



Overview

Business challenge

The effective management of container logistics is critical for both Finland's export industry and the Finnish economy in general. Finncontainers wanted to create an easily accessible source of information on containers, both as a public service and to support its own business model.

Solution

Netwell, an IBM Premier Business Partner, helped Finncontainers select and deploy DominoWiki, a free open source wiki template that leverages the company's existing IBM Lotus Notes and Domino platform. The project was completed within just four weeks, in time for an important Finnish logistics exhibition. The company also implemented IBM Lotus Notes Traveler, providing mobile access to email and contacts.

Finncontainers builds an open source wiki in just four weeks

With Netwell and IBM Lotus Notes and Domino

Founded in 1996, Finncontainers is a family-owned logistics company that specialises in the sale, leasing and transportation of containers for customers in the Finnish domestic logistics and export sectors. The company has its headquarters in Kerava, near Helsinki, employs four people, and generates annual revenues of €3.4 million.

Sarianne Reinikkala, Managing Director of Finncontainers, comments: "The export business makes a major contribution to the Finnish economy, and container logistics plays a critical role. We are one of the leading container companies in the country, so we feel it is our responsibility to help other Finnish companies make more effective use of container logistics and support the export industry."

"For this reason, we wanted to create a publicly accessible store of knowledge that would give our customers and other Finnish companies all the information they need to manage container logistics successfully."

Getting help

The company decided to create a wiki about container logistics, which would be available on the Internet and easily accessible. However, as a small company with limited in-house IT resources, Finncontainers could not afford to spend much time or effort on the development of this new system.

"We decided to consult Netwell, our long-term technology partner, for advice," says Reinikkala. "We have been working with consultants from Netwell for more than ten years now, and we have always been impressed with their technical skills and business knowledge. Netwell is also an IBM Premier Business Partner, and we are always keen to use IBM hardware and software because of its excellent quality and reliability."



Business Benefits

- The wiki enables users to share their knowledge about container logistics, helping the sector grow and become more efficient.
 - By utilising free open source software on Lotus Notes and Domino, Finncontainers maintains a low total cost of operations.
 - The secure and reliable Lotus platform helps Finncontainers focus on its core business, instead of dealing with IT problems. In 13 years of using Lotus Notes and Domino, the company has never experienced any downtime or viruses in the environment.
 - Lotus Notes Traveler enables users to work more easily when they are out of office, helping to support the business 24x7.
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The right platform

For more than 13 years, Finncontainers has based the majority of its IT systems on the IBM Lotus Notes and Domino platform. The company relies on the highly reliable and secure email and calendaring functions, and also uses Netwell Office, a Lotus Domino-based CRM application developed by Netwell.

Netwell Office enables the creation of workgroups for different users, allowing them to create and share documents, manage projects, set up discussion forums, organise meetings and manage information about customers, suppliers and partners.

“In all the time we have been using Lotus software and Netwell Office, we have never had a single virus or experienced any significant unplanned downtime,” says Reinikkala. “It’s an ideal platform for our company, because it just works – so we can focus on our core business instead of dealing with IT problems. We wanted our new wiki system to run on the Lotus platform too, to take advantage of this reliability and to enable us keep all our systems on the same server.”

Open source software

Looking to provide a simple, low-cost solution, Netwell searched OpenNTF.org, a repository of open source Lotus Notes and Domino software development projects, and found an application called DominoWiki. Netwell helped Finncontainers install and configure this free application, helping to get the new wiki up and running within just four weeks.

“With Netwell’s help we completed the project very quickly, which enabled us to announce the new wiki at a major Finnish logistics exhibition,” says Reinikkala. “The ability to deploy free open source Lotus Notes and Domino applications from OpenNTF.org is a real advantage, giving us an easy way to introduce new functionalities without increasing our software licensing costs.”

Since its announcement at the exhibition, the new wiki has become very popular with the logistics community in Finland, attracting more visitors each month.

“We get a lot of very good feedback about the wiki,” says Reinikkala. “We provide it as a public service and we don’t use it to promote our own business, but in general if it contributes to the growth of the container logistics sector, it’s a good thing for Finncontainers too!”

“In the near future, our plan is to re-design the wiki layout and improve some of its functions. If we can encourage more users to contribute articles to the wiki and share their knowledge about container logistics, we hope it will benefit the whole industry.”

“Some small and medium-sized businesses are afraid of IBM – they see it as a huge corporation that doesn’t develop software for smaller companies. Our experience is quite the opposite: Lotus Notes and Domino are designed to deliver everything a small business needs on a single platform.”

— Sarianne Reinikkala, Managing Director of Finncontainers

Going mobile

Netwell has also recently helped Finncontainers to adopt IBM Lotus Notes Traveler, which enables users to access email and contacts via their mobile phones. The latest version of the software (8.5.1) not only supports Windows Mobile devices, but also the Apple iPhone and Nokia Symbian platforms.

“Container logistics is a 24x7 business, and we often have to work outside of regular office hours,” comments Reinikkala. “Lotus Notes Traveler helps us keep in contact with our suppliers and customers even if we are working from home, so we don’t need to spend our evenings waiting around in the office for an email to arrive. It’s a much more convenient way of working, and it’s very popular with our staff.”

Everything on a single platform

Reinikkala concludes: “Some small and medium-sized businesses are afraid of IBM – they see it as a huge corporation that doesn’t develop software for smaller companies. Our experience is quite the opposite: Lotus Notes and Domino are designed to deliver everything a small business needs on a single platform, and it’s so reliable that you don’t need a large in-house IT team to manage it. Moreover, by leveraging applications such as Netwell Office from IBM Business Partners, it is possible to create a comprehensive business management solution at a fraction of the cost and complexity of most CRM and ERP systems.

“From an economic perspective, Lotus Notes and Domino’s licensing costs per user are relatively low, and the availability of open source software like DominoWiki make it a very cost-effective option. Finally, the introduction of new features like Lotus Notes Traveler is helping us to create a more flexible workplace and support our business 24x7.”

For more information

To learn more about IBM software, contact your IBM sales representative or visit: ibm.com

To learn more about products, services and solution from Netwell, visit: www.netwell.biz



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