

Bagchee.com – e-Commerce Storefront – Case Study



Bagchee.com – An e-commerce storefront implemented using the .NET framework

In its endeavor to provide value-added services to its customers, Bagchee Associates revamped their e-commerce storefront, Bagchee.com. The enhanced storefront provides category management tools to classify books & multimedia CDs, while incorporating powerful search capabilities and enhanced online transaction processing within the user interface by incorporating features such as up-selling capabilities. Designed for a global customer base, Bagchee.com provides seamless accessibility and secure online shopping to customers.

Customer Profile

Bagchee Associates, an organization based in New Delhi, India, is a leading source for Indian book titles and information products. The company started operations in 1990 and has grown to the stature of the preferred “support services provider” for major libraries across America, Europe, and Asia.

Business Requirement

Bagchee Associates retails its range of products comprising of books and CDs, through its online storefront – www.Bagchee.com. Launched in 1998, Bagchee.com is an e-commerce storefront that enables customers to search for products, place orders, make online payments, and check order status. Getting in-sync with the latest trends & technologies was an important consideration for Bagchee Associates. The storefront had to be overhauled with precisely this in mind.

Solution

Benefits

- Fully customized and administrator driven processes to regulate front-end features
- Comprehensive access to the product and order information
- Value-added features such as the Up-Sell Recommendation Engine for enhanced quality of service & internal publicity
- ASP.NET/XML Web Service/SQL Server architecture for improved performance

Technologies & Platforms

- ASP.NET
- VB.NET
- JavaScript
- XML Web Services
- SQL Server 2000
- IIS



Requirement

Bagchee.com has been the key success factor behind increased sales volumes achieved by Bagchee Associates. However, as trends in the e-commerce market changed, Bagchee Associates realized the growing need to enhance the functionality and technology of the storefront.

They observed that the storefront was slow to download and lacked features to manage its vast database of books and CDs. In addition, the organization intended a paradigm shift of the storefront in terms of its functionality and ease-of-use. These factors, eventually, led to the decision to completely overhaul the storefront.

Bagchee Associates chose Icreon to develop a powerful e-commerce storefront for improving customer experience and increasing manageability of operations for the administrator.

Leveraging Functionality for an Enhanced Customer Experience

The long-term goal between Icreon and Bagchee Associates was a business-to-customer storefront that could provide rudimentary functionality, scale up to handle customer transactions, and provide Library Services to clients in America, Europe, and Asia. With these governing factors as catalysts, Icreon had to ensure that the storefront would be able to meet the service standards of the global customer.

The success of Bagchee.com totally depended on value additions that we provided in terms of technology, design, performance, and functionality.

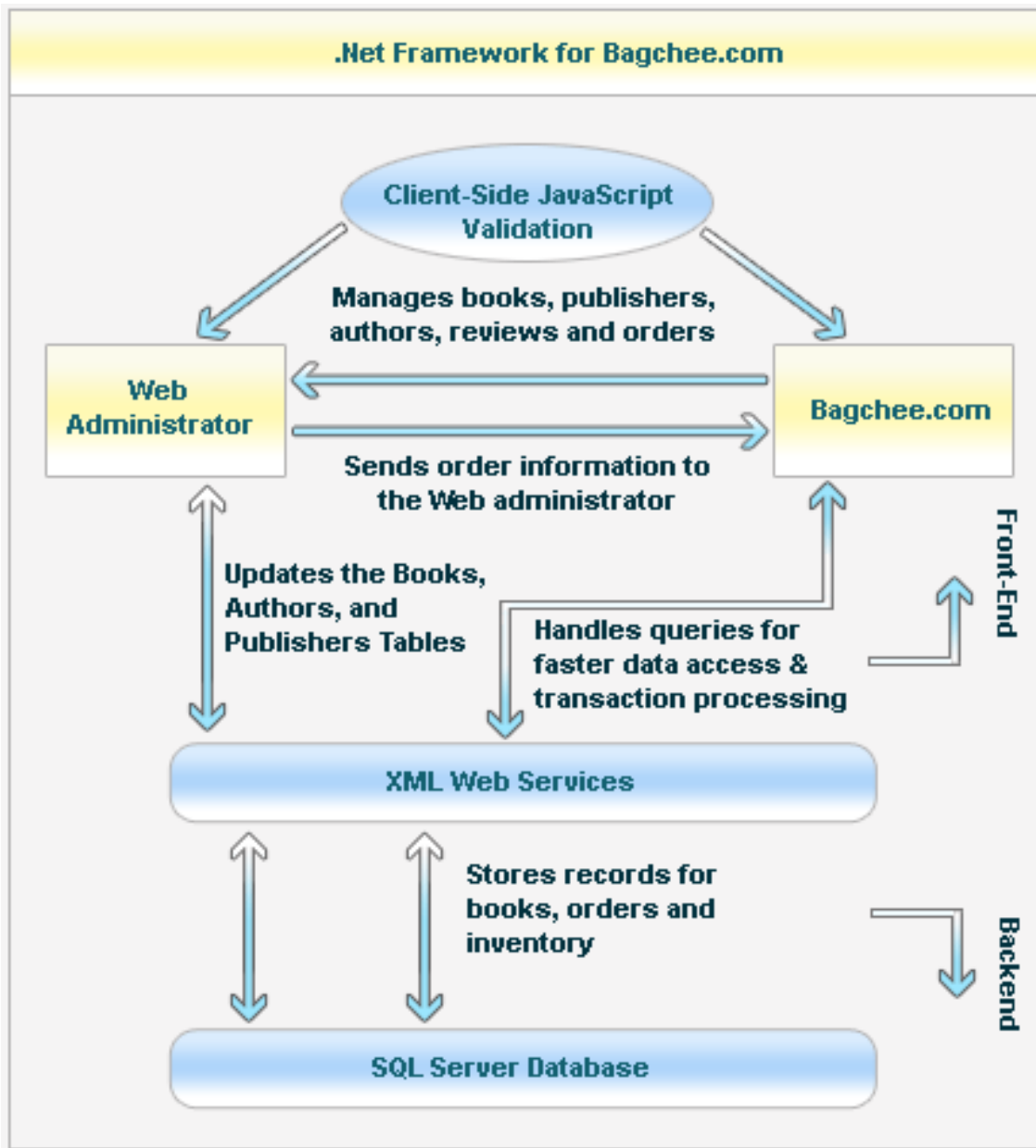
Satisfying client expectations; Delivering a high-end solution; Meeting the restricted timeframe – It was all a part of our team's daily schedule for this project. During each phase of development, the Icreon team interacted with Bagchee Associates to ascertain that the product met desired expectations. This in turn, gradually increased Bagchee Associates' confidence in us and steadily eliminated the chances of cohesion errors and requirement mismatch.

We designed two modules for Bagchee.com - the public storefront and the administrator module. The public storefront is accessible to all customers. They can view book titles, create user accounts, search for books & CDs and place orders through the storefront. The payments are coordinated through the VeriSign payment gateway, for high reliability and security.

Besides the implementation of a storefront that more than meets global standards and practices by all measures, a key feature of the public storefront is a clever marketing strategy called the up-sell engine, an online algorithm that "suggests" similar products to buy, by deriving its logic from prior shopping patterns and trends. PREETI, JUST ONE LINE OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES HERE

The administrator needs to manage and validate all transactions that take place through Bagchee.com. Various administrative tasks can be performed through the Administrator module such as adding new books, publishers, authors, and CDs to the database and managing user accounts created through Bagchee.com. The specifications provided by customers while registering with Bagchee.com, are stored in the database. The administrator can access this data and send timely offers and e-mails to prospective customers.

To provide an enhanced technology solution, we suggested using the .NET framework.



We developed the storefront on a 3-tier architecture, providing a highly reliable and multithreaded environment. The front-end is developed on the ASP.NET framework for enhanced search capabilities and user account management for customers. JavaScript validations check user inputs while creating user accounts, entering search criteria, or performing administrative tasks. The SQL Server 2000 RDBMS handles database storage & retrieval for books, authors, publishers and CDs. Using XML Web services as the middle layer, the request and response functionality is implemented for a distributed and platform independent setup, enhancing data access and transaction processing for the storefront.



Summary

Bagchee.com is the first e-commerce storefront that Icreon developed on the .NET framework. As always, we've deliver a solution that has exceeded its initial conceptualization through enhanced functionality and high quality of services provided. As a result, bagchee.com is now one a one-of-a-kind e-commerce storefront retailing a very unique range of books and multimedia products.

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