

MCS Takes Real Estate and Facility Management IS to the Next Level with Zend



Real Estate & Facility Management

Customer: MCS provides innovative software and consulting services for Facility Management, Real Estate, Risk Management and Procurement to global customers including Siemens, ISS, Belgacom, Proximus, Pioneer, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young, Sanoma Magazines, Arcelor (Ghent), Vedior Interim, Start People, University of Louvain and others.

Geography: Based in Antwerp, Belgium with partners and customers in more than 30 countries on 5 continents.

Challenge:

- Ensure consistent application availability and performance
- Improve time-to-market
- Meet SLAs consistently
- Increase productivity in application development and deployment

Solution: MCS implemented the full Zend PHP stack, using Zend Framework to provide central application components, and the Zend Studio integrated development environment (IDE) for feature development. The company chose Zend Server Web Application Server for faster and smoother installations of its software technology stack and to achieve more reliability and robustness in daily operations. Zend Server helped MCS reduce time-to-market, meet SLAs consistently, and resolve or eliminate performance issues more efficiently. MCS also embedded Zend Server in its new *myMCS* WebPortal Server to extend key performance advantages to customers.

"Having built the myMCS WebPortal on Zend Framework using Zend Studio, we saw the value Zend could provide with a complete, tested PHP development stack backed by support, updates and training. When Zend Server was announced, we seized the opportunity to streamline our development and production environment with an integrated solution that would also make it easier to manage Web applications across the full application life cycle."

Kurt Demeulemeester
Product Development Manager
MCS

Building Web Solutions on PHP and Zend

Belgian-based MCS has been providing business software and consulting services to global organizations in the Facilities Management and Real Estate industries since 1989. The company is known for its innovative suite of business productivity applications accessed through an intuitive and flexible PHP-based Web environment called *myMCS* WebPortal.

Thousands of MCS customers use *myMCS* management software for mission-critical applications such as work order management, facilities maintenance, procurement and central help desk operations. Every day, these customers rely on the *myMCS* WebPortal to conduct business operations reliably and productively online. MCS must deliver consistent high availability and performance of its applications in order to retain brand loyalty among major customers such as Siemens, ISS, Ernst & Young, Belgacom, Arcelor (Ghent), Start People and University of Louvain, among others.

In 2004, MCS adopted PHP as its Web application platform based on the language's flexibility and suitability to the company's software development goals, as well as the availability of skilled PHP developers. The product development team used Zend Framework to provide central application components, which allowed them to focus on feature development, for which they used the Zend Studio integrated development environment (IDE).

According to Kurt Demeulemeester, Product Development Manager at MCS, "Having built

the myMCS WebPortal on Zend Framework using Zend Studio, we saw the value Zend could provide with a complete, tested PHP development stack backed by support, updates and training. When Zend Server was announced, we seized the opportunity to streamline our development and production environment with an integrated solution that would also make it easier to manage Web applications across the full application life cycle."

Empowering the myMCS WebPortal with Zend Server

"Our goals were three-fold," said Demeulemeester. "We wanted to roll out our solutions more quickly, to meet our SLAs consistently, and to resolve or eliminate application bottlenecks and performance problems more efficiently. Adopting Zend Server as our main Web application server was exactly what we needed to achieve these goals."

"With Zend Server, we achieved faster and smoother installations of our software technology stack, and saw more reliability and robustness in daily operations. Zend Server's application monitoring and code tracing enabled us to identify and diagnose performance issues more quickly, very often before they could impact the production environment."

"This year, we embedded Zend Server as an OEM component in the myMCS software suite under the product name myMCS WebPortal Server," said Demeulemeester. "All of our new and upgrading customers are running their myMCS WebPortals on myMCS WebPortal Server, powered by Zend Server."

At the heart of myMCS is an Oracle database where customer data is centrally stored and retrieved. Access to the application is granted through the myMCS WebPortal, containing a user interface developed in JavaScript/ExtJS and a server back-end developed in PHP.

Achieving Market Differentiation and Leadership

"MCS is one of the rare real estate and facilities management ISVs with global presence," said Demeulemeester. "As a technology pioneer in our field, we always look for best-of-breed technology partners: Oracle for the database tier, Autodesk for CAD, SAP/BusinessObjects for reporting, and now Zend is our PHP Web application development and management platform of choice."

"Building upon Zend Framework and integrating Zend components into our product line makes us the leading FMIS (Facility Management Information System) provider with embedded application monitoring, powerful caching options, and proactive support."

According to Demeulemeester, "We are saving a substantial amount of time on software installation and configuration, and we have the backing of Zend consulting and technical support whenever we need it. We've also been able to replace some third-party PHP components with Zend solutions, which are fully tested and supported, to standardize and achieve better performance."

"We anticipate that all of our customers will soon upgrade to the new myMCS release and begin leveraging the benefits of myMCS WebPortal Server. Those who have done so are already reporting improved performance and satisfaction."

"Based on our early success with Zend's PHP solutions and support, we envision a deepening partnership that will provide increased value add for our customers. Zend will continue to be an integral part of our technology roadmap for the long-term."

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The PHP Company

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