Titanic Museum Branson

The Titanic Museum in Branson, Missouri attracts thousands of tourists every day. When museum management wanted to upgrade their FileMaker Pro point-of-sale software to the latest version, their credit card charging plug-in held them back. So, they hired 360Works to roll out a new solution using 360Works Plastic, a credit card processing plug-in that works with the latest version of FileMaker Pro. 360Works staff helped the museum upgrade their solution overnight, so they wouldn't miss a single transaction. As a result, the museum has up-to-date software, a scalable credit card charging solution, and the freedom to expand to new locations, secure in the knowledge that their software can handle their future growth.

Introduction

The Titanic Museum in Branson, Missouri bills itself as "the world's largest museum attraction." Thousands of visitors line up every day to tour this half-scale model of the RMS Titanic, filled with artifacts from the ship, historical documents and exciting hands-on exhibits that give guests a unique window into the history of the fated cruise liner. Every business function for this multi-million dollar facility is managed in a custom-built, constantly changing, FileMaker Pro database solution, from box office to merchandise sales, accounting and payroll. Local FileMaker developer Steve Lehman created and maintains this complex software system.

Business Challenge

One of the main advantages of working with a custom-built FileMaker solution is the ease of upgrades. FileMaker Pro, now in version 10, adds a host of new functionality with each version release. When the latest version came out, developer Steve Lehman was eager to upgrade the museum's software. "There were new interface functions, like conditional formatting and complex script triggers that would make a huge difference in the user experience," recalls Lehman. "So I needed to upgrade as soon as possible."

Only one thing prevented Steve from being able to install the latest software on each user's machine. The terminals that ran the "point-of-sale" section of the software all used a plug-in that let them run credit card transactions run directly from the software. The plug-in that made that possible was not compatible with FileMaker Pro version 10. So, until Lehman could find a solution for credit card charges that worked in the latest version of FileMaker, the point-of-sale software was stuck. "It was a development nightmare," Lehman says, "Those credit-card charging stations were stuck in the Stone Age".

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Successful Solution

360Works had the solution for the museum's upgrade dilemma. 360Works Plastic is the company's credit card charging plug-in. Plastic lets FileMaker developers and users create, execute and track credit card transactions from within their FileMaker Pro solution. Plus, like all 360Works products, Plastic was updated immediately to work with FileMaker Pro v10. Lehman found the 360Works website, purchased the Plastic plug-in and contracted with 360Works to help him remove the old charging functionality and implement the new charging solution. Though Plastic is simple to install, the Titanic solution required special attention. "I consider myself a capable programmer, but for something as critical as credit card charging, I wanted some one to hold my hand," says Lehman.


Sterling Rouse, one of 360Works' lead developers, assisted Lehman with the installation of Plastic. The change-over from the old plug-in had to happen overnight to avoid disrupting the flow of business – so, starting at 11:00 PM, Rouse and Lehman worked together to upgrade each of the point of sale terminals, to pore over and clean out the existing scripts that ran charges, and to implement the new scripts and functions that would integrate Plastic into the software solution.

The next day, when the museum opened for business, the point-of-sale terminals were up and running, ready to accept charges. Steve Lehman was able to continue to improve their software, taking advantage of all of the latest features offered in FileMaker's most up-to-date version.

Customer Benefits

Steve Lehman was very impressed with 360Works software and service. "The Titanic Museum is not a small business," he says. "They have to run a very high volume of credit transactions every hour of every day. Since the point-of-sale system was an active operating system, I couldn't afford to experiment and I couldn't leave them behind either".

With their FileMaker solution upgraded to the latest version and Plastic installed for credit card transactions, the Titanic Museum can take advantage of all of the productivity enhancements that Lehman rolls out. As their business expands to additional locations, their software can keep up and Lehman can continue to help them succeed.

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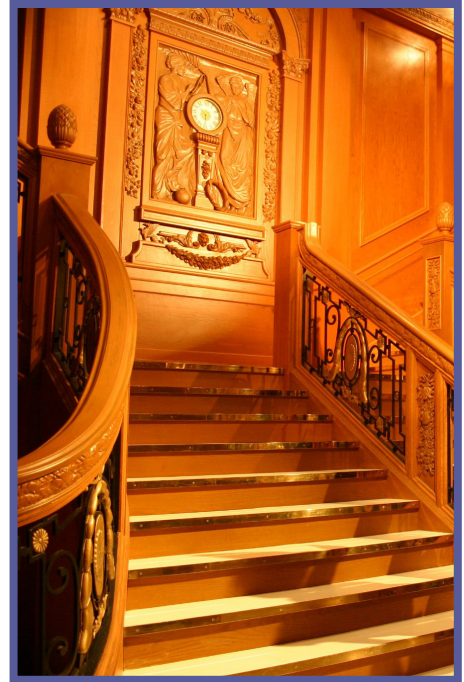
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