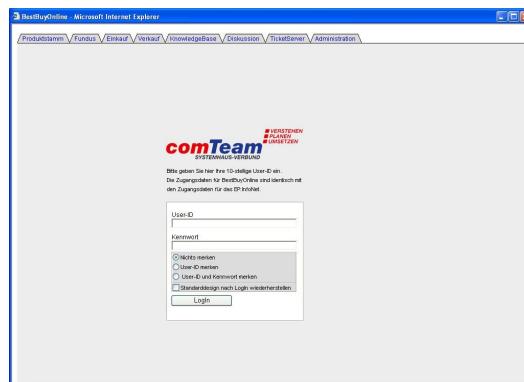
The following information is about an application that is written using the Omnis Web Client plug-in and enables real-time, online price comparison and purchasing for ElectronicPartner, Europe's largest electrical retailer. The solution was developed by comTeam, ElectronicPartner's own IT solutions division.

ElectronicPartner is Europe's leading alliance of consumer electronics and electrical retailers, representing over 6,000 service-oriented IT dealers, retail outlets and system houses in 12 European countries. To succeed in the highly competitive IT and CE retail market, retailers and system houses need up-to-date information about price and availability of thousands of consumer and business electrical products, from more than one hundred different suppliers. To help its members get this information, comTeam – the IT and TC system houses alliance of ElectronicPartner - built a software solution to investigate and compare daily prices from suppliers and to allow orders to be placed just with a few mouse clicks. comTeam used Omnis Studio and the Omnis Web Client to build a system called 'BestBuyOnline' (BBO) which is now available to all members of the comTeam alliance right across Europe.

The 'BestBuyOnline' Web application is accessible in any standard Web browser (Internet Explorer, Netscape, Firefox and Safari) and provides detailed information about several thousands of products and greatly simplifies the purchasing process for all comTeam members. They no longer have to obtain information from individual vendors, rather they have all the necessary information in one place, and now comparing prices, checking availability and placing orders has been made very easy using the BBO system. The whole system for entering the product information, system maintenance, online price comparison and purchasing is handled within the same Web-based application and using the Omnis Web Client.

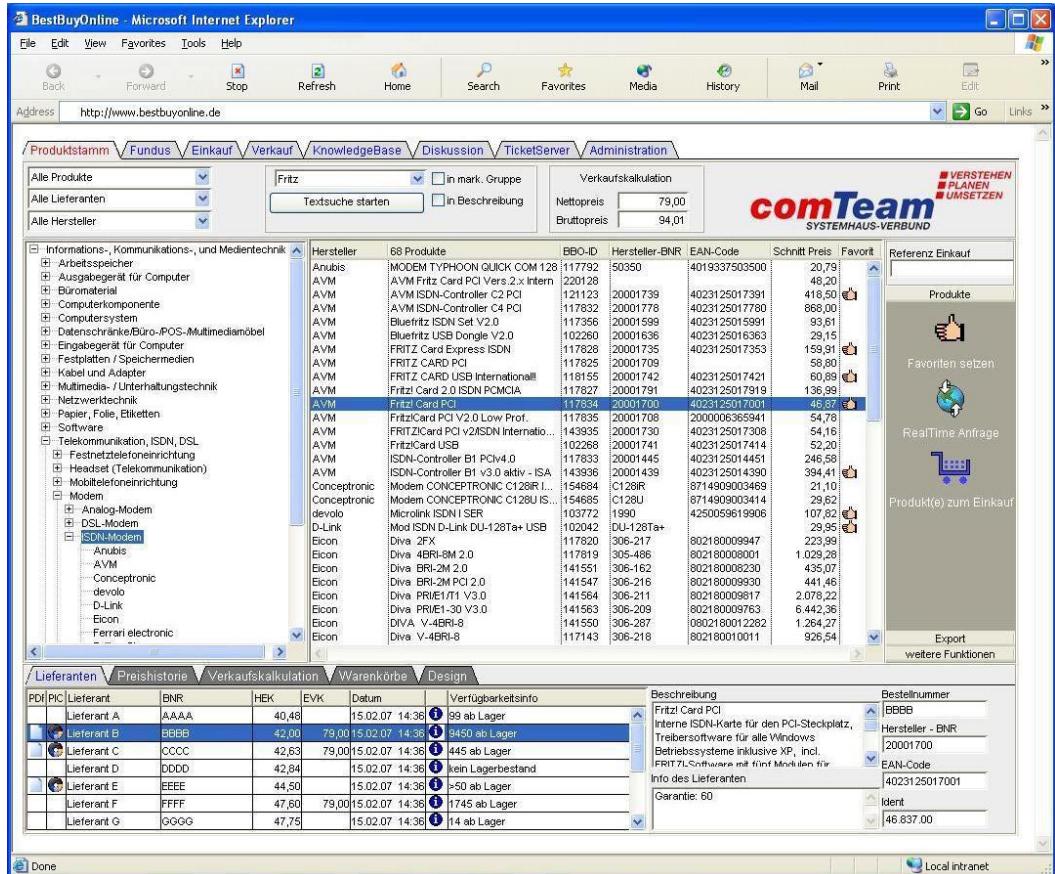


Members of the EP buyers alliance visit the BBO Web site, download the Omnis Web Client and click the 'Start BBO' button.



The BBO application is loaded in the user's browser. To gain access the user must enter a User ID and Password.

The benefits of having one Web-based system were realized very soon after the system was deployed, whereby one individual user of the BBO system said: "With just a few clicks, the price and availability information that BestBuyOnline provides has increased the productivity of purchasing departments significantly", Martin Czialla, Managing Director of the comTeam system house in Remscheid, Germany.



The Omnis Web Client technology allowed comTeam to build a highly functional and easy-to-use Web-based purchasing and price-comparison tool for Europe's largest electrical retailer. The entire application is presented in a single tab-based form, embedded as an ActiveX (for Internet Explorer under Windows) or Netscape-type plug-in (for all other browsers under Windows, Mac OS X and Linux) into a relatively simple HTML page.

"The outstanding productivity of the Omnis Web Client technology enabled us to develop the BBO system in a short time and with relatively few resources. We would not have been able to achieve such high functionality and performance over the Web with any other development environment."

Holger Küchenmeister, Senior Developer, comTeam

The 'BestBuyOnline' system is entirely configurable for each comTeam member. "Besides the personal design, our purchase order platform adopts the individual discounts of each member with the different suppliers and the availability in real time. In this respect, every dealer can see his individual purchase price," explains Julian Riedlbauer, Managing Director of comTeam. "A comparable purchase order system with this range of functionality, performance and user-friendliness is not available today, elsewhere on the market as far as we know".

About comTeam comTeam is the IT solutions division of ElectronicPartner, Europe's largest alliance of independent consumer and business electrical product vendors. comTeam members operate independently, providing IT solutions and systems support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as public authorities.

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IETC – Monitoring & reporting for African educational program

Omnis technology used: Omnis Ultra-thin Client

The following example is an application called FieldLink, which manages an educational scholarship program for girls in Africa, using an HTML-only based interface throughout.

FieldLink's use of the Omnis Ultra-thin Client allows for easy and efficient access in remote areas, especially ones with low bandwidth dial-up connections and old computers, typically found across parts of the African continent.

The whole continent of Africa faces many difficult challenges connected with regional conflict, poverty, and major health issues. A key factor in overcoming some of these challenges will be the education and empowerment of the people of Africa, so they can build a stable and sustainable future for the continent. One of the UN's top development goals (www.undp.org/mdg) is to provide education for every child in Africa, so anything that can be done to help African children in this respect is a good thing.

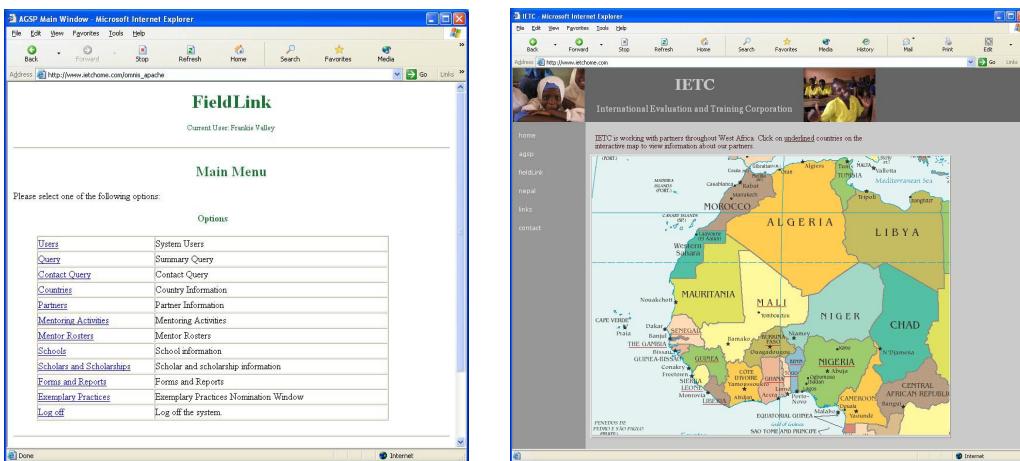
One project, The Ambassadors Girls' Scholarship Program (AGSP), provides 30,000 scholarships per year to girls, in eleven countries in sub-Saharan West Africa. Girls account for 55% of the 40 million children in Africa who do not attend school because of economic hardship or other adverse circumstances. The scholarship program allows girls to attend school and includes mentoring programs for the children, which contribute to the social and educational development of the students and their communities.

International Education and Training Corporation (IETC) is a commercial consulting firm specializing in Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (MER) for domestic and international educational projects and contracts with private businesses, non-profit organizations and for the public sector. In partnership with World Education Inc. (WEI) and USAID, IETC is monitoring and evaluating the Ambassadors Girls' Scholarship Program. To collect and analyze data for the scholarship program, IETC has developed an application called FieldLink using Omnis Studio and employing the Ultra-thin Client.

"Using Omnis Studio means that revisions to FieldLink can be accomplished with a short turnaround time and sub-modules can be deployed as soon as they become available without waiting for a major version release. The application is highly scalable in terms of the scope of the functionality, the volume of data, and the number of concurrent users. The same system is used by data entry clerks and high-level government officials. Data entry windows accept a high level of detail, which in turn allows for a powerful and flexible reporting environment."

Jim Pistrang, CIO for IETC

Access to different functions in FieldLink is controlled by a User ID and Password. The application runs 24/7 on a high-speed server with a permanent Internet connection, while database and system backups are accomplished without any down time. The Omnis Ultra-thin Client and application server structure is well suited to deploying applications in such challenging environments such as Africa.



The FieldLink application has a very simple HTML only interface, which allows easy and fast access to information over slow Internet connections.

On the public parts of the AGSP Web site, you can click on a map of Western Africa to view details of partners and stakeholders in the scholarship program.

About IETC: International Education and Training Corporation (IETC) creates customized online interactive database solutions that allow clients to track, manage, and analyze quantitative and qualitative data for private and public sector research and educational programs. Access is customized allowing different stakeholders key information while protecting privileged information. Reporting is decentralized at the field level while data is automatically analyzed and synthesized for policy level decision makers.

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PWS – online purchase & stock control solution for fitted kitchen trade distributor

Omnis technology used: Omnis Web Client plug-in and HTML only

PWS Distributors replaced their online ERP system with an Omnis Web application. This case study outlines how PWS were able to write their tradeZone application in-house using Omnis Studio and the Omnis Web Client.

PWS has used Omnis since 1991 to enhance the capabilities offered by existing off-the-shelf ERP and warehousing systems, integrate systems, introduce electronic workflow and streamline business processes. More recently, they have worked to replace their ERP system and this required changes to the back end of the already successful real-time Java and XML based eCommerce solution.

PWS decided to take the project in-house using Omnis Studio. This involved building Web Service and API-based frameworks to provide XML results feeds for enquiries, enabling the marketing department to design and control the front end, and a remote form via the Omnis Web Client plug-in to enrich order entry.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a product catalog. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, About PWS, Design Centre, TradeZone, News, and Contact Us. Below this is a sidebar with a 'Product Directory' section containing links for kitchen doors, handles, sinks, taps, worksurfaces, accessories, drawers & runners, miscellaneous, new products, and innovations. A 'PWS GLOBAL' logo is present. The main content area features a 'creative kitchen components' header and a 'tradeZone' logo. A 'Product List' table is shown with columns for Product Code, Product Title, Stock Level, and a small image of each product. One row shows a product labeled 'out of stock, expected date currently being finalised'. There are also links for 'click here' and 'Does your drawer system stack up?'.

Following a standard login, trade customers can search the entire product catalog for product details, checking stock levels of individual products before placing an order – in this case, the product information is fetched and processed in Omnis and presented in HTML format via ASP .NET.

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying an order entry form. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links for Home, About PWS, Design Centre, TradeZone, News, and Contact Us. Below this is a sidebar with a 'Product Directory' section containing links for kitchen doors, handles, sinks, taps, worksurfaces, accessories, drawers & runners, miscellaneous, new products, and innovations. A 'PWS GLOBAL' logo is present. The main content area features a 'creative kitchen components' header and a 'tradeZone' logo. The form includes fields for 'enter despatch method', 'date required', 'deliver to', and a calendar. It also shows a table for 'ordered by' with rows for TEST AUL 11/10/05 and LUMLE001. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'goods value', 'carriage charge', 'order total exc VAT', and a note to 'Select despatch method, then press ENTER key'. A 'Product Finder' search bar is at the bottom left, and a 'Le Mans' advertisement is on the right.

During order entry, when products have been selected, a delivery slot can be chosen by clicking on the Omnis Calendar Web component, which is displayed in the form via the Web Client plug-in. Omnis provides over 30 different ready-made Web components, plus you can create your own.

The technology was proven when a pilot product search was put together and the Omnis oXML plug-in was utilized to handle XML-based sales orders. Since its launch the new site's popularity has continued to grow – over 2,000 trade buyers regularly use the application to browse and purchase components for their own customers.

"Omnis Studio has made the process of replacing our existing ERP system simple to manage, debug and maintain, and has spared time to make enhancements along the way. Omnis enables us to focus on business requirements rather than technology, with real rapid development, problem free deployment, scalability and reuse through inheritance."

Andrew Lumley. Systems Analyst, PWS Distributors Limited.

About PWS Distributors Ltd: PWS is a leading UK trade distributor of kitchen components to manufacturers, retailers and installers of fitted kitchens. PWS offers a product range comprising over 6,000 ex-stock lines with an emphasis on good design, service, quality and innovation.

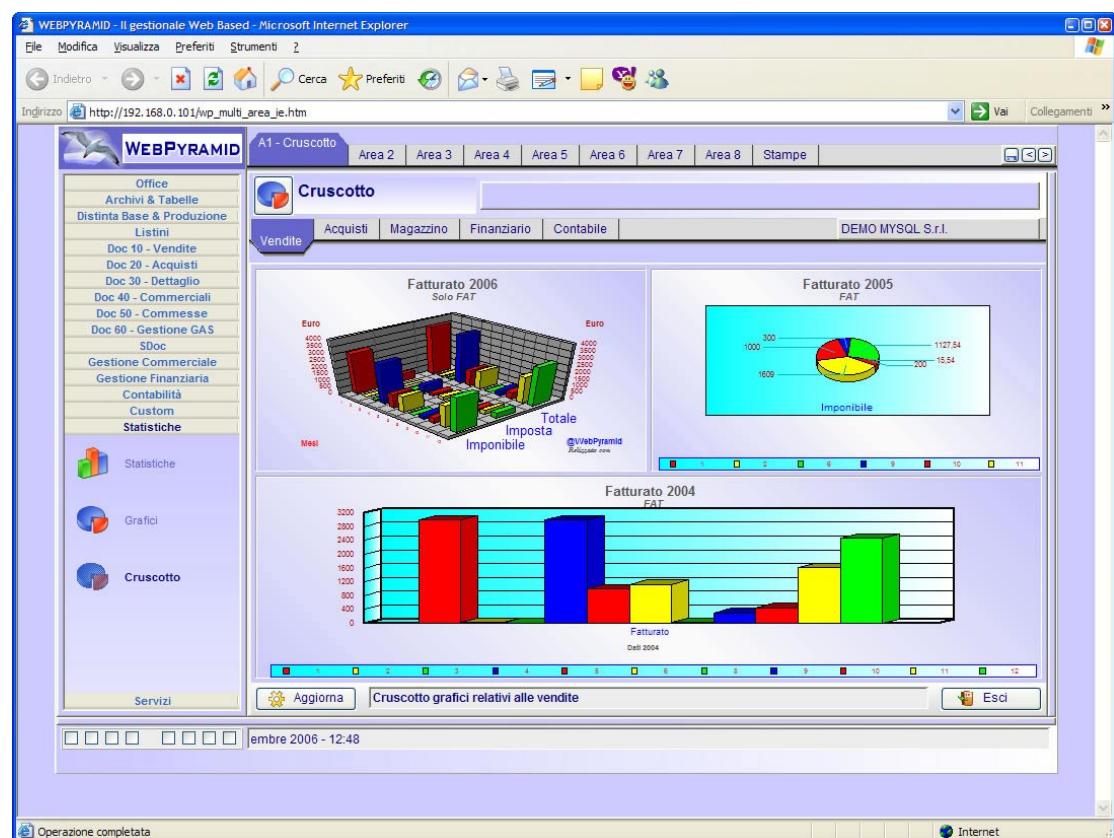
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Webpyramid – a fully featured, web-based ERP solution

Omnis technology used: Omnis Web Client plug-in

WebPyramid is the first web-based ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) system in Italy to be developed using the Omnis Web Client technology. It can be used on both Local Area Networks (LANs) and the Internet with the same usability of a traditional Client/Server application. With its many functional areas, WebPyramid can present multiple windows working in a standard web browser using only the Omnis Web Client plug-in. The breadth of functionality within WebPyramid provides: stock management, purchase/sales order, logistics, complete financial management (including accounts, invoicing, bookkeeping & ledgers, profit & loss, balance sheet, financial reports), company overview with statistics and graphical reports, production/manufacturing management, project management, point of sale, document management, email, personal & company calendar, web publishing, e-commerce, and e-business.



The WebPyramid ERP system was developed in Omnis Studio using the Omnis web client technology, and supports client access on Windows, Mac, and Linux via Internet Explorer and Mozilla based web browsers.

The Web frontend of WebPyramid is currently available in Italian and on the server database side it supports MySql, Sybase, and Microsoft SQL.



Omnis Web Client technology provides over 30 different web components with which to build Rich Internet Applications for all types of business uses, such as the fully featured Webpyramid solution.

"When we found out about the great Omnis Web Client technology we decided to rebuild our old software. We wanted to create an innovative application for both LANs and the Internet. Thanks to Omnis Web Client, we now have Webpyramid!"

Fabrizio Ponti, manager of Omnis development, WebPyramid Srl

About WebPyramid Srl: WebPyramid Srl is a new company created as a spin-off from Next2Day Srl. The company created WebPyramid ERP and now distributes the solution to VARs, System Integrators and Software houses who offer WebPyramid to end users 'off-the-shelf' or customised for their specific markets. WebPyramid Srl offers 'on-demand' software solutions (Software as a Service) on the Web, hosting applications and databases with the best warrantee regarding security, availability and privacy.

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Further Developer Comments

The following comments are from recent Omnis Case Studies, available in full on the Omnis web site at: www.omnis.net

Online Travel Services AG – the leading solutions provider in the Swiss travel market

"For us, Omnis Studio is the ideal product with the depth of functionality to solve complex problems, while offering a simple and easy-to-use development environment... With Omnis Studio, we are able to react quickly to changes in the market and we can adapt our products to meet customer requirements quicker than our competitors. In addition, the Omnis development and runtime environments continue to work year after year, providing support for new operating systems and advances in computing technology such as XML and the Web. For most of our deployed sites, we use Omnis Studio 3.0.1 which is a very stable release, but we use Studio 4 for all Web development and are planning to migrate to Studio 4 in the course of this year.

For us, Raining Data is not just a good software supplier; they are also a trusted partner who we can talk to about any aspect of our business, whether it is concerning the commercial or technical part of our company. And being a member of the Omnis Developer Partner Program gives us the financial strength and stability to grow our business going forward."

Rudolf Bargholz, Chief Software Developer and joint Managing Director of Online Travel Services AG.

About Online Travel AG: Online Travel AG is based in Zurich and has built up an impressive suite of applications for the travel market. Using Omnis Studio they have created solutions to support all aspects of the travel business including CRM for operators and agents, online booking for holiday packages, hotel and flight reservations, back-office support, and so on.

Kälte + Shop Service – shop refrigeration maintenance service

"An important factor for us was that we were able to develop the application for desktops and the Web using a single development system. This reduced the development time and effort for us significantly. The user interface and the forms in the Web version look the same as the desktop version and work exactly as the developer intended them to. And if, for any reason, we want to change the database, with Omnis we know we can, and keep the application and the user interface without changing a thing."

Robert Maier, Managing Director of KSS.

About Kälte + Shop Service GmbH: KSS manages refrigeration, climate control and other electronic devices installed in over 1,100 Shell gas and fuel stations across Germany, as well as many other retail customers and medical establishments.