CIGNEX
Creating value for Enterprises using Open Source

by Vimali Swamy

United Business Media Information (UBM), a leading Media and Publishing company, has five different platforms—UBM Live, UBM Built Environment, UBM Connect, UBM Conferences and UBM International Media—to deliver integrated media solutions to around 20 international industry sectors. To do this it was using multiple website platforms including Webvison, Contribe, Mira-media, Emego, AISP and more across the 100 plus brands it serviced. In addition to the lack of a uniform platform, UBM also found it difficult to provide customer support due to shortage of skilled manpower for tools like Webvision, Contribe, Emego, which meant everything had to be planned well in advance—with no room for any last minute changes required.

With these challenges proving to be an obstacle for scaling its business, UBM approached CIGNEX, a provider of Commercial Open Source solutions, to help overcome the issues by deploying LifePortal, Liferay, the leading Open Source Portal solution, provided upfront reduction in license fees, flexibility & freedom to develop on the existing code, highly scalable & reusable across multiple brands and businesses and huge reduction in Total Cost of Ownership—in excess of 76 percent over traditional, proprietary Portal solutions. In the past 20 months, UBM has rolled out over 70 websites across Expo / Conference, Magazine suites, community Portals, and others using Liferay.

Open Source & CIGNEX

“In today’s cost conscious industry, usage of enterprise software solutions tends to take a toll on an organization’s financials. Deploying a cost-effective, yet fully-functional & performance-oriented solution is a dilemma faced by all CIOs. At CIGNEX, we address this problem by helping enterprises migrate to Open Source technologies through a proven Open Source Adoption Methodology,” says Amit Babaria, President & EVP – Sales & Marketing, Americas for CIGNEX. CIGNEX achieves this by— a) integrating Open Source solutions with existing Line of Business solutions, and b) managing the contradictory demands of reducing IT spend while rolling out new solutions. The uniqueness in the entire engagement is the fact that the services provided are tailored to suit each client’s specific requirement and integrated to provide end-to-end solutions. In the last decade, CIGNEX has recorded over 200 successful implementations in premier companies across High Tech Manufacturing, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Banking Financial Services & Insurance, Education, Telecom, Media & Entertainment and Government.

Why Open Source?
The traditional, proprietary software model, today, is in the midst of a paradigm shift. Open Source Software (OSS), which until recently was considered only for academia or internal projects, has become the change agent. Enterprise-ready Commercial Open Source products are changing the way enterprises are adopting new solutions with low or no license fees, implementations that take half as long, minimal maintenance fee and more importantly, ownership of source code. Apart from better performance, reliability, scalability, security, support, clearly defined upgrade path and indemnification, Open Source helps save 50 – 70 percent reduction in cost across license procurement, implementation, deployment, maintenance, support, hardware and more—over proprietary technologies.

“Even with regards to standards, OSS is easier to integrate with external systems as against proprietary technologies. At the same time, it provides faster turn-around time in terms of business requirements, easy adoption to business changes, better risk mitigation, freedom from vendor lock-in, licensing and flexibility. Clients are also very happy with the opportunity to test OSS in their environment using the free Community Edition, before making a financial commitment to the Enterprise Edition of Commerical Solutions Babaria.”

This is the advantage that CIGNEX hopes to bring to its clients. Out of more than 200,000 Open Source products, CIGNEX reduces risk as well as time to market by suggesting enterprise-ready Open Source products for client adoption. Clients can save time and money by reusing the code/features created by CIGNEX. With the largest resource pool of Open Source technology consisting of over 400 Open Source experts, CIGNEX supports its clients with a distributed development model with onsite, state-side and offshore centers. CIGNEX is the Global Platinum Partner to both Alfresco & Liferay—the leading ECM & Portal solutions providers. Additionally, it has forged deep partnerships with Magento, Intalio, Compiere, Open ERP and RedHat.

Unique Service offerings

CIGNEX partners with its clients successfully to adopt OSS tools and technologies through a combination of Migration, Implementation & Roll-out, Custom Development and Integration activities. Additionally, it also offers maintenance and support to the enterprise solutions it has rolled out. “We have also invested in developing solution frameworks, termed as Accelerators, to help clients jumpstart the OSS adoption process. Some of the Accelerators developed by CIGNEX in partnership with client engagements include Migration Toolkit from Documentum to Alfresco, etc. The Accelerators help our clients reduce upfront cost of adoption / migrating to Open Source,” says Babaria.

Challenges
While adopting Open Source provides tremendous benefits to Enterprises, CIGNEX faces the following challenges while approaching potential clients.

“Lack of awareness on the maturity of & support extended by Commercial Open Source providers for client adoption. Clients can save time and money by reusing the code/features created by CIGNEX. With the largest resource pool of Open Source technology consisting of over 400 Open Source experts, CIGNEX supports its clients with a distributed development model with onsite, state-side and offshore centers. CIGNEX is the Global Platinum Partner to both Alfresco & Liferay—the leading ECM & Portal solutions providers. Additionally, it has forged deep partnerships with Magento, Intalio, Compiere, Open ERP and RedHat.”

“One of the key challenges is a lack of awareness on the immense potential in Open Source services and consulting — increased vertical focus, driving community adoption and leveraging Cloud computing. “Through our close relationship with our clients, we have gained tremendous functional expertise and a deep understanding of the immense potential in Open Source services and consulting — increased vertical focus, driving community adoption and leveraging Cloud computing. “Through our close relationship with our clients, we have gained tremendous functional expertise and a deep understanding of the immense potential in Open Source services and consulting — increased vertical focus, driving community adoption and leveraging Cloud computing. “Through our close relationship with our clients, we have gained tremendous functional expertise and a deep understanding of the immense potential in Open Source services and consulting — increased vertical focus, driving community adoption and leveraging Cloud computing.”

To overcome these, CIGNEX has been taking several initiatives to evangelize the benefits of Commercial Open Source education through seminars, webinars, speaking at industry forums & leading free workshops on “Lunch and Learn” sessions for Enterprise clients; organizing a “Blue sky” days for Enterprises to share the OSS landscape and conducting community workshops to improve support, maintenance and upgrades. CIGNEX has also been at the forefront of providing training on Open Source technologies through a combination of

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