



DMSi DRAMATICALLY IMPROVES PRODUCTIVITY AND TIME TO MARKET WITH ROUNDTABLE® TSMS AND PROGRESS® OPENEDGE®

Every company strives for rapid business growth. But growth inevitably leads to new challenges. Those companies that find ways to adapt, innovate, and take advantage of new opportunities will set themselves apart from the competition and rise to the top. That has certainly been the case for DMSi Software, the leading business management solution for distributors of building material and forest products. Today, nearly 400 of North America's top lumber, millwork, roofing, siding, laminate, drywall, and other building product suppliers use DMSi software to efficiently manage daily activities in 1,500 distribution yards, shops, warehouses, and offices.

A long-time Progress application partner, the company has relied on the Progress OpenEdge development platform to power its solutions for over 19 years. During that time, the company has continued to grow and innovate its solutions, becoming an early adopter of the Software as a Service model in the early 2000s. DMSi's development group alone has doubled over the past 10 years to keep up with business growth. All of that growth and innovation also led to its adoption of the Roundtable TSMS integrated software configuration management solution from Progress partner Roundtable Software.

Mark Opfer, Senior Software Architect and Development Lead at DMSi, says the primary motivators for moving to a new, automated system were to improve productivity and quality. "Prior to Roundtable, we only had four programmers, but we still managed to overwrite one another's changes at least a couple of times a week. If we realized the mistake immediately, it could take anywhere from an hour to a day to recover. If we didn't realize the mistake until later, it took much longer to recover. Without a step-by-step picture of the changes, we had to rely on memory to know if we had the right code in place. It was clear we needed a better way to manage the process to support our anticipated business growth."

DMSi evaluated a number of potential solutions, but found that Roundtable TSMS was the only system written specifically to support Progress-based applications. "Roundtable's ability to manage Progress OpenEdge database schema changes was a significant factor in our decision," explains Opfer. "The ability to set up shared tasks was also something that set the application apart." Even after 15 years, Roundtable TSMS continues to be the best fit for their business. "We periodically review other options on the market. But we just haven't found another product with features that outweigh the benefits we get from Roundtable," says Brent Heavican, Director of Architecture and



CHALLENGE

Improve productivity and quality; optimize development process to support rapid business growth

SOLUTION

Roundtable TSMS provides tools and functionality to maintain high levels of efficiency and quality through software configuration management and version control

BENEFIT

Decreased time to market by one year; reduced defect numbers by 50% over past five years; most recently, accelerated ability to fulfill enhancement requests from two weeks down to two days



Innovation at DMSi. “Because Roundtable plugs right into the Progress OpenEdge Developer Studio, it is essentially an extension to our existing developer environment. Because the integration is seamless, Roundtable just looks like part of the OpenEdge platform which makes everything far more productive and efficient.”

Today, the company successfully manages multiple versions of its software across all of its in-house and remote developers. “With Roundtable, we can easily control all of those versions,” says Heavican. “We are able to manage multiple streams of development simultaneously. The system is so automated that we no longer have to worry about issues with code changes. And we can also use the system to make notations, letting the other developers know what changes and updates were made.” DMSi also uses Roundtable TSMS to manage the source code for some of its non Progress-based tools, including its reporting application, Cyberquery.

Roundtable TSMS gives managers, like Heavican, visibility into the development process. “Part of my job is code reviewing - making sure that our guidelines and standards are being followed. I use Roundtable all the time to review what different developers are working on and to verify everyone is on track.”

The flexibility of Roundtable TSMS also gives customers like DMSi the ability to extend its capabilities and leverage additional tools with the Roundtable TSMS API. DMSi was able to easily write an extension using out-of-the-box functionality of Roundtable TSMS to connect to their Salesforce application for additional change verification and management. “When a project is updated using Roundtable, we confirm that information in Salesforce as well,” explains Heavican. “Before a developer can check code in, the system will verify that the project is in the correct release and that the change corresponds with an open work request in Salesforce.”

Each night, DMSi uses the Roundtable TSMS API to automatically compile the updated code to verify if anything was missed or if there were any code issues. Developers will receive an email in the morning noting any potential issues that need to be fixed. And the company also automatically conducts an import each night from its development environment into its test environment. “It is important to note that we are able to accomplish all of this with the Progress OpenEdge Advanced Business Language [ABL],” says Heavican. “There is no need to bring in third-party solutions or to learn new technologies. That is invaluable when it comes to driving greater productivity and efficiency.”

IMPROVED QUALITY AND BUSINESS AGILITY

“Our productivity and quality improved dramatically right out of the gate with Roundtable because we had so much more control over who was changing a particular program at any given time,” explains Opfer. “In fact, that first year our time to market decreased by 12 months. The tools in Roundtable make it possible for one software engineer to build deployments for all of our customers using about 10% of that person’s time over the course of a version. Prior to Roundtable, it took 40% of one software engineer’s time just to handle organizing our local testing environments.”

Over the years, Roundtable TSMS has continued to help DMSi accelerate its time to market. “In the past, our typical deployment schedule for an enhancement request has been two weeks,” explains Heavican. “But with our most recent release, we had an aggressive timetable to get it done as fast as we could. Instead of two weeks, we were able to get the entire process down to two days. The ability to automate so many processes in Roundtable was key to this success.”

DMSi also benefits from the ability to look through Roundtable TSMS’s historical information and pinpoint exactly when a piece of code changed and why, so they can avoid breaking an existing feature as they add new ones. “The version history that is provided in Roundtable is invaluable to us. Each time we check in a change we have information about the time the code

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*Brent Heavican
Director of Architecture
and Innovation
DMSi Software*

was checked in, the related project, an exact picture of what the code change was, the order that the change was made in relation to other changes, and the name of the person that made the change,” explains Opfer. “Even if someone did find a way to remove code in the newer version of the program, we could rollback to a previous version in Roundtable and easily grab the code. That feature has saved us countless hours.” In the past five years alone, DMSi’s defect numbers have gone down by 50%.

Roundtable TSMS has affected more than just DMSi’s business. Opfer shares his own personal metric. “It’s because of Roundtable that I now have a life. Prior to Roundtable, I usually got home from work in time to tuck my kids into bed. By the end of our first year of using Roundtable, I was getting home in time to have supper with them because I wasn’t spending so much time chasing the bugs and phantom bugs that came from uncontrolled code movement.”

CONTINUED INNOVATION WITH PROGRESS® PACIFIC™

Part of DMSi’s ongoing success lies in its commitment to innovation and providing customers with the state-of-the-art tools and functionality they need to remain competitive. Heavican says. DMSi is extremely excited to take advantage of the new Progress Pacific application development platform. “We are ecstatic about Progress Pacific. We now have a complete platform that can absolutely keep up with our needs – and more. In fact, we are trying our hardest to keep up with Progress because there are so many exciting tools we can leverage.”

DMSi is currently implementing the Progress® Rollbase® cloud platform to build a new CRM SaaS application. And the company is eager to take advantage of the Progress Corticon Business Rules Management System [BRMS] to meet customer requests for integrated business rules. DMSi also plans to build two new mobile applications this year using Progress OpenEdge Mobile. And because OpenEdge is an integral part of Progress Pacific, DMSi will continue to leverage Roundtable TSMS to manage its OpenEdge development projects. “Once we are able to take full advantage of Progress Pacific, our solutions will uniquely position us in our marketplace.”

A LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP: PROGRESS AND ROUNDTABLE SOFTWARE

Dedication to technology innovation is something Progress and Roundtable have always had in common. Jeff Ledbetter, Co-owner and Roundtable Product Architect at Roundtable Software, could hardly imagine that his interest in Progress technology all the way back in high school would lead to the launch of a successful company serving the needs of industry leaders like DMSi over 20 years later. “From the very beginning Progress just made sense. When I first discovered Progress I thought to myself: ‘this is how all business applications should be written.’ And decades later, I can still say the same thing.”

Back in the mid 90s, Ledbetter says there were some basic code change management tools, but there was not a tool that could bring a complete software configuration management solution to a Progress-based application. Because Roundtable TSMS is written in Progress OpenEdge, it can perform specialized functions, like schema updates, impact analysis, and deployments. “Roundtable has that intimate knowledge of the Progress language and schema, which sets us apart from the competition.”

Progress OpenEdge customers would have to implement a variety of other tools to try and achieve the same benefits they can with Roundtable TSMS. “When using Roundtable, you do not have to switch back and forth between different solutions; you can perform all functionality, from application compilation to schema updates to deployments, from within a single integrated environment. As a matter of fact, we use Roundtable to develop Roundtable and I love the ease with which Roundtable allows me to work.”

“Our productivity and quality improved dramatically right out of the gate with Roundtable TSMS and Progress OpenEdge.”

Mark Opfer
Senior Software Architect and
Development Lead
DMSi Software

Today, the majority of Roundtable TSMS sales are managed through the Progress sales channel. "This model has enabled us, as a small business, to have a worldwide reach. Best of all, we get to leverage the expertise of the Progress sales force," says Ledbetter.

As a Progress partner, Roundtable has always had the inside track to the Progress technical team and product management. "Particularly for our solution, which is complementary to Progress OpenEdge, this level of access is invaluable," says Ledbetter. "We know ahead of time what modifications need to be made to ensure Roundtable TSMS supports any new features that may be delivered in the next release of Progress OpenEdge."

The company is working on its next release, which will be available around the launch of Progress OpenEdge 11.4. "We're building in support for new features, like Table Partitioning, along with other key enhancements. Our goal is to stay in line with Progress's development schedule to ensure we are providing our customers with the state-of-the-art tools they need to maximize their Progress OpenEdge business applications."

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ABOUT DMSi SOFTWARE

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ABOUT ROUNDTABLE SOFTWARE



Roundtable Software is a leader in developing and supporting software applications for the demanding world of software development. Roundtable Software's product line includes Roundtable TSMS, a software configuration management solution for Progress OpenEdge development, and Roundtable Team, an Eclipse-based version control solution.

Roundtable Software is a Progress technology alliance partner. www.roundtable-software.com

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation [NASDAQ: PRGS] is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or in the cloud, on any platform or device, to any data source, with enhanced performance, minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

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