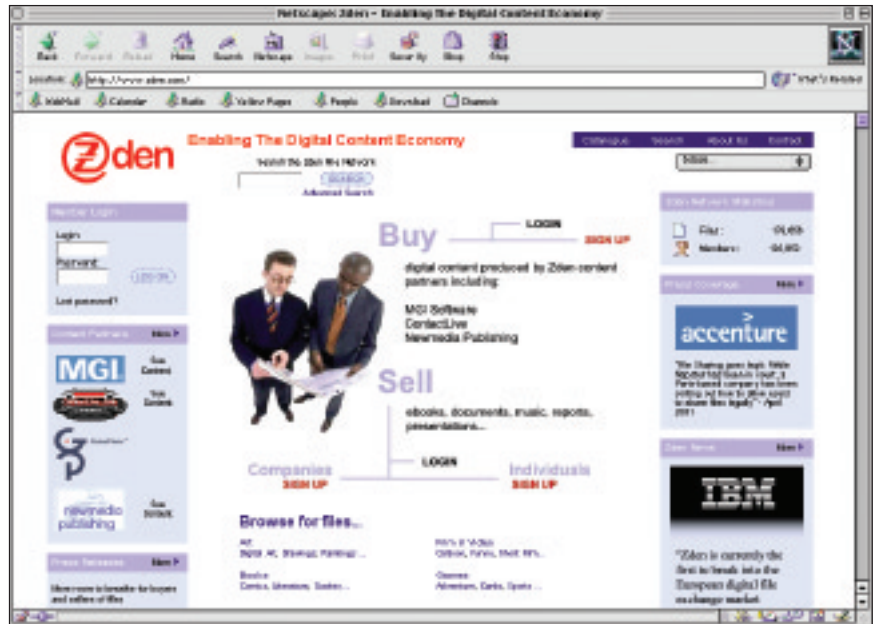


Zden aligns with IBM for secure, global digital content network.

Overview

- **Challenge**
Enable secure digital content exchange over the Internet
- **Solution**
DICODIS® Digital Content Distribution System for multimedia content sales
- **Why IBM?**
IBM viewed as a proven e-business vendor that Zden could rely on to build its e-marketplace infrastructure
- **Key Business Benefits**
First to market with its distribution system for digital content providers; 250% growth in customer base and 700% growth in volume of digital files managed per year
- **Business Partner**
SOFIM



A respect for diversity, constant innovation and the encouragement of creativity are among the core values that guide the daily operations at Zden, the developer of an e-marketplace that provides secure digital content exchange over the Internet.

“Content is king” is often the adage for companies pursuing innovative business models for the Internet. But distributing this content securely—in digital formats over the Internet—while still making a profit can be a formidable challenge for any content producer.

Zden has developed a solution to meet this challenge: DICODIS (Digital Content Distribution System), the first integrated system of its kind that allows companies to securely sell their own original digital content.

“As we prepared to launch, one of our most challenging and critical tasks was to find a reliable storage solution for content and a scalable and highly secure database to manage customer information.”

*—Denis Harscoat,
CEO and Founder, Zden*

Using value networks to reach new markets

Key Components

Software

- IBM DB2® for AIX®

Servers

- IBM RS/6000®
- IBM Enterprise Storage Server™

Services

- IBM Global Services

Headquartered in Paris, Zden is the realized vision of 12 self-described Internet zealots who saw a business opportunity in their endeavor.

“We provide content producers—from publishing houses and software firms to game developers—a cost-effective solution for distributing their digital content,” says Zden CEO and Founder Denis Harscoat.

Using DICODIS, businesses can distribute digital content through their own Web sites. In this arrangement, Zden offers its solution as a “white brand”, a generic offering distributed by a third party. Businesses can also distribute content through the entire Zden network. An affiliate program built into DICODIS enables businesses to designate specific networks of partner sites. Together, these content providers constitute a secure, global digital content network.

An operational test version of DICODIS is available at Zden.com, and DICODIS Version 2.0 is already available. But getting to this stage was challenging for Zden. “As we prepared to launch, one of our most challenging and critical tasks was to find a reliable storage solution for content and a scalable and highly secure database to manage customer information,” says Harscoat.

“Looking to the leaders in this space—IBM, EMC and Oracle—we found the performance we needed with IBM. We also saw the opportunity to build our infrastructure with a proven e-business vendor who could offer the support and brand recognition we need to grow,” he notes.

Zden built DICODIS with IBM DB2 for AIX and IBM Enterprise Storage Server (ESS). “Oracle costs seven times more than DB2, so the price/performance ratio of DB2 is much more reasonable,” says Harscoat. “Also, Oracle charges for features we don’t want, while DB2 is a reliable database that can scale up as we need it.”

DB2 supports fast development goals

The Zden network currently boasts more than 205,000 users and manages nearly 200,000 multimedia files. At this rate, the company anticipates 250 percent growth in its customer base and 700 percent growth in the volume of digital files managed per year. Of these files, up to 10 percent are available for sale; the rest are being stored by Zden, which acts as a virtual hard drive, freeing customers from the costs and resources associated with managing large volumes of multimedia data on their own. “Zden is currently the largest secure digital content network of its kind. Our closest competitors are just launching,” notes Harscoat.

“DB2 is running perpetually. This high level of availability, along with its incredible speed, reflects the real value that DB2 provides for applications that must be accessible by countless users 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”

—Denis Harscoat

In fact, time to market was a key consideration, as the company recognized first-mover advantage could bring with it a larger market share. Zden developed its DICODIS e-marketplace using Java™ technology, and created the backend foundation with ESS and DB2.

“Developing with DB2, with its stored procedure archive files and user-defined data types, was easy for our team,” says Harscoat. “Maintaining DB2 also requires little effort, particularly since the DB2 Control Center features a GUI for our administrators to manage database commands as well as online performance monitoring capabilities.”

Turning to IBM for a complete solution

Java technology drives the front-end GUI as well as the business logic that provides the transaction processing capabilities for DICODIS. The site is hosted by IBM Global Services on six clustered IBM RS/6000 servers at its Paris server farm. DB2 for AIX manages information about customers and their purchases, as well as data about available file types. When users submit a query on the Web site, DICODIS uses Java Database Connectivity (JDBC) to pull data from DB2 and deliver it back to the site.

IBM Business Partner SOFIM helped install ESS, the repository for all the multimedia files that customers entrust to Zden for both sale and storage. The server currently stores 1TB of data, with a capacity of 11TB. The company can increase capacity by building a storage area network where data can be shared by several ESS units. The platform is maintained and monitored by IBM Global Services.

“DB2 is running perpetually,” says Harscoat. “This high level of availability, along with its incredible speed, reflects the real value that DB2 provides for applications that must be accessible by countless users 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And with the IBM Universal Server Farm’s highly secured environment—including its firewalls and regular hacking tests—we’re confident that we can guard our customers’ valuable content from infringements.”

“Oracle costs seven times more than DB2, so the price/performance ratio of DB2 was much more reasonable. Besides, Oracle charges for features we don’t want, while DB2 is a reliable database that can scale up as we need it.”

–Denis Harscoat



Writers and other developers of original content can feel secure in Zden’s commitment to protecting intellectual property. Anyone caught violating copyright laws is blocked from using the service.

Although Zden developed its e-marketplace using a third-party Web application server, it is planning to migrate soon to IBM WebSphere® Application Server, Enterprise Edition for the Java runtime engine. "Because we're so pleased with DB2 and Enterprise Storage Server, we see the value in leveraging our relationship with IBM and relying on a single e-business vendor for support," notes Harscoat. "Moreover, having had experience using WebSphere Application Server as well as IBM VisualAge® for Java, we know that incorporating them into our environment would represent an advancement."

Currently, DICODIS customers can link from the Zden site to an outside fulfillment house for online credit card transactions and billing. With the latest version of DICODIS, Version 2.0, Zden can integrate payment applications with the existing billing engines of its service providers' clients.

Grand plans ahead

Zden's employees work from offices in Paris and Luxembourg. The company is striving to extend its reach in Europe before reaching out to North American and then worldwide markets.

To boost its market share and the market share of its clients, Zden will offer DICODIS to large community sites and service providers so that their customers and clients can distribute as well as access massive amounts of digital content provided by content partners and DICODIS clients.

Zden's larger objective is to build the biggest digital file network on the Internet, a "content grid" of sorts. Says Harscoat, "At the moment, DB2 and ESS are our two pillars, and we'll lean on them to support us as our business expands. When we first met with IBM, we sensed that its people understood our business objectives, and now we feel that we have a real ally."

For more information

Please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

Visit us at: ibm.com/e-business

For more information about Zden, visit:

www.zden.com

www.zden.com/dicodis



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