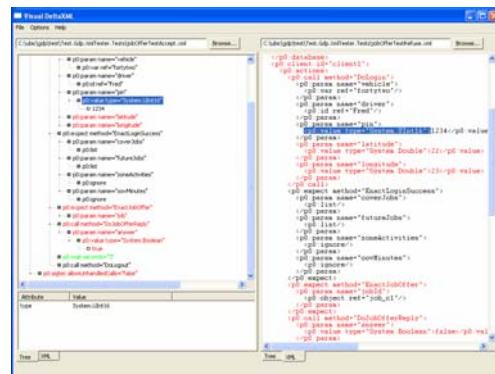




DeltaXML (Monsell EDM Ltd) makes and supports the DeltaXML toolkit for XML change management. More than 40 organisations, including IBM, Cisco, Springer Verlag, Standard Life, CSW Ltd, the UK Inland Revenue and Centrica / British Gas, rely on DeltaXML technology for flexible, scalable and reliable software to identify and manipulate changes in all types and sizes of XML documents. Monsell EDM was founded in 1991 and is based in Malvern, Worcestershire.

DeltaXML's clients have typically been large organisations such as publishers, software companies, and other organisations with complex needs in the fields of data interchange and content management. These clients usually pay upwards of USD5000 for a license to use the DeltaXML



toolkit in a specific single application, including full support and maintenance. DeltaXML perceived a gap in the market for a Windows application that would allow users to compare XML documents graphically, somewhat in the manner of WinDiff but using DeltaXML's special XML-handling capabilities. In August 2004 they contracted Parthenon to develop this application for them.

Parthenon was ideal for this work because of its staff's extensive expertise with XML, including SAX, DOM and XML Schema. Parthenon engineers have worked on the Apache project's XML tools and the open source XPath parser Pathan.

The company's Java experience is also extensive, with engineers having worked on various applications large and small, both on the command line and using the Swing and SWT GUI toolkits. Parthenon staff are well-schooled in modern, proven software design approaches, including object orientation and intelligent, thorough testing procedures including automated GUI tests. Clear and thorough code documentation is also important to the company, as is careful software design with ease of future development in mind.

This last quality was important because Parthenon agreed to work on the project in short stages, each lasting approximately two weeks and leading up to a milestone. At the end of each phase, Parthenon discussed the goals for the next milestone in detail with DeltaXML staff and drew up an estimated schedule. To date, three phases have been completed, of which two were finished on schedule and the other one took only one day longer than expected.

One aspect of Parthenon's development process that has proved especially useful is its online automated build system. Powered by open source software and running on a web server at Parthenon, it runs the project's unit tests every time code is committed. DeltaXML staff were given password-protected access to this system, enabling them to check the project status easily and download up-to-date source code and binaries.

A key requirement for the graphical DeltaXML application was that it should look and feel as much as possible like a standard Windows program, despite being written in Java, the language of the DeltaXML API itself. The SWT GUI toolkit, developed as part of IBM's Eclipse and WebSphere projects, was chosen because its hybrid architecture, mixing Java with native Windows libraries written in C++, provides much higher responsiveness than a pure Java toolkit and makes applications developed with it look much more like native Windows programs. Using SWT also allowed the application to run on Linux and Mac OS X.

Work on this project has proceeded intermittently, with a release anticipated soon. Currently, the application is advanced and stable enough to be useful to Parthenon staff in other projects, and is therefore to be considered a success.

According to Robin LaFontaine, DeltaXML's CEO, *"Parthenon's approach to software development has provided us with high quality, innovative software in a very short space of time. In addition, their flexible approach has meant that we have been able to include new requirements in at various points in the project."*

Parthenon's adaptable and professional approach to this project, both in their partnership with their client and their engineering, made them the right choice for DeltaXML.

To discuss how we can add value to your business:

Contact Graham Innocent on 01865 811184.

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