

VIRTUALIZATION OF TECHREADY

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In early 2007, Exsilio Solutions was chosen as the virtualization partner for TechReady, the Microsoft® bi-annual internal technical sales education conference. TechReady provides Technical Sales and Service teams at Microsoft the ability to learn more about Microsoft products and services to better equip them in their sales and service roles. Exsilio created TechReady Virtual Labs, which housed and presented all of the hosted labs from the conference for attendees to extend the learning experience beyond the in-person event.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

TechReady conferences cannot be attended by each of the technical service and sales people who need to learn new software and applications; therefore, this content must be available to them outside of the conference, without requiring individual users to download each lab and the accompanying manual.

The main challenge is to provide a large amount of content in a highly consumable way; on-demand, and to the specifications of each online lab. In support of the conference, over 240 lab manuals and virtual machines needed to be provisioned. An important piece of provisioning labs includes organizing numerous virtual machines, and continually determining when to incorporate additional builds to ensure complete, hazard-free performance.

SOLUTION

Exsilio determined that the first step was to evaluate the existing infrastructure available behind TechReady. Exsilio's development team created a customized, attractive, smart platform to house all of the TechReady labs. This enabled full flexibility for a scalable virtual environment. This approach also meant that the creation of each virtual lab could be tailored specifically to each software or application, and could be modified depending on the scope. Because the TechReady content was hosted outside of Microsoft, Exsilio added functionality for users to be able to login with their Microsoft domain credentials, giving them access to content any time of day, from anywhere with their standard username and password.

Each lab provisioned was organized and classified with an appropriate taxonomy. Users could save their progress so they could come back to a lab in-progress. To aid with users being able to quickly get to their highest value labs, users could save favorite labs. Also required was an easy-to-use interface for search, and for labs to have customized descriptions for each.

“It’s a ‘wow’ moment, that in 2 years we have had 10k labs consumed. Close to 50% [of virtual labs] are viewed by new people coming to the platform. That means 50% are returning users. That’s incredible...”

Lenny Dayberry—Architect, TechReady

My TechReady site



Single sign-on login



Online course catalog

Online virtual environment



Virtual lab manuals

RESULTS

Creating Virtual Labs for TechReady has changed the way Microsoft's technical sales and service teams learn the latest Microsoft products and technologies. The ability to access Microsoft programs and applications all in one place, without having to download each individual lab and manual, is invaluable.

In addition, each and every lab is available around the clock, extending the life of TechReady months past the actual date and location of conferences. This unlimited, world-wide access means that the number of customers and partners being trained is growing every day.

Since the launch of TechReady Virtual Labs in July 2007, nearly 10,000 labs have been consumed. As well, the TechReady team at Microsoft is seeing Virtual Labs as a way to decrease their cost per seat, freeing up funds to create even more content, distribute more widely, and continue to improve the platform. TechReady Virtual Labs takes training to a new level—outside of the traditional classroom or Live Meeting settings in to an online, interactive space where content can be consumed whenever and wherever the user would like.

SOLUTION DETAILS

Solution Timeline:
July 2007 - December 2010

Exsilio Services Leveraged:

- Project Management
- Cloud-based Virtualization
- Creative Services
- Analytics and Reporting

Benefits:

- Unlimited Access to Content
- Scalable Environment
- Cost-effective Solution

Website:

<http://techready.vlabcenter.com>

Client:

Sales and Marketing Services Group
Readiness, Microsoft

Location:

Redmond, WA

Exsilio Solutions is a full service marketing and technology partner.

Whether your business needs a marketing, software development or creative solution, our team adapts to your goals and objectives. We're proud to have built a strong reputation as a true partner; we approach each project as part of a larger client relationship, one which fosters growth and success.

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Contact us today to talk about your company's needs. info@exsilio.com

