

The Story of POSSE

TIMELINE



In 1993, the Planning & Development Department for the City of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, had a significant problem. During an audit of the department, it was discovered that current business processes were insufficient, and needed to be completely reengineered. A regulation-centric environment resulted in numerous inefficiencies: routine permissions took months to process and some permits and inspections were difficult to track.

City management began to look for a creative solution that would focus on the customer's needs and increase staff productivity – including the implementation of a new software system to manage their business.

The City contracted Computronix to oversee the implementation of a new software system, and when they determined that there was no suitable commercial software available, to build one. However, there was one major obstacle. The reengineered business processes were still being written and implemented, and would not be finalized

until only a few weeks before the software needed to be in place. Computronix's development team wrestled with this challenge for a while – it seemed an almost impossible task. How could software be created to manage a business process without that process being defined?

Finally, Computronix found a solution. Rather than try to implement a pre-defined set of business rules, Computronix would build a highly flexible and customizable business rules engine that would allow the business rules to be easily configured once they were known. The City of Edmonton could have the software when they needed it, and if and when the business rules changed, they could simply configure the new set of rules. This was somewhat of a risky proposition, as no such system existed in industry, but the City was willing to take on the experiment. In 1995, that experiment, named POSSE (after the Planning Operational System Software re-Engineering project that created it, since changed to Public One-Stop Service Engine) was launched.

POSSE was immediately successful. Just like the bricks in a box of LEGO can be used to build a near-infinite number of objects, shapes and structures, POSSE could be configured to fit virtually any workflow that users may need. The main advantage of POSSE was how end users could easily configure and adjust data and workflows with POSSE to meet their unique business needs. This flexibility allowed users to make

1993: The City of Edmonton contracted Computronix to develop a solution

1995: Creation and launch of POSSE

1997: Edmonton won a URISA Exemplary Systems in Government award

1998: POSSE was inducted into the Smithsonian Institute

1998: Computronix began selling POSSE to other government agencies

2012: POSSE ABC was released

2013: POSSE LMS was released



changes or add new data fields without needing to engage software programmers, and it allowed POSSE to be upgraded easily and shared across departmental boundaries. POSSE also had the capability to integrate data from other systems as if it was native to POSSE.

Shortly after the City of Edmonton went live with POSSE, they won a URISA award for Exemplary Systems in Government, and the software began to attract attention from government agencies worldwide. The software also garnered numerous awards, including the prestigious recognition of induction into the Smithsonian Institution's collection of innovative software!

Over time, more government agencies were seeking pre-configured software solutions for managing workflow. To meet this need, Computronix used the POSSE platform to build two browser-based Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) software solutions – POSSE LMS (Land Management System), and POSSE ABC (Alcoholic Beverage Control).

POSSE LMS is a solution for managing all the business processes related to municipal land management, including planning, permitting, inspections and code enforcement. POSSE ABC manages licensing, enforcement and other workflows associated with liquor control at the state or provincial level. Both solutions are used by a steadily growing number of government agencies across North America.

POSSE is continually being refined, upgraded and improved to stay ahead of client needs and industry trends, and POSSE clients are constantly coming up with new and inventive uses for the software. POSSE has had a long and impressive history for what was originally a simple software tool, but it's far from finished. And even with everything that's been done with POSSE so far, Computronix and our clients continue to find innovative ways to harness its flexibility and configurability.

Just imagine the possibilities!

"What makes POSSE COTS+ solutions superior is that you get a product out of the box that does what you need it to do, but also has POSSE underneath it, so you can reconfigure it and finetune it to do anything else your business might need."

Jim den Otter
CTO
Computronix

computronix.com

Computronix (U.S.A.), Inc.
Denver, CO

Phone: 720.962.6300
Toll free: 866.962.6300

Computronix (Canada) Ltd.
Edmonton, AB

Phone: 780.454.3700
Toll free: 800.359.3758

