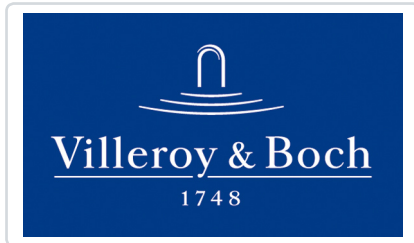


Villeroy & Boch brings innovation to the table with e-commerce powered by Magento and Zend



CUSTOMER:

Ceramics manufacturer Villeroy & Boch is an internationally renowned premium brand for bath and tableware products, represented in 125 countries worldwide. Founded in 1748 and headquartered in Mettlach, Germany, Villeroy & Boch has grown its share of international business to 72 percent over the last 15 years.

CHALLENGE:

Villeroy & Boch needed a dynamic technology platform with which it could quickly and cost-effectively develop and manage new e-commerce applications to support its global sales and marketing initiatives.

SOLUTION:

Villeroy & Boch chose PHP as its Web development platform. Zend PHP solutions were adopted to customize, deploy and manage its Magento e-commerce application running on Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) servers and accessing SAP ERP and MySQL back-end databases.

Leadership through Innovation

Villeroy & Boch regards the interplay between tradition and modernity as a force that shapes its business. Company innovations in bath and tableware design and manufacturing have established major international trends. This same spirit of innovation has made the company an industry frontrunner with its adoption of an eBusiness strategy, and new Web and open-source technologies powered by PHP.

“We are constantly evolving, so when it came to modernizing our eBusiness, we wanted a Web-based platform that would give us flexibility, productivity and scalability in working with Magento and custom applications, and for us that was Zend PHP,” said Pascal Rheinert, Dr.-Ing., Internet & eBusiness Services at Villeroy & Boch.

“Our working knowledge of Zend-sponsored PHP open source projects and community edition tools sparked our interest in their commercial software. Zend offered a level of integration with enterprise e-commerce and database applications and cross-platform compatibility, which were vital to the success of our application development plans. These factors plus Zend’s ongoing commitment to the evolution of PHP made our decision easy.”

Enterprise-ready PHP Solution for E-commerce

Rheinert’s team chose Zend Studio IDE, Zend Framework and Zend Server to tailor and optimize their Web applications across the full application life cycle. This consisted primarily of Magento e-commerce at the front-end accessing MySQL, SAP ERP and other enterprise applications running on Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) servers at the back-end. Development was done locally in Windows, committed to an SVN server, and then delivered to the RHEL test system. Having a production environment that mirrored the development environment helped ensure that Villeroy & Boch could deliver a reliable e-Commerce solution for its customers.

“We were new to Magento e-Commerce when we first began the overhaul of our Web assets. Zend Server Web application server had the functionality we needed to interface to our environment and extend our eBusiness applications to back-end databases. Because Zend Server provided us with PHP 5.3 and Zend Framework as well as drivers and extensions, we saved weeks of coding, configuration was greatly simplified, our implementation was clean and we were quickly able to optimize Magento performance.”

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Using Zend as the Web application platform, Rheinert's team developed a series of new Web sites with functional enhancements to drive more B2B and B2C commerce online.

- The corporate site, www.villeroy-boch.com, based on Typo3, a leading CMS written in PHP, as well as several ancillary sites such as www.svenska-badkar.se.
- Migration of e-shops to Magento Enterprise to support direct-to-consumer sales of dinnerware product lines in 16 countries worldwide, including <http://shop.villeroy-boch.com/au> and <http://shop.villeroy-boch.com/de>. They established communication between their CRM system and Magento, creating online credit card authorization, etc.
- New B2B portals enabling hotel and sanitary industry customers to order goods, check order status and take advantage of other services which access the company's SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Accelerate Delivery, Ensure Availability of Applications

"Because we are constantly updating and optimizing our eBusiness applications, our ability to both accelerate delivery and ensure availability of applications is important to bottom-line business profitability and customer satisfaction. Key to our strategy for rapid development and smooth deployment is the integration of the Zend PHP solution."

"Zend Server helps us optimize performance and manage servers while it proactively monitors our applications and alerts us to any operational or performance issues. Zend Server's Code Tracing ability provides us with a 'flight recorder' type of history so we can quickly pinpoint and resolve

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issues in the code. One click takes developers directly from Zend Server into Zend Studio to debug. Using Zend, we are reducing debug time and bringing applications online 30 percent faster than before."

"The ability to quickly develop, test and launch new functions for our eShops is a primary reason why customer feedback has been so positive. Zend Framework provides us with a lightweight open source application framework for PHP. With Magento and Zend Framework, we don't have to build everything from scratch."

Rheinert's team uses Apache Subversion (SVN), an open-source revision control system, to maintain current and historical versions of source code, web page and documentation files. Using Zend Studio, developers work locally and collaboratively, committing their code to a central SVN-server before the application goes to the test system, where sales and marketing groups review to confirm that the application meets their requirements. Following approval, files are pushed to the production system.

"We can develop, debug and deploy whole applications within one framework using Zend Studio with SVN. It's a process that reduces problem-resolution time and steps, which means less errors and more time for innovation."

Big Pay-off to Modernize E-Commerce

"Using Zend, our team migrated three eShops to Magento Enterprise within just three months. Zend Server offered a central point of visibility and control, plus caching and acceleration tools with which we could improve performance across all of our eShops. At the same time, Zend Framework enabled us to improve the online experience of Villeroy & Boch for customers, with new features such as 360-degree views of our products."

"Before launching this initiative, we had gathered competitive bids for revamping our eBusiness. Our choice of Magento Enterprise with the Zend PHP solution for development and server-side deployment helped us achieve a six-digit dollar cost savings within the first year, while introducing a whole new level of e-Commerce functionality for Villeroy & Boch."

"In managing our e-Commerce application life cycle, we always look for ways to do more with lean resources. Even as we scale up with new sites, the visibility Zend Server provides into our development and production environment allows us to spot new issues and remedy them before they impact our customers online."

"When a random, intermittent error was causing extreme performance problems across our worldwide eShops, we didn't know where the bug was. Between localization efforts plus frequent updates and testing to support retail promotions, our Web environment is very dynamic. Zend Server alerted us and its Code Tracing captured in real-time the full execution history of our application, revealing an elusive SQL database error that if left unchecked could have resulted in lost sales and lost customer loyalty."

"Looking ahead, we are on track to launch 13 more eShops in 2011. In addition, we are able to support a larger Web workload effectively without

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adding to our headcount. Our team is freed up to focus on higher level issues, and we're looking forward to working with Magento and Zend to build on our successful e-commerce innovations at Villeroy & Boch."