

Save Money and Time with Web-based Technology

Web-based collaboration is fast becoming key in the oil and gas industry as companies form teams within and outside their organizations to more efficiently manage resources and activities.

Imagine sitting in your hotel room in Midland one night when you get a call from your boss just after kickoff of Monday Night Football, saying there is a problem on a well in south Texas only you can solve. Instead of driving all night to get back to your office and systems, you go to your laptop, log on to PetrisWINDS NOW!™, and get to your software. In a matter of minutes, you launch your favorite exploration and production (E&P) analytical application, load data from the well log system and are able to solve the problem. You then launch a project planning system; update the project, which automatically notifies your joint venture partner (along with everyone else on the project) that they need to approve an AFE for a workover...all before the end of the first quarter.

Now, how about Christmas Eve, or the school play, or an important presentation on an acquisition, or.... you know the story, wells don't know or care what time it is or what you're doing.

The type of collaboration described above can save thousands of dollars and make everyone's life a lot more pleasant. Yet even with the proliferation of modern information technology (IT), many companies still face two age-old problems: access to data and applications when and where you need them.

"Oil and gas has unique needs, so industry-specific IT solutions have evolved," said James W. Pritchett, chief executive officer of Petris. "At Petris, we offer solutions that will make the people and systems you already have work better together, i.e. 'collaborate.' We are a go-between for the IT department, software vendors and the oil and gas company's end-users. By focusing on workflow solutions that more effectively utilize applications already in place, we can help cut out errors and shorten cycle times."

Petris's technology is available for all-sized companies and in all areas of the industry – from large multi-nationals to individual oil finders, in upstream, midstream and downstream. Regulatory and governmental agencies along with individual consultants have been aided by Petris.

Petris' solution approach is based on Web-based technology and a vendor neutral integration platform. "The reality is most companies already have dozens, hundreds, if not thousands of information systems from a wide range of vendors," Pritchett said. "The technology we have built will work with those products. We can make a company's data and applications sharable, portable, more useful and more valuable by unleashing them.

"We offer systems that can be deployed on a company's Intranet, or we can service them on the Internet through our ASP (applications service provider) site."

Using four major building blocks, Petris' solution approach is customized for each client. Focusing on software, skills and services, Petris uses its PetrisWINDS platform as an IT foundation and builds on the concepts of Outsourcing, Off-the-Shelf and Custom Solutions, Consulting/People and Hosting.

"For one company, we process their invoices and electronically route to the folks who need to approve them, significantly improving their work flow," Pritchett said. "For another organization, we collect daily production data and publish it through a custom portal that we host. In yet another, we host tens of thousands of technical documents, making them available to the organization's membership."

Outsourcing options also include professional data services and software development. "For example, we've done a lot of geographic information systems (GIS) work, especially on the pipeline and regulatory side to help pipeline companies improve their safety and comply with regulations," Pritchett said.

Custom solutions include such services as application development for real-time collaborative processes; portal development with specialization in development of extremely fast and highly scalable Web environments; and an Energy Industry Integration Platform, an extensible and open Service Oriented Architecture designed to provide for integration of data, information and applications across the business processes of the industry.

The Consulting/People building block highlights one of Petris's key advantages: personnel with years of energy industry experience. Covering such areas as acquisition, divestiture and portfolio management, operations, GIS strategy, back office and G&G support along with technology experience and government, Petris personnel can interface effectively with their counterparts in a client company.

Dewayne Everage, engineering manager of T.H. Hill, has had first-hand experience with Petris's technology. "It allows us to leverage our applications along with several other applications that meet or exceed their technical capabilities. We can interface with other companies with different strategies, with different market approaches, with different applications capability and plug in on an 'as needed basis' without having to invest capital dollars on our end of things to develop those applications independently to service our customer base."

Of special interest to members of the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) is the new alliance between Petris and SPE to provide a variety of software applications to SPE members through the organization's Web site, www.spe.org/learn/dptoolbox. The new service is called "E&P Toolbox" and

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 - Data Management Solutions
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offers members access or applications on a per-user, per-month basis at member discounts. E&P Toolbox is adapted from Petris's application service provider ASP PetrisWINDS Now!

"Part of the reason why we decided to do this is we think there are some real benefits in terms of making software available to people as they need it," said Glenda Smith, Web Content Manager for SPE.

Added Pritchett, "SPE's collaboration with Petris on this technology is an indicator that the time for an industry-specific, vendor-neutral ASP service is here. More and more software vendors will be attracted to this concept, and that will generate more synergy and, in turn, more clients. Costs will be lowered and service levels will benefit."

ASP delivery helps companies:

- find and use the data and applications that all E&P, financial and other key professionals need, within or across departments, locally or globally;
- enable the right people to collaborate and work on the hottest problem at the right time; and
- enable large productivity improvements with modest capital outlays.

Operators will have immediate access to any E&P Toolbox application through one contract and usually only one user identification and password. E&P Toolbox will help oil and gas producers reduce their internal support requirements and extend the life of existing hardware. The pay-as-you-play pricing structure also helps reduce a company's capital expenditures and makes using these products part of a more efficient operational process.

E&P Toolbox includes applications from a growing list of best-in-class independent software vendors from all areas of the industry.

"With the ASP model, you have a pay-as-you-play system that works out just fine for some of those producers who can't afford the total application package, but see a need for that application. Now, they can access and utilize that tool for their business decisions without a huge investment," said Don Duttlinger, executive director of the Petroleum Technology Transfer Center.

The E&P Toolbox will be in operation at Petris, Booth 110, and at the SPE Pavilion, Booth 2015, at SPE Annual Technical Conference & Exhibition from Oct. 5-8 in Denver. ●