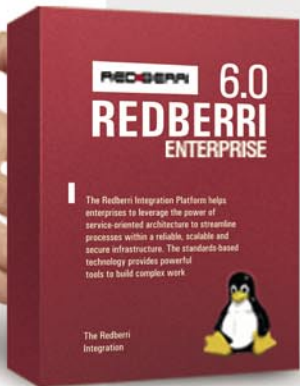


INDUSTRY

MEDIA/ONLINE NEWS



### THE RESULTS ARE IN – REDBERRI HELPS CHICAGO SUN-TIMES DELIVER FASTER ELECTION REPORTING

The Chicago Sun-Times competes with a variety of local, online and network broadcast news organizations. While readers turn to the print edition for in-depth coverage, they also go to the Sun-Times Web site for breaking news. In a city as politically connected as Chicago, one of the main points of contention is election coverage. With other newspaper sites just a click away, having more up-to-date information gets the Sun-Times more readers and more reader loyalty.

All media outlets receive the same data from the State of Illinois at the same time. It is their ability to process the data and turn it into a consumer-friendly format that allows one to stand out from the others.

### CHALLENGE:

One of the difficulties the Sun-Times has faced during the past five years has been the constantly changing format of the electronic data feeds from the State of Illinois. Making the adjustments was a very timeconsuming and expensive process which hindered the news outlet from posting results quickly.

Because of the degree of difficulty involved, Pathfinder normally kept an engineer on-site during election night to write code to aid with the conversion from the state’s format to the html required for the Sun-Times Web site. Although the State of Illinois converted its data feeds to XML, there was still a great deal of work that needed to be done to convert the data into a useable format.

The Sun-Times uses seven separate data feeds from the State of Illinois, all of which can potentially change at any time. These feeds are then uploaded by the Sun-Times to a MySQL database, from which a minimum of 25 html output files are generated for the Web site.

## CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

### PROFILE:

The Chicago Sun-Times is a major metropolitan daily newspaper with a print circulation of nearly 457,000. Its online companion site typically receives over 2,500,000 unique visitors per month.

### Industry

Media/Online News Industry

### Environment

Receives data feeds from a variety of different sources using different protocols; data must be converted into html quickly for timely posting on the Web site.

### DEPLOYMENT SUMMARY:

- WPathfinder has an ongoing IT consulting relationship with the Sun-Times
- Company was brought in to help improve the speed, accuracy and reliability of posting election results
- Sun-Times wanted a tool that business users could use without requiring programming skills
- Pathfinder selected Redberri, had it up and processing election results in fewer than three weeks, including training Sun-Times personnel on its use
- Sun-Times had great success, is looking to use Redberri for other multiple source data feeds to expand coverage in areas such as sports





### Helping Businesses Grow by Breaking Through Boundaries

Redberri removes internal and external boundaries. With the Integration Platform, enterprises can leverage the power of service-oriented architecture to streamline processes within a reliable, scalable and secure infrastructure. The standardsbased technology provides powerful tools to build complex workflows, integrate with trading partners and monitor business processes in real time.

Companies across the board stand to gain from an understanding and adoption of Redberri especially when implementing XML-based Web services for their serviceoriented architecture projects.



Pathfinder is an interdisciplinary technology and design consulting and services firm. Founded in 1998, Pathfinder develops worldclass, user-focused web sites, intranets, portals and business process management solutions for mid-market and Global 2000 organizations. Pathfinder's strength is in using its integration experience to link meaningful user experiences to business processes and applications in the most cost-efficient manner.



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## CASE STUDY:

### SOLUTION:

After investigating several wellknown options (including Microsoft BizTalk Server), Pathfinder discovered Redberri from WDI. Redberri was quickly identified as the most viable solution for several reasons.

One of the most significant was the ease of use. Redberri allows business users with no coding knowledge to map how data moves from one application to another quickly and easily. Another was the speed of deployment. Finally, cost was a factor. Redberri is far less expensive than other business integration tools, making it more palatable particularly for specificfunction uses.

Pathfinder used Redberri to drive the entire data conversion process. It imported the data, converted it to MySQL format, updated the MySQL database, requested html pages to be built, and moved the output html files to the Web service.

*“Redberri is very intuitive even for non-technical users. Users picked it up so quickly, they felt no need to have technical personnel on-site. I was on call all night, but the phone never rang. Instead, I watched DVDs with my family.”*

*Alan Choyna, Senior Engineer at Pathfinder*

### RESULTS:

The Sun-Times received plaudits from government and the media industry for their fast and accurate election reporting. While there were still glitches in the data feeds, Sun-Times users fixed them almost instantaneously.

“Normally, finding the cause of errors is the most time-consuming part of the process,” said Bernhard Kappe, Director at Pathfinder. “Redberri does such a great job of documenting process flow that it was easy to find the cause. Users knew where to look immediately, and used the simple visual interface tools to make corrections on the spot.”

While improving coverage was the primary goal, the Sun-Times received an important secondary benefit – lowering the cost of administering online election results. Because the process is simple and highly automated, it requires fewer people overall.

The results from election night were so successful that the Sun-Times is now looking to Redberri to help them expand Web site coverage in other news areas. First on the docket is sports coverage. Currently, due to the difficulties of converting data feeds from The Sports Network (TSN) into a format the Sun-Times can use, most online breaking news coverage is for local professional teams such as the Cubs, White Sox, and Bears. The feeds, which come in XML format, are very complex and change regularly, requiring a very flexible tool.

“The Web has given newspapers the ability to compete on equal footing with broadcast news outlets in terms of timeliness,” Kappe says. “Still, the lack of a single standard makes it a challenge. By deploying Redberri as its data integration tool, the Sun-Times holds a competitive edge that gets the technology out of the way of providing superior news coverage.”