

# Case Study: M.R.S. Company Limited, Raising CFIB's Voice in the Marketplace

## Challenge:

CFIB wished to move their existing legacy systems into a Web-enabled system. They wanted to be a leader in online membership management and surveying.

## Solution:

M.R.S. Company Limited, an IBM Certified eBusiness Solution Partner, provided IBM's products to implement the solution:

- WebSphere Application Server Advanced Edition v4.0
- Lotus Domino v5.0
- IBM eServer iSeries model 270 & eServer iSeries: Dedicated Domino Server



## Benefits:

- Saved \$150,000 per year in courier costs
- Increased membership and renewal rates at unprecedented levels
- Increased productivity
- Improved communications
- Offered new services to members

## Background:

Since 1971 the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) has been giving small firms a big voice in the public arena. CFIB services business owners and operators. Best known for high-profile actions with governments regarding policies such as tax, labour, and public-sector spending, CFIB has also achieved many changes that have increased profits for all firms. For example, persistent CFIB lobbying was instrumental in achieving the capital gains exemption, the small business reduced corporate tax rate, the Small Business Loans Act, and RRSP rules. CFIB also helped make beneficial changes to the Bankruptcy Act.

## The Situation:

Although CFIB had been successful, they were unable to meeting their changing business requirements with their legacy systems. These existing systems were inefficient and inflexible, did not easily allow addition of new functionality, and did not provide access to the Web. As a result, CFIB was unable to access data that would allow them to manage their business better.

The systems were originally designed and programmed in 1985 and had reached the end of their lifecycle. Maintenance and support of the existing systems was overly complex, programming consultants were engaged in other strategic initiatives, and contemplated business changes could not be efficiently supported. CFIB needed to replace an existing core Membership Processing and Field Compensation System with a new system, one that would better allow the following options:

- Introducing new member services
- Changing business rules and processes
- Generating reports and accessing information

CFIB chose to work with M.R.S. because of their combined knowledge of IBM and Microsoft technologies and business knowledge of membership and agency business models. M.R.S. staffs its projects with employees rather than contractors, enabling access to consistent technical resources for enhancements or future projects.

*The new system has allowed for the introduction of new products and services to our membership, supported the ability to develop more streamlined processes, supported responsive changes to business rules, facilitated faster and easier data entry, improved data mining and report generation, and substantially reduced the quantity of paper and courier costs.*

- Denise Berwick, Vice President, CFIB Information Systems



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*Single Sign-On . . . is so very elegant and will have a huge impact on the security of our sites and systems and also on the morale of employees and members.*

- Denise Berwick

## The Solution:

Initially M.R.S. consulted with CFIB to propose a global business systems architecture that addressed their current and future business requirements. With their extensive knowledge of business and technology, M.R.S. designed, customized, and integrated the online, Web-based applications using IBM WebSphere Application Server and Lotus Domino.

The resulting solution, "eRock," includes three Web-based applications:

- **Field Compensation System:** This application allows District Managers to have real-time Internet access to daily compensation reports. Prior to the solution, field compensation reporting was paper-based and overly time-consuming; district managers received reports via courier on a weekly basis.
- **Member and Prospects Inquiry:** This membership application, database, and query tool is driven by a search engine that enables Web query and reporting on all members and prospects. Report details include member activity, payment, and history. Prior to the solution, membership data were out-of-date and difficult to search, while prospect data were unavailable.
- **Member Services Issues Log:** Member services counsellors log all activities using this application and a single sign-on between WebSphere and Domino is enabled. Prior to the solution, all member services activity was logged on paper, not allowing for tracking or reporting.

## A Measurable Difference:

CFIB now saves \$150,000 per year in printing and courier costs as a result of delivering online compensation reports to district managers. In addition, CFIB has increased and sustained membership growth and renewal rates at unprecedented levels for membership organizations. Realizing increased productivity, CFIB redeployed five data entry personnel. The new solution enriched jobs, increasing employee empowerment and morale. Better communications with district management has encouraged employees to work more efficiently. The time and money saved from the eRock solution, along with increased technological efficiency, have allowed CFIB to concentrate on new services to members, such as credit card payment and value added services.

M.R.S. Company Limited is an innovative IT Consulting Company that delivers bottom-line results by providing dynamic and integrated e-Business, Business Intelligence and Custom Application Development solutions. M.R.S. is an IBM Certified eBusiness Solution Partner and Microsoft Gold Certified Business Partner

MRS clients include, among others, Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, Canadian Marketing Association, GlaxoSmithKline, and Ford Motor Company of Canada.

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