

Minutes Publishing Software for a Local District Council

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1 Introduction

In this poster paper we outline a capstone project within the Bachelor of Computing Systems (BCS) programme at Bay of Plenty Polytechnic (BoPP, 2005) which was conducted by the first author and supervised by the second author. The project was conducted in corporation with local software company that has been providing software systems to local government in New Zealand since 1991. The project is about the design, creation and implementation of Minutes Publishing application software, which is a part of workgroup information systems (Nickerson, 2001), for a client i.e. a local district council.

2 Objectives

The objective for the new system is to create an easy to use visual interface of the meeting schedule which allows the client to easily view, create, modify and cancel meetings, as well as navigating between the calendar and expanded details.

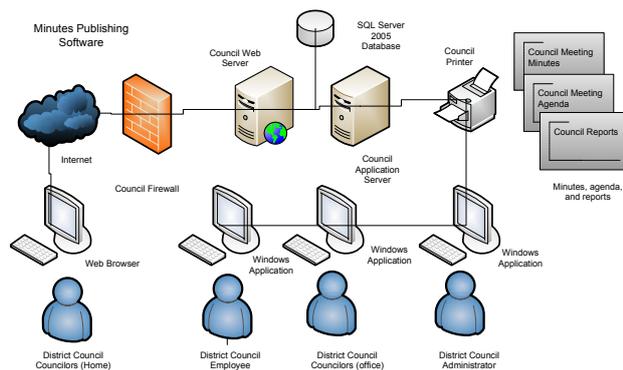


Figure 1: Overview of the minutes publishing application software.

3 Methodology and Technology

The chosen methodology for the project is the Rapid Application Development (RAD) methodology (Martin, 1991).

For the Windows application front-end and back-end platform the Microsoft Visual C#.NET Language and Microsoft SQL Server 2005 DBMS were the preferred technologies used in the project (Microsoft, 2005a). Furthermore the Microsoft ASP.NET 2.0 and Microsoft SQL Server 2005 were the preferred technologies for the Web application front-end and back-end platform (Microsoft, 2005b). For both platforms Microsoft Office 2003 VBA technology is used extensively to manage the creation and updating of the documentations produced in the software.

A number of interface design tests were conducted by involving a number of prospective users of the system. The format of the test was structured around the modified interface design test performed by Nielsen (1994).

4 Results

The Minutes Publishing software is a Microsoft Office Automation Application which has been designed to improve meeting productivity by allowing employees to easily capture and manage information from meetings such as agenda items, minute's creation, customised reports creation, recommendations and action items.

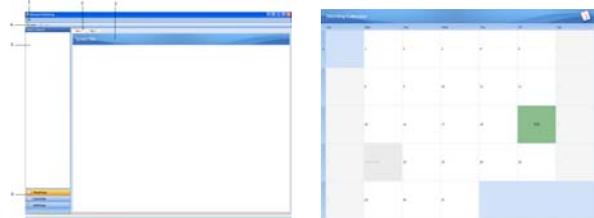


Figure 2: Windows and Web application front-ends

In the Windows application (please see Figure 2) users can instantly access all information associated with their past and future meetings via an easy to use meetings calendar. The capturing and storing of information covered in meetings such as the agenda, related documents, the meeting minutes, decisions, and action items.

The web application allows the general users to create agenda items and/or custom reports to be included in the agenda of the selected meeting. Please also refer to the Figure 2 for a snap shot of the web application part of the software.

5 Conclusion

The software is designed on both windows application and web application platforms and it provides the capability for the council to manage agendas and minutes for council's regulatory formal meetings. The Microsoft .NET technologies such as C# programming language, ASP.NET 2.0, SQL Server 2005 and Office 2003 VBA were used in the design and construction of this software. The software receives good feedback from the end users.

6 References

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