Agence France Presse Circles World with Eclipse

With roots going back to 1835, AFP is one of the oldest and most respected news agencies in the world. Employing over 1,250 journalists in France and around the world, AFP can be found wherever news is being made, including the most dangerous and remote hot spots.

Providing the right information technologies in this fast-paced agency is a challenge. For almost fifteen years, AFP relied on a home-made content management solution to support its journalists. While this system worked well in the 1990s, AFP wanted to offer more services to journalists and customers.

AFP began the quest to build the P2XML system, a replacement that would be standards-based, easy to maintain and extend, and simple and fast for busy journalists to use. The first phase of this multi-stage project was to build the P2XML Multimedia System initially targeted to the 35 members of AFP's multimedia desks, where it will serve as a pilot for the global P2XML system. The P2XML Multimedia System is composed by a server part powered by the open source Enterprise Content Management solution "CPS Platform", and the Multimedia Console NG. The client had to be able to manage content synchronization with AFP's head office and present journalists with a
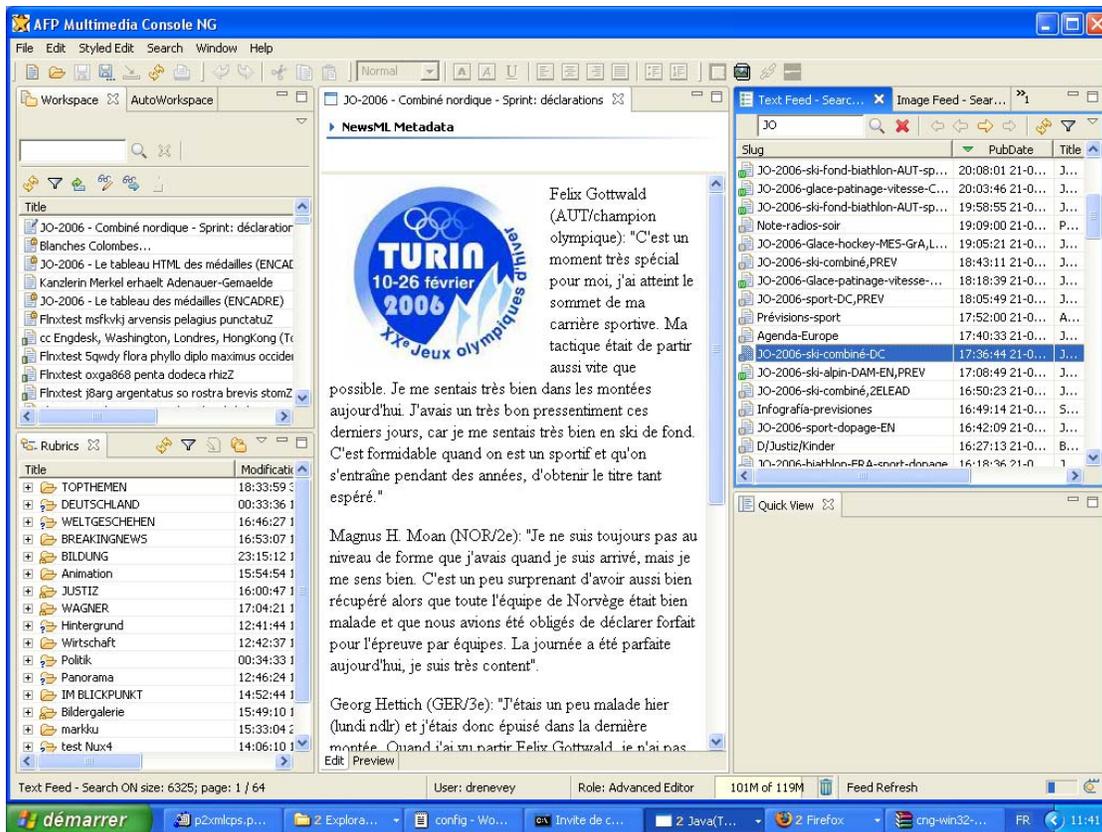
responsive, easy to use tool that allowed them to work with rich content in an integrated environment.

AFP turned to Nuxeo of Paris, vendor of the open source "CPS Platform" Enterprise Content Management system. Nuxeo selected the Eclipse Rich Client Platform (RCP) after evaluating a range of technologies. A thin client solution would not provide the responsiveness, integration or ease of use that AFP's users required.

RCP's native platform support allowed Nuxeo to build tight integration with other applications. As Eric Barroca of Nuxeo points out, "RCP's easy access to MS Word, Update Manager, graphics editors and authentication via USB keys were critical to providing the integrated user experience that APF required".

The solution, when approved by AFP's journalists, could be use to build the global AFP system for text and photo feed, enlarging the deployment scope to over 1,200 users in offices around the world, often with different deployment requirements. A solid maintenance strategy is essential to deliver bug fixes and enhancements. The RCP Update Manager met these needs. Frequent updates, supporting different configurations

Agence France-Presse's Multimedia Console NG allows journalists to work seamlessly with content stored in the CPS Platform enterprise content management system.

of the Multimedia Console NG in different locations, are simple and easy.

The open philosophy behind Eclipse was also important to Nuxeo, a strong proponent of open source development in Europe. Access to the source code shortened their learning curve and facilitated customization. Nuxeo also benefited from Eclipse community components and plug-ins such as BIRT, which they used indirectly for reporting.

Nuxeo quickly found that developing the Multimedia Console NG with Eclipse technologies was so efficient that they could benefit from a quick, iterative review process with AFP. Providing rough-cuts of proposed solutions for review and comment at low cost and on short cycles helped both parties evolve the project toward the best design – often exposing solutions that would not have otherwise been obvious.

Nuxeo's initial success with RCP has confirmed to AFP that they made the right choice. In fact the source code for the AFP, called Apogee, has been such a success with the developer community that Nuxeo has been proposed an open source Enterprise Content Management for RCP project at Eclipse. Future versions of the CPS Platform and P2XML systems will take advantage of ECF, Mylar, ETF and other Eclipse technologies to build on their current success.

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