



North Carolina Treasurer's office improves service for state employees.

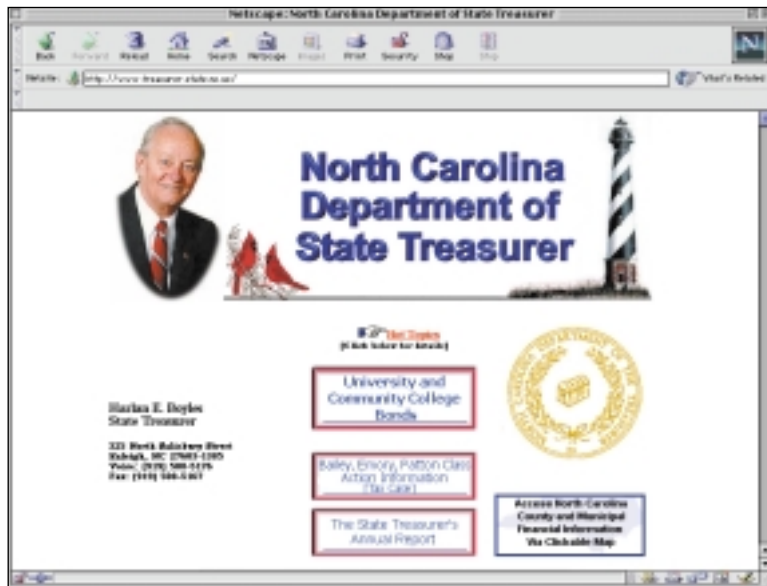
Application	Highly secure access to state retirement plan data
Business Benefits	Significantly higher level of customer service, substantial cost savings
Software	IBM WebSphere® Host Integration Solution, IBM WebSphere Host On-Demand, IBM WebSphere Host Publisher
Business Partner	Software Spectrum

The North Carolina Department of State Treasurer oversees a wide variety of administrative and management activities. Providing North Carolina's citizens with first-class service requires extensive technical and administrative resources to manage a broad spectrum of programs, investment funds and initiatives. Recently, the Department of State Treasurer faced the challenge of increasing accessibility to its host system to provide state employees with a significantly higher level of customer service.

“WebSphere Host On-Demand and WebSphere Host Publisher are definitely bureaucracy busters.”

– Doug Piner, Web Manager, North Carolina Department of State Treasurer

With numerous requests for information about employee benefits, the department's Retirement Systems Division required a solution that offered fast and easy access to



The IBM WebSphere Host Integration Solution has saved money and time for the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer.



Internet access to host systems has enabled North Carolina state agencies and vendors to respond promptly to the inquiries of state employees.

host data for various state agencies and third-party service providers. In particular, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) as well as BB&T Corporation — the administrator of the state's 401(k) and supplemental retirement plans — needed quick access to information about state employees' retirement benefits. The department's Information Systems (IS) Section realized that providing Internet access to the host system would deliver immediate relief to the Retirement Systems Division, while enabling DOT and BB&T to respond to state employees' inquiries easily and promptly. The IS staff needed a solution that would solve the access problem without introducing new hardware or software that would require excessive maintenance or user training.

Maximizing host resources simply and securely

After looking at products from various vendors, Doug Piner, Web manager for the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer, chose IBM WebSphere Host Integration Solution. Working with IBM Business Partner Software Spectrum, the department's IS staff installed WebSphere Host On-Demand and WebSphere Host Publisher to provide highly secure Internet access to host applications and data.

With WebSphere Host Integration Solution, it's easy to develop applications tailored to each organization's specific needs. And it can offer significant time-saving benefits as well. IBM software was delivered to the IT staff online, making set-up easy and convenient. The solution enabled the IS staff to add functionality without the traditional, time-consuming processes associated with mainframe development. Using IBM products, processing happens on the Web server rather than on the mainframe. "Not having to touch a mainframe application — and the ability to display mainframe data to the Web easily — was a good selling point for me," says Piner. By eliminating the need to reprogram existing applications and databases, WebSphere Host Integration Solution also provided the Department of State Treasurer with substantial cost savings.

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Piner was equally impressed with how easy it is to develop the applications. Having the ability to write programs using JavaScript™ was a definite advantage. “The technical skills required weren’t nearly as intensive as [with] some of the other products,” he explains. Because developing applications takes less time, the Retirement Systems Division hopes to eliminate the backlog of requests faster. Employees at DOT and BB&T also find the new applications easy to use. And now they can access host data and applications over the Internet using standard Web browsers.

“The WebSphere Host Integration Solution made my job much easier.”

– Doug Piner

Providing quality, efficient service

Improving customer service for state employees required the IS staff to develop host applications tailored to the specific access needs and computing environments of both DOT and BB&T. “The solution provided a pretty streamlined answer for DOT and BB&T,” observes Piner. “WebSphere Host On-Demand and WebSphere Host Publisher are definitely bureaucracy busters.”

With approximately 15,000 employees located statewide, employees at DOT were bombarded with calls about retirement benefits and salary issues. DOT wanted access to information about its employees, but the query on the host application produced a list of every public employee in the state. The Host Publisher solution designed for DOT improved the quality of the agency’s service by making sure its information resources and technology were utilized in a secure, efficient, cost-effective manner. Today, employees in DOT’s personnel department can view the information from their desktops and can usually answer workers’ questions on the spot.

Within a matter of weeks, the IS staff was able to set up the host system; it can be used by several different agencies, but each agency can only access data about its own employees. With WebSphere Host Publisher, the Department of State Treasurer is able to extend greater information access to other state agencies while maintaining confidence that no one can view or change data on the system without the proper authorization.



Using Host Publisher, the state’s Department of Transportation can answer its 15,000 employees’ retirement questions.

Using a modem connection, BB&T had limited access to the host system. Bank employees had to call the treasurer's office to get information about eligibility and benefits. Managing the retirement accounts for several thousand state employees throughout North Carolina, bank employees processed approximately 800 withdrawal applications each month. To improve customer service, BB&T needed a solution that would increase employee productivity without requiring additional software installation, user training or excessive maintenance. Using IBM technologies, bank employees now have Internet access to the Department of State Treasurer's host system, allowing them to readily view records of employees participating in BB&T's 401(k) plan.

According to Piner, the main appeal of the Host Publisher and Host On-Demand solution was simplicity and flexibility. "The WebSphere Host Integration Solution made my job much easier," observes Piner enthusiastically. "Right now, I'm a hero."

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