

>> AXIS - Online CAD Application

Development of a custom online CAD application helped Cornerstone improve appraiser productivity and satisfaction, achieve software licensing savings and generate greater customer satisfaction.

>> Business Challenge

Cornerstone Appraisal Services, Inc. specializes in providing detailed, accurate replacement cost valuations, risk analysis and technology solutions for the insurance industry. The company maintains a network of appraisal and loss control experts across the US. To distribute and manage appraisal orders to their experts, Cornerstone developed a fully featured web-based automation tool.

An integral part of the appraisal process is producing accurate diagrams of the properties inspected. Cornerstone's web automation tool previously offered this capability through the integration of a third-party, ActiveX-based CAD application. However, the solution was unsatisfactory due to its limited functionality as well as security concerns that arose from the use of an ActiveX product. The CAD application also required extensive training for new appraiser trainees to use correctly. Additionally, Cornerstone was on an annual license basis with the provider and in order to avoid paying the following year's license fee, the development of the new application had to be completed before their current license expired in only 5 months.

Cornerstone initiated a project to develop a proprietary web-based CAD application that would overcome these limitations and offer future customization capabilities.

>> Solution

Scio has deep expertise in the development of highly interactive, online applications, so Cornerstone engaged the company to develop the new online CAD application. **Scio** recommended the use of the Adobe Flash platform based on the specific functional requirements of Cornerstone. Because Flash-based applications are widely compatible with most Internet browsers and are not considered a security threat, this approach eliminated most of the deployment issues associated with using an ActiveX-based application.

Scio and Cornerstone focused the first phases of the project on designing a Graphical User Interface that would provide access to the more than 150 features of the application, yet remain easy to learn and use. Following that, the project went through a phase of incremental development and testing to meet the aggressive 5-month deadline. A Beta version was released in month four and Cornerstone coordinated an exhaustive User Acceptance Testing phase with a selected group of appraisers. This process uncovered remaining issues and needs and a final product build was released to production on schedule.

The resulting solution is a full-featured Computer-Aided Drawing application that Cornerstone named AXIS. The application uses Flash for the User Interface, XML for data storage and transfer, and ASP.NET and MS SQL Server to integrate the application into Cornerstone's appraisal automation tool. **Scio's** deep expertise in User Interface development was applied to the product's

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Customer Name
Cornerstone Appraisal Services, Inc.

Industry
Field Services for Insurance Industry

>> Business Challenge

- Replace previous, ineffective online drawing tool with a more functional solution
- Terminate dependency with vendor of previous online drawing tool
- Develop new application in 5 months to avoid the upcoming year's annual licensing fee

>> Solution

- Developed a full-featured online CAD application to customer specifications
- The application used Adobe Flash for the user interface, providing a high degree of interactivity
- Integration with workflow automation tool was achieved with XML and ASP.NET

>> Business Value

- Increased appraiser satisfaction and productivity
- Customers receive more consistent, better quality diagrams
- Flexibility to add features and functionality as company needs evolve

contextual UI; meaning the appraiser is shown additional tools only when they are needed. To accelerate user productivity, **Scio** also developed an online tutorial to train appraisers in the use of the tool, as well as a user manual that would function as a detailed reference.

>> **Business Value**

The development of Cornerstone's AXIS application allowed the company to eliminate its dependency on their previous CAD application vendor that resulted in ongoing annual savings of licensing fees. Cornerstone increased the satisfaction and productivity of appraisers by developing an application that was easier to learn and use, allowed greater flexibility and was better suited to their needs. Overall, productivity and customer satisfaction increased because property diagrams were now more accurate and professional. Finally, because this is a proprietary product, Cornerstone has the flexibility to make updates, enhancements and modifications to the application as the needs of the company and market evolve or new approaches need to be implemented. All of this is reflected in the bottom line of the company through increased productivity, cost reductions, and increased sales driven by enhanced customer satisfaction.

>> **Looking Forward**

As a partner in this effort with Cornerstone, **Scio** will be involved in maintenance of the application as well as ongoing enhancements over the long term.

Cornerstone has shown AXIS to industry peers, generating so much interest that they are now considering licensing the application to other companies.

>> **About Cornerstone Appraisal Services Inc.**

Cornerstone is the leading provider of inspection workflow solutions, high value and older home insurance inspections. Since 1996, Cornerstone has provided the very best insurance valuation and loss control services to its customers through industry leading technology.

Cornerstone's nationwide network of appraisal and loss control experts are the most experienced in the industry specializing in high value and older homes. If you are interested in learning more about the AXIS sketching program and how it might benefit your organization please contact Matt Lyon: mlyon@cornerstone-appraisals.com or 312-962-3140.

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