

PROFILE

iMAPs leads the way

With their revolutionary engine that simplifies data and graphic integration, OneStopDotCom Sdn Bhd is looking to leverage on their success in the MSC APICTA 2002 to further develop the technology for other applications and services.

Entering the office of Wan Khalik Muhammad, chief operating officer of OneStopDotCom Sdn Bhd, the first thing you would notice is the MSC APICTA 2002 trophy proudly displayed on his table. The company won the award for the 'Best of Start-up Companies' at the 2002 edition of the MSC APICTA awards for its Interactive Multimedia Applications, or iMAPS.

"iMAPS is basically a revolutionary engine we developed that simplifies data and graphic integration developed using the open source technology platform and XML. It enhances applications such as maps or data presentations as the technology applied separates design from content, unlike other proprietary formats. This makes updates to either of the two elements simple and 'painless,'" explained Wan Khalik.

According to Wan Khalik, interactive applications available currently do not really live up to expectations. The flow between changes in data and the presentation of these changes in graphical form require complex programming and the end result often leaves a lot to be desired.

"What iMAPS actually does is simplify the integration process,



COO of OneStopDotCom Sdn Bhd, Wan Khalik Muhammad holding aloft the well-deserved trophy at the MSC APICTA 2002 and receiving his certificate from the Minister of Energy, Communications and Multimedia, Datuk Amar Leo Moggie.

resulting in easy-to-use web-based solutions with enhanced image quality. Pixels on conventional graphics tend to break and distort when enlarged but this does not happen with applications that run on the iMAPS technology,” he revealed.

Wan Khalik further elaborated, “The application is based on what is termed as ‘Scalable Vector Graphics’ (SVG), a user friendly solution that is data-driven and customisable. iMAPS can also be combined with different systems to create various web-based applications, tools or sophisticated user interfaces. It is compatible with common web scripting and programming languages like JavaScript, Java, and Microsoft Visual Basic.”

Wan Khalik has come a long way since starting the company in 1999, amidst the IT boom in Malaysia. “When we started, our core service was web designing, and things were really slow back then. It was difficult to even make ends meet,” said the 28-year-old from Sarawak.

Today, OneStopDotCom offers a host of products and services, ranging from web-enabled technology development to end-user applications such as Internet portals, 3D simulations and e-commerce projects.

“We gradually grew into a software house, constantly learning along the way. Our policy was to never say no to a client. If we didn’t have the technology to deliver what a client required, we went out and got it. That was the main factor behind iMAPS,” said Wan Khalik.

“A particular client required a graphical application but we were unable to build a suitable system with existing programming. So, we decided to develop one of our own. It took our seven-member team only three

months to finish iMAPS and realised that there was true potential in the resulting technology,” he recalled.

“We then launched various applications that employed the technology we developed and the response has been very good,” said Wan Khalik. “What makes iMAPS so attractive and useful is that it has the capability to grow into so many different applications.”

The team then used the technology to develop interactive mapping solutions for population studies, comprehensive inner city maps, graphical presentations with database integration, and even integration with Global Positioning Systems (GPS). Content in iMAPS applications can also be linked to back-end business processes like corporate databases, e-commerce systems and other real-time information dependant systems.

Applications that run on the iMAPS technology changes image attributes, eliminating the need for numerous image files and the space required storing them. The technology even offers scalable server solutions by reducing the loads on client platforms. The server is capable of pre-rendering and optimising content before delivering it to a receiving platform with limited processing resources like PDAs and cell phones.

“We have also developed Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS

and Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) applications powered by iMAPS. The HRIS system allows the user to monitor personnel activities and movement in real-time dimensions, and the application is able to generate management reports with specific information at any given time or period,” said Wan Khalik.

He concluded proudly, “iMAPS is our very own creation and the W3C, the worldwide Internet authority, has recognised it as an Internet standard. It is an open-source based technology, so, anyone could develop it, but we were the only ones who tried and succeeded. The technology could be further developed into so many different applications and services with proper research and funding to improve the way we do business.” ●



Wan Khalik and Noor Azmi with their MSC APICTA 2002 trophy for 'Best of Start-up Companies'.