



FDM4 International Inc. relies on the Roundtable TSMS Software Configuration Management solution to automate and streamline the work of 60 developers across more than 100 workspaces. The company also uses the solution to maintain partner workspaces with some of its customers, allowing for joint-development. The ability to easily manage simultaneous development projects while maintaining source code management and version control gives FDM4 the flexibility to deliver highly customized solutions—a significant competitive advantage for the company.

FDM4 MAINTAINS ITS COMPETITIVE EDGE WITH ROUNDTABLE TSMS

How do you grow and maintain a successful business over three decades? For FDM4 the answer is simple – give your customers what they want. For over 30 years, FDM4 International Inc. has specialized in becoming a leading provider of integrated ERP, WMS, eCommerce Web Solutions (B2B/B2C), Mobile Applications, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Product Lifecycle Management (PLM), and Executive Dashboard technology. The company serves leading global manufacturers and distributors across a variety of industries, including consumer products, fashion, apparel, footwear, and industrial parts.

A significant driver behind the company’s long-term success is its ability to provide clients with customized business solutions to meet their special needs. “We have always respected the fact that our customers know their business better than anyone; they are the true experts,” explains Joelle Hotte, Vice President of Customer Service for FDM4. “We strive to understand their goals, how they want things to work, and what they need to run the most efficient and successful business. We then customize our application to meet all of those needs. This flexibility has truly become a point of differentiation for us in this market.”

While the ability to deliver customized applications sets FDM4 apart from other vendors, it also requires a highly productive and responsive development team. For almost 20 years, the Roundtable TSMS Software Configuration Management solution has provided FDM4 with the tools and functionality its developers need to maintain the highest levels of efficiency and quality through source code management and version control.

“We have close to 60 people across our two locations in Canada and Nevada that use Roundtable every single day,” explains Hotte. “We are constantly making changes and updates to well over 100 different workspaces. We also maintain partner workspaces, which enable both FDM4 and some of our clients to make changes to the source code. With so many projects and so many people touching code—often simultaneously, it is



CHALLENGE

Many FDM4 customers require a highly customized solution, even those within similar industries.

SOLUTION

Roundtable® TSMS, Software Configuration Management built on Progress® OpenEdge®, manages changes throughout the software development lifecycle across multiple development projects.

BENEFIT

Roundtable TSMS enables FDM4 to easily and rapidly deliver high-quality custom solutions to its customers, as well as updates and new features.

crucial that we are able to rely on Roundtable to control and automate the flow of changes across departments and development workspaces.”

Today using Roundtable TSMS, FDM4 maintains individual workspaces for all versions of its base application for both its ERP and logistics solutions. FDM4 manages approximately 100 individual workspaces representing individual customers – some of which have a number of workspaces to accommodate different versions [for example, both the ERP and WMS Solution]. The company is also using different workspaces to manage different environments, for example for developing, testing, and deploying solutions.

For those organizations that do want to maintain some control over development efforts, Roundtable TSMS enables FDM4 to set up partner workspaces that allow for co-customization through joint-development. Maintaining mirror workspaces, FDM4 deploys changes to the customer’s system and the customer then deploys any changes back to FDM4. Roundtable TSMS tracks all activity across both development groups.

“Whether we are using Roundtable internally or within a partner workspace, the solution oversees all the various changes to the schema, source code, and documentation that comprise the system—tracking who made changes, when and why they made them,” says Hotte. “And perhaps one of the best features is that Roundtable permits any version of a system to be reconstructed at any time.”

Roundtable TSMS is based on the Progress OpenEdge application development platform which, Hotte says, is a significant benefit. “The fact that Roundtable is so tightly integrated with the underlying OpenEdge platform just makes it so much easier for us to control both changes to the database as well as changes to the code. We can store all of the database definitions in Roundtable and make those database changes in Roundtable. That is certainly not a feature we have seen in other software configuration management tools.”

SUPPORTING BUSINESS GROWTH

Over the years FDM4 has used Roundtable TSMS, the company has more than quadrupled its business, both in terms of revenue and number of employees. And Hotte says the solution has supported that growth every step of the way. “We’ve changed quite a bit over the years to keep up with evolving markets and customer requirements. When you are a small company with a handful of developers, issues like version control and keeping track of code changes aren’t so important. But as we have grown both our team and our customer base, we have had to implement more structure to keep up with demand and ensure quality control. With Roundtable, customer requests are now documented, and we have visibility into what is being done and the business reason for the change. So modifying our internal structures, putting more tools in place, and connecting all that with Roundtable has helped us grow, attract more customers, and support more complex customizations.”

IMPROVING DEVELOPER PRODUCTIVITY

With Roundtable TSMS, FDM4 has total visibility into the development process – past and present, and that has had a significant impact on developer productivity. “Using our internal application along with Roundtable, we can see everything that’s going on at any given point in time, including any open tasks,” explains Hotte. “And we can go back at any time to see who did what and when. This is critical, especially if someone is out sick or we have a new developer.”



“Rather than saying ‘you’ll have to wait until the next update is ready in three months,’ we can say ‘sure, no problem – we will get that to you ASAP.’ That degree of flexibility—to keep up with the pace of our customers’ business—is where we shine. With Roundtable, we are far more agile than our competition.”

Joelle Hotte
Vice President of
Customer Service
FDM4

AGILITY TO KEEP PACE WITH CUSTOMER NEEDS

FDM4's ability to quickly respond to customers and provide highly customized solutions is the company's biggest competitive edge, says Hotte. "I think we are really one of the exceptions in our industries. If a customer has an issue or need, depending on the scope, we may be able to deliver the fix or new feature within a day or even hours. Smaller companies just don't have the resources to do that, and larger companies have too many customers to offer that level of personalization. Rather than saying 'you'll have to wait until the next update is ready in three months,' we can say 'sure, no problem - we will get that to you ASAP.' That degree of flexibility—to keep up with the pace of our customers' business—is where we shine. With Roundtable, we are far more agile than our competition."

MOVING ITS BUSINESS FORWARD WITH ROUNDTABLE TSMS

Hotte says she just can't imagine a world in which FDM4 didn't use Roundtable TSMS. If we didn't have Roundtable—with its customer workspaces, custom modules, the ability to create controlled deployments, and the ability to keep absorbing more work and more customers and more change—our world would be chaotic. All of our programmers are in and out of Roundtable every day. Roundtable is a core part of our business; we couldn't function without it."

After working with Roundtable TSMS for over two decades, Hotte says FDM4 remains a loyal customer simply because the system continues to meet their needs. "Like any business, we periodically scan the market to see if there is a better solution. But time and again Roundtable has proven to be the best decision for our business. I think for any company that has a Progress-based application, for any company who has customer workspaces, or for any company that has to control multiple environments of the same application, Roundtable is an ideal solution."

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ABOUT FDM4

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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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