



THE COFFEE CONNOISSEUR SERVES UP ENHANCED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE WITH RED HAT

FAST FACTS

Industry	Food and beverage
Geography	Singapore
Migration Path	Microsoft Windows to Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5
Business Challenge	Develop a reliable system to run its customer loyalty programme
Solution	Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5 and JBoss 4 Java Application Server running mobyLoyalty, a loyalty application developed in Java.
Benefits	Achieved a reliable loyalty programme offering rewards points to customers



BACKGROUND

The Coffee Connoisseur (TCC), a leading purveyor of gourmet coffees in Singapore, offers an extensive range of exclusive top-quality coffees, brewed to perfection using a variety of methods including syphon, ice coffee dripper, and espresso techniques.

Customers at TCC enjoy a cosy, welcoming ambience where they can fully appreciate the pleasure of savouring a truly excellent cup of coffee. Each of the chain's art boutique cafés features a unique design and ambience to suit the local clientele. Besides coffee, it also serves a comprehensive menu of delicious starters, main courses, and desserts.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The food and beverage industry is highly competitive and a key to success is not only attracting but retaining customers. Having established a brand name in Singapore, TCC wanted to develop a strong customer retention strategy centered on its brand and quality of products and services.

This involved the rolling out of a customer loyalty programme that offers members discounts off total bill, special deals, and exclusive offers to arts events and performances.

"The technical challenge was the implementation time frame," said Henry Tan, marketing communications manager of TCC. "We had a very tight deadline to come up with a system to support this programme."

SOLUTION

TCC evaluated several vendors based on the loyalty application. Following extensive assessment, it decided on mobyLoyalty, a customer loyalty application developed in Java, running on servers based on Red Hat Enterprise Linux 5 and JBoss 4 Java Application Server. The solution was recommended by Philip Tang & Sons (PTS), a Red Hat Business Partner.

The coffee chain based its decision on the proven track record of Red Hat, scalability of the solution, and availability of reliable support.

"We found PTS to have an extensive track record of implementations for various industries, as well as good clientele base. The mobyLoyalty application which we evaluation was developed and deployed in a telco scenario. That gave us the comfort of knowing that it is a robust and proven platform," said Tan.

TCC also wanted a solution that is scalable, allows for expandability of features, and can support its growing business and database.

The mobyLoyalty system deployed by TCC has already gone through enhancements over the past two years. It is also capable of having customer relationship management (CRM) and short messaging service (SMS) functions should the business require it.

Availability of support was another key consideration. "The skill set availability and technical competency of the vendor in supporting the server operating system



as well as application was important. That is also the reason why we choose Red Hat Enterprise Linux -- both Red Hat Enterprise Linux and JBoss are cost-effective solutions that simultaneously deliver reliability, high performance, and offer scalability," said Tan.

PTS deployed the entire platform and application on an Intel server within two months of the award of the contract. This included all the customisation on the backend as well as integration to the point-of-sale (POS) terminals to accumulate and redeem points seamlessly. Training for all retail staff was done within this timeframe.

BENEFITS

Thanks to the solution, TCC was able to launch its loyalty programme and membership base has since grown to over 50,000 members in just three years.

"The scalability of the Red Hat-based solution has enabled us to support this rapid membership growth and the expansion of our chain to 30 outlets. We need not upgrade the platform at all," said Tan.

The customer loyalty system has run smoothly - with only one scheduled maintenance during closing hours - since its deployment. "This is excellent considering that it is supporting our chain of 30 outlets every day of the year. We are delighted with the reliability of our Red Hat solution," he said.

TCC was also impressed with the Red Hat subscription model, which allows the coffee chain to defer the high initial investments and converts the costs from capital to operational expenditure. "This allows us to stage our investments in the entire platform, which is important as we needed time to refine the loyalty program and software application functionality," he added.

According to Franklin Tang, marketing director of PTS, Red Hat has helped to ensure the successful deployment of the solution at TCC.

"Red Hat has been extremely supportive and is an excellent global corporation partner under the Infocomm Local Industry Upgrading Programme (iLIUP). It is very committed to the programme and in supporting small and medium enterprises. We have benefited much from its reliable support," said Tang.

Going forward, TCC plans to upgrade the platform to involve more CRM functions to better satisfy its members.

"We are very satisfied with the reliability and robustness of our programme, as we have been running our systems for over three years, with excellent uptime and with few maintenance requirements," said Tan.

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