



Developing Agility

*A Newsletter for Unisys EAE
and Agile Business Suite Customers*

Contents

- Page 2 **Modernization Services Align Apps with Business Goals**
Find out more about how Unisys Application Modernization Services can help you get more value from existing ClearPath applications.
- Page 4 **Notable Modernization Projects — Get Inspired!**
Real-world examples of how EAE and Agile Business Suite apps have been enhanced to offer new and expanded services.
- Page 7 **Engineering Corner: Mobile Enabling EAE and Agile Business Suite Apps**
Step-by-step guidance for putting EAE and Agile Business Suite screens on mobile devices.
- Page 9 **Diane McGonigle Named Agile Business Suite Migration Manager**
In her new role, Diane will help EAE customers make a smooth transition to Agile Business Suite.
- Page 10 **A Fresh Perspective**
Maarten Schneider offers his thoughts on using EAE and Agile Business Suite to address future development needs.
- Page 12 **UNITE 2010 Recap**
A wrap up of this year's technology conference.

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Modernization Services Align Apps with Business Goals

By Edward Wakelam, Vice President, Application Modernization and Outsourcing Solutions, Unisys TCIS



The value of existing application investments has never been clearer — or harder to tap into — than it is today. With rip-and-replace long gone, today's preferred approach is to take what you have and make it better. A simple concept, but one that takes work to put into practice — and that's where Unisys can help.

The Unisys Application Modernization practice has proven expertise helping businesses strategically prioritize and execute modernization initiatives that result in more agile, secure, and efficient operations — and lower overall costs. Our approach is grounded in over 30 years of experience and leadership in high-volume, mission-critical mainframe and open technologies — enabling us to quickly implement cost-effective modernization solutions with minimal risk of disruption.

With teams of consultants located around the world, we work side-by-side with members of your organization to develop a modernization plan that fully meets your business objectives. Unisys holds extensive industry certifications, including Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) Level 5, assuring quality and timeliness of delivery. We bolster these qualifications with a deep knowledge of the technologies your business uses each day, including ClearPath, Agile Business Suite, and EAE, making us the best partner to guide your organization's application modernization projects.

Consumerization of IT Drives Modernization Efforts

The global surge of "iWorkers"— network-connected people who create, use, or work with information — is forcing IT to rethink the service and support structures governing their applications and infrastructures.

New [Unisys sponsored research](#) reveals that IT organizations are playing catch-up when it comes to meeting the rapid growth of consumer technologies in the workplace.

Application Modernization Services

Unisys offers a comprehensive set of services designed to deliver on the benefits of application modernization. These include:

- **Unisys Modernization Benchmark:** Gives you access to independent research verifying Unisys modernization approaches against over 1,200 IT peers, and serves as a first step that helps you identify gaps and establish your modernization roadmap.
- **Application Advisory Services:** Provide assistance in systematically assessing and aligning all modernization initiatives with key business priorities and IT best practices. The Unisys 3D Blueprinting™ approach enables visible mapping of applications to business processes and infrastructure, including integrating ClearPath applications with other mission-critical enterprise systems.
- **Transformation Services:** Guide your application modernization journey from the “as-is” state, in which current and/or future needs have not yet been met, to the “to-be” state that brings these goals to life. These services leverage proven industry best practices and tools, and are tailored to your specific organizational priorities, goals, and business climate. >>

Where Can Your Modernization Efforts Begin?

The unique goals you establish for your application modernization plan can kick-start a host of exciting new initiatives and help you establish programs for:

- Creating a better understanding of your application portfolio and its value to the business
- Documenting existing business rules and process flows to ensure in-depth knowledge is captured for the future
- Bringing existing resources into a service-oriented architecture (SOA) for easier application integration and introduction of new solutions that address specific business requirements
- Updating the front ends of applications to increase ease of use and reduce training times
- Making specific areas of your applications accessible for customers and business partners, enabling self-service initiatives
- Facilitating the efforts of colleagues, customers, and business partners by making existing applications available on mobile devices
- Selecting, integrating, and deploying the mobile applications that best suit your organization's business needs
- Designing a solid application integration strategy that enables you to leverage social media to drive business growth
- Enabling a longer application lifecycle, which reduces capital expenditures and avoids the costs related to replacing technologies
- Developing a long-term roadmap to protect applications beyond any current technology horizon, with regards to interfaces, tooling, and infrastructure

And, we offer a broad portfolio of tools and methods to help make your plans a reality, including many that are appropriate for and/or specific to EAE and Agile Business Suite.

Getting Started

The first step in any modernization project is to assess the current state of the applications and determine what role they play in your overarching business strategies. Conducting an inventory and determining priorities in this way will help you create a modernization roadmap that becomes the basis of a plan to evolve towards a more agile application environment that delivers greater business value.

For more ideas of modernization projects you can kick off in your organization, please visit the [Application Modernization and Outsourcing](#) section of the Unisys web site, or read the Unisys white paper titled [Overcoming the Seven Barriers to IT Modernization](#).

Notable Modernization Projects — Get Inspired!

There are many ways that EAE and Agile Business Suite customers can take their existing applications in new directions — and we've highlighted most of them in previous issues of *Developing Agility*. This article skips the theory and gets right to the practice — featuring real-world examples of how organizations are extending the value of their applications via a range of modernization techniques.

What: Agile Business Suite/web integration.

Who: Dutch disability insurer, [Movir](#).

How: Client Tools ASP.NET Web Services Generator and Unisys consulting services.

Result: Elimination of time-consuming, paper-based process.

Unisys consultant, Ching Lam, worked with Movir to create an online policy renewal capability. Rather than completing and returning reply postcards — that were then manually entered by Movir staffers — customers are asked to authorize annual policy renewals via the Web. New Specs were added to the company's application, deployed as Web Services via Client Tools ASP.NET Web Services Generator, and interfaced to the application through Component Enabler. The new Web Services interface with the company's existing website — providing data integration between the back-office Agile Business Suite application and the online transaction. Questions? [Ask Ching](#).

What: EAE/web integration.

Who: Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR).

How: Custom web apps from ISpecModel.class files and Microsoft® Visual Basic® apps.

Result: Faster, more convenient citizen self-service functionality via the Web.

As a state business and trade regulatory agency, TDLR is responsible for issuing licenses, conducting inspections, investigating complaints, assessing penalties, setting rules and standards, and holding hearings. External users of TDLR's EAE applications use custom front-end web applications that have been developed using the ISpecModel.class files created by the standard Client Tools ASP Generator. Among other things, these apps allow users to submit applications, renew licenses, check license status and required training, and more. Local editing and validation are performed by the apps and the database is updated as necessary. Additional capabilities are provided by Visual Basic apps via Component Enabler. The custom web applications meet the need to assimilate data from multiple sources (not just user input), while the Visual Basic apps provide certain back-end functions. With both the custom web and Visual Basic apps, TDLR has found that the interface through Component Enabler provides the same level of consistency and integrity that one gets with the EAE generated "internal" application. Future plans include upgrading the GUI for internal users from PowerClient to a web-based interface using ASP.NET. Questions? [Ask Jim Nichols](#). >>

What: EAE/SOA integration.

Who: Global financial services company.

How: WebSphere MQ for ClearPath MCP and Unisys consulting services.

Result: Tighter integration of back-office business systems and data with front-end, satellite applications.

Unisys consultant, Henk Hoogland, created a simple, yet elegant, means of sharing data between a ClearPath MCP-based EAE application and other apps running on a wide range of platforms. Henk developed an EAE Report, which was generated as a co-routine — thus becoming an object that can be seen as a service and called from outside the MCP environment. The calling application places a message into a Message Queue that's being monitored by an MCP-hosted ALGOL library (the name of service/co-routine to be called is included in the message). The library passes the message to the proper service using GLB.PARAM and the service processes the request per defined business rules — placing the resulting information back into GLB.PARAM. The result is then picked up by the library and placed back into a Message Queue for the caller to pick up. Questions? [Ask Henk](#).

What: EAE/SOA integration.

Who: Major European insurance company.

How: Custom-developed ALGOL and COBOL libraries.

Result: Cross-platform/application information sharing via XML messages through an enterprise service bus (ESB).

The insurer made a business decision to standardize on an ESB and use XML messages as a means of sharing information between applications written in a wide range of languages and running on many platforms, including EAE applications running under ClearPath MCP. Ensuring high performance and the flexibility to handle messages of undefined lengths were key requirements. The company worked with a contract programmer to develop several COBOL and ALGOL libraries that enable the integration. The libraries detect when an XML message arrives, parse the message (if necessary), pass it to the EAE application for processing, and return the result. Rob Henrichs, a Unisys technical consultant, and the customer are now evaluating how Unisys XML Parser for ClearPath MCP can be leveraged for the interface. Questions? [Ask Rob](#).

What: Agile Business Suite/application integration.

Who: Société du Canal de Provence.

How: Agile Business Suite 1.2 Client Tools, custom ASPx generator, and Unisys consulting services.

Result: Single interface to multiple apps for call center personnel.



When the company implemented a new customer relationship management (CRM) application it engaged Unisys consultant, Gerard Creplet, to help integrate the software with existing Agile Business Suite applications. There were two critical objectives to be met: create a single interface for both new and existing applications, thereby creating a complete view of the customer's information, and enable real-time data exchange between all systems. A new transaction was developed for the Agile Business Suite app with a user interface generated through a custom ASPx generator built by Unisys France. The CRM app was slightly modified to invoke and display the new transaction — fully populated with data — when a call from a recognized customer is received. And, to ensure the timely interchange of data between applications, Gerard used a combination of Web Services and Business Integrator. Questions? [Ask Gerard](#). >>

What: EAE/user interface modernization.

Who: Health insurance company.

How: Agile Business Suite 2.0 Client Tools, Visual Basic .NET, and Unisys consulting services.

Result: Modern, feature-rich, easy-to-use GUI.

The company decided to modernize the end-user interface to its back-end EAE application. Unisys consultant, Martin Stolp, created a custom Visual Basic .NET client application that uses Client Tools Visual Basic.NET Client Generator and the WinFormRenderer to provide a seamless interface to the EAE application. In doing so, he provided macros that process a number of predefined transactions behind the scenes — so end users can more easily navigate the application with just a single click. The client is published with Microsoft ClickOnce feature, which reduces the work for software releases to almost zero. Martin recently added single sign-on authentication based upon the Microsoft Security Support Provider Interface (SSPI). The Visual Basic .NET client exchanges security tokens (using the NT LAN Manager (NTLM) protocol, but Kerberos is also possible) with the host application. After a successful handshake, the user is granted access without typing a usercode or password. This greatly enhances the quality of user authentication while making sign-on easier for end users. Questions? [Ask Martin](#).

What: EAE/integration, modernization, and more.

Who: Union des Mutuelles Cogérées.

How: Client Tools, custom ASPx generator, and Unisys consulting services.

Result: Streamlined IT processes, business-driven IT services, and modern GUIs.



With a small developer team, Union des Mutuelles Cogérées is always looking for ways to introduce new technologies without compromising the efficiency of its information services. With EAE, Client Tools, and the assistance of Dominique Michaut, the company continues to deploy new solutions using a combination of old and new capabilities. Most recently, the team enhanced its EAE application in response to new regulations and end-user requests, created a new control module to manage file transfers using HUB, and built a database structure that releases information to a data warehouse. The company also put up a new web site with an interface that varies according to user type: no-frills for internal users and feature-rich GUI for external users. All with EAE and running on a mix of MCP and Microsoft Windows® operating environments. One development tool, one developer skill set, many usages. Questions? [Ask Dominique](#).

*What's **your** modernization story? Let us know how your organization has evolved its EAE and/or Agile Business Suite applications. And, if you want more information about any of these projects or would like to speak with a consultant in your region, please drop us a note and we'll be happy to help:*
ABSuite@unisys.com.

Engineering Corner: Mobile Enabling EAE and Agile Business Suite Apps

By John Papachristos, Client Tools Technical Lead, GTC Australia, Unisys TCIS and Nagendra Purushotham, Team Lead, GTC India, Unisys TCIS

Mobile access to EAE and Agile Business Suite applications is poised to move from an interesting concept to a "when can we get it" requirement. This article reviews the capabilities developers have today to make their apps available from those tiny, glowing screens.

If you looked into mobile device support before and decided the technology wasn't ready for prime time, perhaps you should take another look — especially given recent advances in mobile browsing technologies, including Apple® Safari® on the Apple iPhone® or Microsoft Internet Explorer® on the latest versions of Microsoft Windows Mobile®. While older mobile browsers were limited in what they could support, these newer versions can handle more HTML scripting and Java, and are fast approaching the level of desktop browsers.

Generating Your Mobile Device GUI

Generating an interface for a mobile device is essentially the same as creating an ASP.NET Web Forms Client application using the ASP.NET Web Forms Generator. The steps include:

- Set up your Component Enabler bundle folder with the Specs you wish to deploy for mobile access
- Set up your ASP.NET Web Forms solution folder
- Generate the ASP.NET Web Forms application using the ASP.NET Web Forms Generator
- Compile, configure, and deploy the ASP.NET Web Forms application to the IIS Web Server
- Access the application from a mobile browser

The main difference is deciding on the design of the screens for mobile use. Pre-existing screens that have been developed for the desktop may need to be redesigned to provide a better user experience on the mobile device (more about this later).

Whether you are an EAE or Agile Business Suite user, in both situations we recommend using Agile Business Suite 2.0 Client Tools when developing applications for mobile devices, as this level contains enhancements specific to mobile device support, including:

- Automatic switching to another locale/language (more about this later)
- Browser detection, which enables you to perform special processing for certain browsers
- Mobile-aware infrastructure files
- Flow-layout sorting of controls

Best Practices Make for a Better End-user Experience

While it is possible to generate an existing Spec for use on a mobile device without change, it's likely you will want to make some modifications to accommodate the difference in viewing areas and the challenges related to data entry. Keep the following best practices in mind during the process:

- Minimize data entry — use short URLs, provide navigation links and/or buttons on each page, avoid free text wherever possible, and add list, check-box, and radio button selections to reduce typing >>

- Minimize the amount of data to be transferred — limit content to what the user has requested, avoid big images, don't send large lists, and avoid auto-refreshing pages
- Avoid scrolling or limit it to one direction, preferably vertical
- Test screens on physical devices, as well as device emulators (more about this later)
- Keep the interface simple, preferably task based, and confine the forms to the screen size of the targeted devices

A practical and effective way to define and manage separate mobile and desktop forms, while sharing a single set of logic, is by using a different locale/language for mobile device forms. EAE and Agile Business Suite have long supported the display of screens in more than one language for a single application and this is simply a unique way of leveraging that capability. You can now supply a value in the new "MobileLanguage" tag in Web.config, and when the ASP.NET application detects that a mobile device has connected to the site, it will automatically switch to the specified locale/language. In this way, you can keep the same runtime application processing, but have different forms displayed on the mobile device versus desktop.

Finding the Right Fit

There are several tips you can employ to ensure the screen you are converting will fit a mobile device. For example, if you are targeting a specific mobile device — say for an application where all the users are issued the same smartphone — then you can simply adjust the form size in Agile Business Suite Developer Painter to match the screen size of that device. EAE developers can achieve the same objective by using a Global Logic to put a box on the form of the size screen they intend to support. With either approach, when a developer paints something outside the box, he or she will know a user won't be able to see it without scrolling.

Now, if you are targeting a range of devices, choose a form size that will suit the expected majority of devices. The goal is to avoid scrolling as much as possible. If the form must be scrolled due to the number of controls, then limit scrolling to one direction — a best practice is to use vertical scrolling.

If the target mobile device includes an older browser that is not compatible with absolute positioning, then it is best to align your controls in a flow-layout arrangement. Agile Business Suite developers can choose the "Flow Layout" option in the Agile Business Suite 2.0 Painter.

Testing, Testing...1,2,3

Testing the size and functionality of your mobile application can be done using device emulators, which are available from the manufacturer of each device's operating system. The emulator runs inside a virtual machine and simulates the behavior of the physical device, allowing you to run the required mobile browser and test the deployed ASP.NET application.

Though such a trial may yield the desired results, it is always important to perform confidence testing on a physical device, since the software levels used by device emulators can become outdated, leading to differences in behavior. >>

Making Mobile Apps a Reality

We encourage you to run a pilot program using an existing EAE or Agile Business Suite application. In just a matter of a few hours, the current screen set can be made accessible by mobile devices.

To take the pilot a step further, you can redesign selected Ispec screens to suit the form factors of the devices being targeted. At a basic level, this would entail making sure they fit the smaller screen sizes, but could also involve some application redesign if the forms are difficult to read on the mobile device. Depending on the complexity of each frame, you may want to create new Ispecs to break up the information into more manageable fragments or simplify the workflow (and avoid extra traffic) by combining common tasks into a single Ispec transaction.

Security is handled in the same way as any other ASP.NET application. To ensure a secure connection, you should encrypt the data by configuring the web site to use HTTPS, the secure form of the HTTP protocol that uses Secure Sockets Layer (SSL). Mobile devices use the same security protocols that are available with most desktops. In reality, the biggest security concern is control of the device itself – you won't typically be locking a mobile phone in an office. If you plan to allow mobile access to your critical corporate resources, treat them with the same level of importance you would apply to laptops or remote workers. Use firewalls and passwords to control access, and use Ispec bundles and views to restrict public access to only the transactions you want to allow.

Finally, a word to the wise: Under the majority of circumstances, the application will work the same on most mobile browsers, because they are basically processing HTML and JavaScript. However, not all devices are supported. Lower-end models with relatively simple browsers that do not support JavaScript will not be able to access our ASP.NET client applications. To support these devices, you'll need to develop a custom browser-based application using the Component Enabler interface.

To learn more about mobile enabling your EAE and Agile Business Suite applications, please read the Unisys white paper [Developing Web-based Applications for Deployment to Mobile Devices Using AB Suite Client Tools ASP.NET Generator](#), which includes coding for a sample system that has been enhanced to display a set of forms on small screens.

Diane McGonigle Named Agile Business Suite Migration Manager

After many years of dedicated service as a senior marketing manager for EAE and Agile Business Suite, we are happy to announce that Diane McGonigle has taken a new role as Agile Business Suite Migration Manager.

In this position since April of 2010, Diane turns her focus to helping EAE customers the world over make a smooth transition to Agile Business Suite. To do so, Diane will:

- Act as a single point of contact for customers and Unisys field personnel alike*
- Define and communicate the methodologies and processes necessary for a successful migration*
- Identify any critical issues that occur during the migration and ensure they are quickly escalated and addressed as appropriate*

Please join everyone at Developing Agility in congratulating her on the new role and wishing her the best of luck in the future. If you're planning an Agile Business Suite migration project, please let Diane know:

diane.mcgonigle@unisys.com.

Need help starting your own migration initiative?

The [April 2009 issue](#) of Developing Agility is a great source for tips and tricks to kick start your Agile Business Suite migration.

A Fresh Perspective

By Maarten Schneider, Worldwide Marketing Manager, Enterprise Application Environment (EAE) and Agile Business Suite, Unisys TCIS

Hello to all Developing *Agility* readers! I know many of you from my prior assignment as marketing manager for software products, including EAE and Agile Business Suite, in Europe. Now, I look forward to getting to know more of you in my new role as worldwide marketing manager for EAE and Agile Business Suite. In this article, I'd like to discuss my perspective on these two important development tools. And, I hope you will share your thoughts with me via our easy-to-remember ABSuite@unisys.com.

Today, many organizations are turning their attention from cost cutting to revenue generation — looking to launch new services, win new customers, and drive new business. Those that rely on EAE and Agile Business Suite are well positioned to support new initiatives, knowing they can quickly change their core applications with reliable results and reduced risk.

We understand the important role EAE has in many organizations — especially in today's uncertain economic times. And, that's one reason we have extended its support for ClearPath MCP and OS 2200 environments through the end of 2015. For EAE on Microsoft Windows and UNIX® platforms, we're offering support through the end of 2011, with the option to purchase an additional year of Phase 1 support. Our hope is that you will continue to use EAE to respond to today's business challenges while also planning for the future. And, of course, I have several suggestions for you on how to do so.

Modernize to Make the Most of Your EAE Applications

Experienced EAE developers know that a model-driven development approach pays off. Their productivity is much higher than colleagues who use lower level, more technical languages. Even more important than productivity is the **predictability** offered by the EAE environment. EAE generates a full solution, including online and batch applications, database, and logging and transaction monitoring software — and all from a single specification. This results in greater consistency and better reliability, which pays off in higher application availability.

In addition, EAE productivity advantages **continue** over the 10+ year lifespan of a typical application. Unlike Java or .NET environments, where changes to the underlying software stack often force time-consuming maintenance work, EAE manages and mitigates such changes with a build process that adjusts the generated code as needed. This approach has been a part of EAE since the LINC days and is an often-overlooked core capability that has saved customers untold months of qualification, test, and deployment time when compared to other environments. Without EAE, these test activities have to be done every time something changes in the underlying software stack, which could easily happen every year.

In light of all these advantages, modernizing EAE applications using Client Tools is clearly a sound investment. Client Tools makes it easy to give end users a fresh, modern interface (including mobile devices) to existing EAE applications, while keeping all their sound business logic intact. Taking advantage of Client Tools now is an investment that will pay off today and in the future — because the work you do in your EAE environment can be used unchanged when you move to Agile Business Suite. >>

Need a New App? Get Started with Agile Business Suite.

Agile Business Suite takes many of the best aspects of EAE and brings your application development capabilities to a new level. It is the future for EAE developers and we encourage you to start planning for migration even as you continue to develop with EAE.

Why not get started by using Agile Business Suite to develop new applications? Doing so provides a training ground for EAE developers and an even more capable toolset for those who use Microsoft Visual Studio® to develop other applications. As a Visual Studio package that uses object-oriented (OO) constructs, Agile Business Suite is ready to support new development projects, as well as EAE migrations. And, it can bridge the divide that exists in some IT shops between EAE and C# developers — exposing the C# experts to the many extras that Agile Business Suite has inherited from EAE and showing EAE experts the many cool productivity aids that come from working in a Visual Studio environment.

Let's Stay in Touch

What's your organization doing with EAE these days? What technical challenges have you solved? What are your modernization plans? Are you planning to start your migration to Agile Business Suite next year? I want to know more and act as a resource to help you get the information you need to be successful with EAE and Agile Business Suite. Please use ABSuite@unisys.com to get in touch with me.

UNITE 2010 Recap

Held just minutes from the historic Baltimore Inner Harbor, the conference offered EAE and Agile Business Suite users an impressive slate of presentations and lab sessions.

This year's EAE/Agile Business Suite track included **four** lab sessions that provided delegates with **eight** hours of hands-on training. In addition to these lab sessions, delegates had their pick of presentations that covered a variety of topics, including:

- *Agile Business Suite Status Update*
- *An Agile Business Suite User Case Study*
- *Getting the Most from Agile Business Suite Debugger*
- *Polymorphism — What it can Mean for You*
- *LDL+ — The Language*
- *Customer Profile — HRSDC*, presented in conjunction with Tom Murphy from HRSDC
- *Migration How To — Describing the Detailed Steps of a Successful Migration to Agile Business Suite*
- *Client Tools Explained*
- *Custom Client Development Using the Component Enabler for .NET Runtime interface*
- *Build an Application from Scratch with Agile Business Suite*

What's more, delegates and partners also delivered informative sessions:

- *Migrating Your Presentation Client to Agile Business Suite ASP .NET*, presented by Andrew Champion and Jami Porter from Thomasville Utilities
- *A Good UX — How to Make it Happen*, presented by Niels Gebauer of Client Tools Consultancy
- *Managing Dynamic Change*, presented by Dennis Schmidt and Lynn Wilson of Information Exchange Group, Inc.

Tom Renolds of the Phoenix Police Department, chair of conference planning for the EAE track, wrapped up the event with a "Birds of a Feather" session that enabled delegates and presenters alike to share experiences and best practices while enjoying the company of their peers.

As always, EAE and Agile Business Suite customers made a strong showing at UNITE with an average of 16.8 attendees per session. To view presentations delivered by Unisys staffers, please visit the [eCommunity](#).

Thanks to all our presenters and attendees for making UNITE 2010 a resounding success. We look forward to seeing you at UNITE 2011!

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