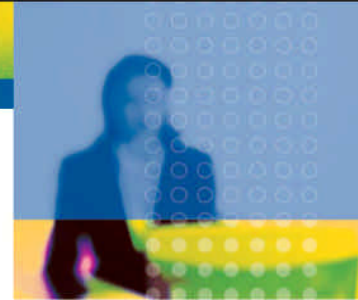


LexisNexis



A Corticon® Success Story



LEXISNEXIS TURNS TO CORTICON TO REDUCE RISK, AUTOMATE CUSTOMER ORDER MANAGEMENT AND REDUCE COSTS BY 70-80%

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CHALLENGE

In 2004, LexisNexis was faced with lengthy, costly, and complex processes for entering, routing and fulfilling new customer orders within its Lexis service. When the company began investigating technologies to help automate order processing, reduce operational risks associated with errors in processed orders typically associated with inconsistent business decisions, and alleviate the burden on information technology (IT) staff, it turned to Corticon Technologies. The LexisNexis vision was to achieve unified order fulfillment through a new Customer Order Management System that would automate the validation, routing and fulfillment of orders coming into the company via phone, web, and fax.

THE CHOICES

Business Rules Management was a central element in the proposed LexisNexis solution. LexisNexis' final list of potential solutions included Corticon's Business Rules Management solution, and ILOG's JRules solution. A driving requirement, LexisNexis wanted the entire organization to be able to fully participate in the creation and change of business logic without the significant technical involvement previously required. LexisNexis found Corticon to be the better of the two choices for its Enterprise Rules Management solution.

SOLUTION

Corticon provided LexisNexis with a complete Business Rules Management solution to help create new customer accounts—accounts previously processed and managed by a custom application that required costly continuous development and technical resources.

"At LexisNexis, we're utilizing Business Rules Management software from Corticon so our business users have the flexibility to create, change and manage the majority of their business decision logic without much IT involvement," said Steve Iddings, Director of Applications Integration at LexisNexis. "Corticon has demonstrated to us that their rules automation software can reduce project costs and increase the quality of our business rules logic."

Corticon Studio is the industry's first standalone desktop business rules modeler for capturing and formalizing mission-critical decisions from interrelated business rules. The modeler environment allows LexisNexis business analysts to easily capture, validate, test and manage business rules without the need for in-depth programming expertise. As a model-driven environment, the spreadsheet-like rules models are automatically converted to executable web-services. Corticon's service-oriented architecture (SOA) enables LexisNexis to take the common set of business rules that come together to make up a business decision, and package and deploy that 'decision service' as a web-service. This allows business logic that might be needed in multiple applications to be managed as a common decision service.

With Corticon LexisNexis Has:

Reduced Operational Cost

Because LexisNexis now needs fewer people to process orders, the company has reduced their cost-per-order through Corticon-based automation.

Increased Business Agility

LexisNexis business users are building and changing 80-90% of their business rules logic without utilizing costly IT resources.

Reduced Project Costs

LexisNexis has eliminated 80% of costs associated with extending and changing business logic. New product costs are reduced by 50%.

Increased Involvement Across the Business

With domain-knowledgeable business users driving rules management, LexisNexis is better able to control business rules logic and reduce coding errors.



CORTICON

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RESULTS

Significant Reduction in Operating Costs

The Customer Order Management System at LexisNexis was established to achieve unified processing by automating validation, routing and fulfillment of orders coming into the company via telephone, web, and fax. Corticon was tapped to accomplish some significant goals, including ensuring orders were processed consistently, allowing orders to be successfully and accurately handled by fewer people than before, lessening the time it took for the company to fulfill orders, and reducing the time-to-market for new and/or improved LexisNexis products. Because the Corticon solution automates business rules, there is no need for custom coding as LexisNexis required before the implementation.

"The first priority for us was order automation, which would allow us to automatically maintain rules without technical expertise," said Chuck Carter, Senior Software Engineer at LexisNexis. "Corticon allows us to make intelligent routing decisions about customer orders. For instance, in the case of a new order, the system determines things like the customer's market, the parameters for their account, general subscription attributes, and the billing setup. Prior to Corticon, we had to custom code everything, which required a development resource to maintain the process. The costs related to that requirement are now much lower – we need technical input only occasionally now. The development lifecycle is significantly shortened."

Solution Agility Eases Rules Creation and Management

Unlike other products available, Corticon's solution does not require skilled programmers – it is literally as easy to use as a spreadsheet. "With the agility we get with Corticon comes the ability to resource a project more easily by assuming the analyst working on it can get close enough that it doesn't require three staff months' worth of development effort to write the rules," said Carter. "We're now faster and we've offset the allocation of technical resources on each project. I'd estimate it takes 50% to 70% less time to complete a project – that's a huge savings. The Corticon system also gets the fulfillment organization more involved in the business process, and as they begin to understand each type of customer, they become more knowledgeable with every order."

Operational Risks Reduced

Decision automation must be precise, and Corticon's approach is to first analyze rules for correctness and then provide a testing capability that requires no programming or classic QA organization. In other words, Corticon helps LexisNexis determine whether their business decisions are correct and appropriate from the start by providing tools tailored specifically for business users as opposed to IT personnel. This approach is far more beneficial to the bottom line than the alternative approach of trying to test quality into the business logic. Classic testing is hit-or-miss due to the complexity of decision logic. LexisNexis appreciates the quality control the approach provides for its bottom line.

"If an analyst working on a project enters something incorrectly, Corticon will catch that and ensure accuracy," said Carter. "Once again, it removes the need for programmers to step in, as well as eliminating risk involved with erroneous business decisions caused by human errors made during the process of defining and creating the rules."

FUTURE USES

LexisNexis plans to utilize the Corticon Business Rules Management system across its other applications. "We are currently starting to use Corticon for the Nexis side of the business—the news side," said Carter. "They are writing rules comparable to the legal service and using the same automation engine. Business rules have emerged as an independent tier in our applications architecture. By separating critical logic that is truly owned by the business and giving the business new levels of control and agility, we are helping our company make our information systems a real competitive weapon."

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