

Modernization of Critical Legacy Software



Monsanto applies innovation and technology to help farmers around the world be more successful, produce healthier foods, better animal feeds, while also reducing agriculture's impact on the environment.

"EASA makes our valuable legacy software more accessible to new users. It does not alter the underlying code so there is no need for revalidation. We have created many EASA applications without any programming, in a fraction of the time that would have been required using a conventional language..."

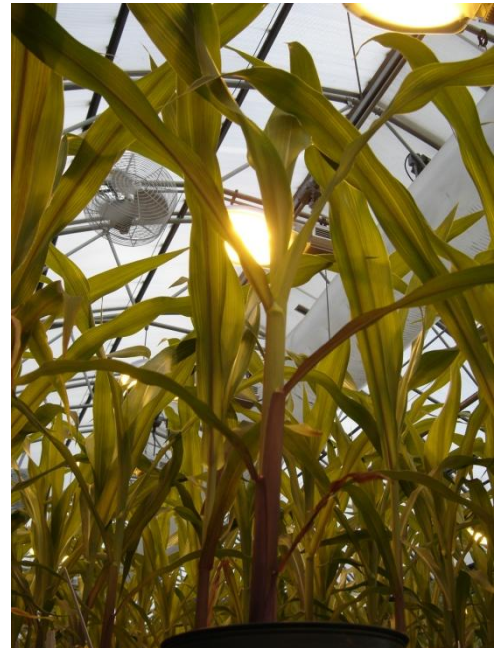
"EASA provides the opportunity for substantial productivity improvements throughout our organization."

Denny Hayek, Process Engineering Manager,
Monsanto

The problem of legacy applications

Over the past four decades, IT staff at Monsanto have developed many custom applications to help the firm's managers, engineers, and plant operators to solve problems specific to the business. However, these applications were developed in the days of DOS; being command line driven, they were very difficult to use, especially for younger employees accustomed to more modern graphical user interfaces.

"The text-based interface required the user to get the syntax exactly right," says Ed Casanova, Manufacturing Technologist for Monsanto. "If a user typed an incorrect character or a character in the incorrect location, an unhelpful error message would appear. The user typically had to start over, trying to figure out what they had done wrong. Even more serious was the risk that data might be entered incorrectly - the program would run, but return the wrong results."



Managers considered out-sourcing a rewrite of the applications but rejected the idea because each application would have cost anywhere from \$20,000 to more than \$100,000. Not only that, the rewritten applications would have required a lengthy revalidation and testing phase, which would have been prohibitive.

Moving to a new environment

Monsanto decided to evaluate EASA's patented approach. EASA enables rapid codeless creation and deployment of web-based applications that connect to one or more existing software tools.

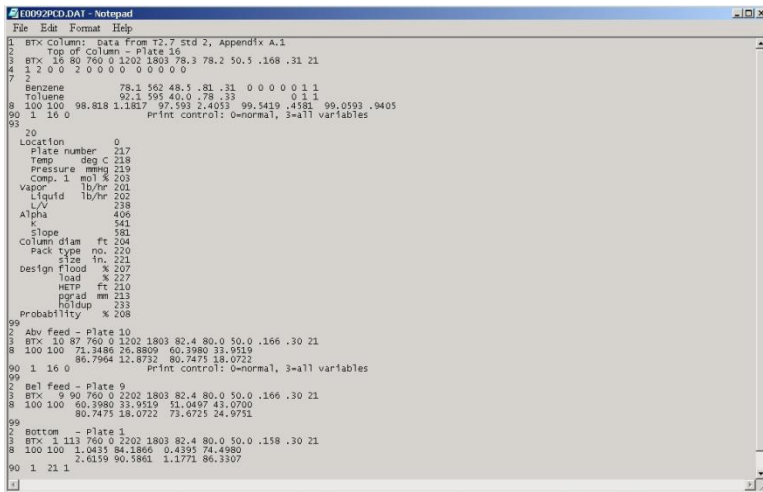
While EASA applications can be built for many different purposes, one of the more frequent uses involves the creation of applications that "wrap" legacy codes, databases and spreadsheets - thus significantly improving their usability.

The immediate effect is to dramatically reduce the learning curve and facilitate deployment of key legacy software tools.

By avoiding the need to completely re-develop and then maintain new custom tools using conventional programming technology,

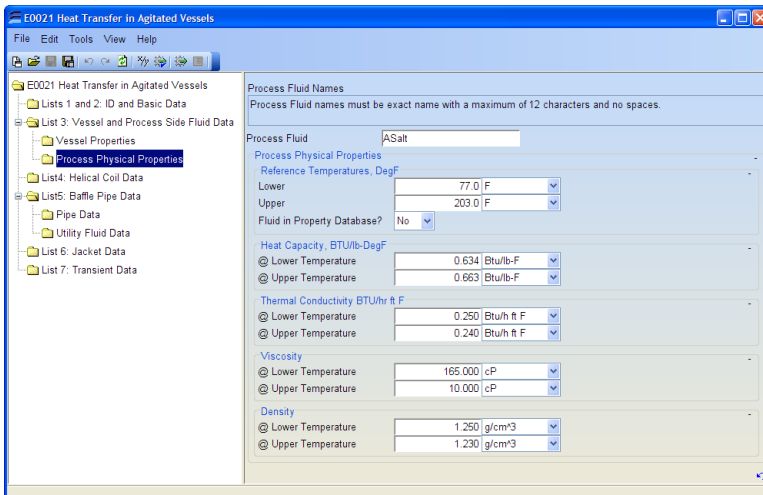
Monsanto estimates that EASA has saved the company several million dollars.

"EASA makes building new applications as easy as using any other Windows application. Many of our EASA applications have been created in a single day while the most complex require only two or three days," Casanova concludes. "EASA has allowed Monsanto to reduce the amount of time our staff spends on many key tasks."



BEFORE:

Monsanto's legacy applications were technically sound, but completely out-dated in terms of usability. New users typically found these tools difficult to learn, and would often make errors while entering data.



AFTER:

The new EASA applications are web-based, are easier to use, and provide users with a central repository of past work. In addition, the author can embed checks to ensure that user errors are reduced or eliminated.

More about Monsanto

Monsanto is a leading provider of agricultural products and integrated solutions that bring together chemicals, seeds, and biotechnology to improve farm productivity and food quality

