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CASE STUDY



Socially Assisted Trip Planner

Situation

A Silicon Valley based start-up wanted to develop a socially assisted trip planner for enhancing the travelling experience. The goal was to allow travelers to plan their trips more intuitively by providing rich content gathered through professional and social networking. The application also facilitated integration with travel service providers and has the ability to be an ideal one-stop vacation/travel planner.

Challenge

The system required a rich design- primarily from a user interface, accessibility and features perspective, to accommodate various users like content providers, trip planners, agents, advertisers etc. The challenge also involved using some of the latest open source technologies with their known limitations to create an application that was cross-browser, cross-OS compliant.

Solution

Our first step was to develop a scalable custom content management system. In order to facilitate authoring and publishing of content in a remote and a secure fashion, we used Slide and the X-forms platform to develop the solution.

The core application is based on REST architecture and completely developed using open source tools and technologies. The system uses the best of AJAX and JavaScript programming to provide a very rich graphical user experience through menus, sliders, grids, drag-drop and many more custom controls. It supports features like Geocoding (integrated with Google Maps), Mash-ups (with travel portals, advertisers), opinion polls, instant messaging etc. Also supports integration with third party sites through Web Services. To enhance performance, caching was provided and custom managed at multiple levels- browser, session and application.

Benefits

The custom content management system allowed travel content providers/authors to easily communicate with the application irrespective of their location or bandwidth. The application through its rich interface and socially rated content is a one-stop, intuitive and extremely easy to use trip planner.