



January 2009

In this Newsletter:

[Hello 2009, Goodbye 2008](#)

[Now is the time to Outsource](#)

[Tools, Technologies, and Techniques – OnTime by Axosoft](#)

[On the Lighter Side...](#)

Hello 2009, Goodbye 2008

Most of us usually approach the new calendar year with great anticipation, if not excitement. Unfortunately, that is not the case at many of the companies I have been speaking to recently. The setbacks that many companies suffered this past year, combined with the bleak forecasts for this coming year, is not making for a very upbeat business atmosphere right now.

However, at the risk of over-utilizing a common cliché, we at Renaissance are trying to turn the current economic lemons into lemonade. In addition to focusing on our existing client projects, we are actually attempting to use this time to grow the company in several different directions! We are looking to take strategic advantage of the current situation in the following ways:

- (1) Working on a few ideas we have for some in-house technologies and projects
- (2) Learning, experimenting, and gaining experience with some of the latest Microsoft technologies, e.g. WPF, Silverlight, Entity Framework, and a few others.
- (3) Talking with potential employees – many high-caliber developers are currently looking for new opportunities, due to many drastic layoffs at larger companies.

Looking back at 2008, we had a challenging and successful year – new employees, new projects, and a cool video! You can read about several of our exciting projects – for Microsoft, a healthcare company, and an Internet startup - in the May newsletter (www.renaissance.co.il/newsletters/NewsMay08.pdf) and can check out the video "Coding Model-View-Presenter with CodeRush and Refactor Pro!" on our download page www.renaissance.co.il/downloads.aspx.

Now is the time to Outsource

I finally sat down and formulated a blog post that summarizes some thoughts I've had about outsourcing software development and the current economic crisis. The short story is that I believe there are 5 good reasons, listed below, that you should consider outsourcing some of your software development projects during the current economic recession:

1. Budget vs. Head Count
2. Fixed Price Projects
3. Jump Ahead of the Competition
4. Develop Relationships, Processes, and Partnerships
5. Changes in Technology

You can read my explanation for each of these items (and offer your comments) in the blog post at <http://weblogs.asp.net/jackieg/archive/2009/01/12/outsourcing-software-development-during-a-recession.aspx>

Tools, Technologies, and Techniques – OnTime by Axosoft

Although we take pains to avoid useless formalities and bureaucracy, one thing we have always tried to do at Renaissance is to work in an organized fashion. Even on the smallest projects, we use a tool to manage features and tasks, and have (almost) daily standup meetings. The project tracking tool we have been using for the past several years is OnTime by Axosoft (www.axosoft.com).

Why OnTime? The short answer is that it is simple to start using, it is sufficiently flexible, and is reasonably priced (including a free single-user license). The longer answer is that with each user

license, you get three different UI options – Windows (i.e. rich client), browser, and Visual Studio add-in. It also has a rich set of features and options – which you can grow into as your projects and/or teams grow in complexity. You can start with the basic management of feature, defect, and general task lists and then progress to defined workflows, project wiki, customer portal, helpdesk incident tracking, and more.

We have often been asked by clients to use other project tracking tools. Many of them, especially the ones that have only a browser interface, are painful to use. We were very happy, therefore, when we convinced one of our current clients to use OnTime for the overall management of the project we are working on for them.

On the Lighter Side...

How technology changes ...

March 22, 1998

Dry Bones



I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you any of your current or planned projects. We can help you develop a technology strategy, lead your development team, or take full responsibility for your projects. I also welcome your questions and comments on any of the subjects covered in these mailings, our approaches to software development, or any of my conference presentations.

Sincerely,

Jackie Goldstein
President, Renaissance Computer Systems Ltd.
www.renaissance.co.il