

# Westside Produce Picks Profound Logic to Modernize and Extend their IBM i (AS/400) Applications

## Case Study Highlights

- **Company:** Westside Produce
- **Industry:** Produce Grower/Shipper
- **Business Challenge:** Seasonal operation needs to reduce IBM i application training times and increase user efficiency
- **Solutions:** Profound UI and Genie enable company to create browser-based applications that are easy for employees to learn and that scale with the company's growth

## About Westside Produce

When the outdated interfaces of Westside Produce's applications began to limit the productivity of their employees, they turned to Profound Logic Software. Using a combination of Genie and Profound UI, they were able to make their applications more user friendly and expand the capabilities of their existing applications.

## The Challenge

Although Westside Produce made great strides in modernizing its processes over the years, something lagged behind: its business application interfaces. The company runs its business on an IBM i operating system, and their departments' business applications were accessed through outdated 5250 green-screen user interfaces. Because of this, employees at Westside Produce struggled to stay on top of their daily duties. "We're a seasonal operation, and our employees will have around nine months off before returning to Westside Produce for our three month peak harvest time," says Westside Produce's technology director, Justin Porter. "At the start of each season I found myself retraining office staff on our business systems." Between recurring training sessions and a general lack of ability to add new features due to interface limitations, Porter's ability to focus on the operation's other IT needs became limited and he knew Westside Produce needed a better way to access their business applications.

## The Solution

Why did so many people at Westside Produce have difficulty using the company's business applications? "They weren't intuitive," states Porter. "Today's workers are used to working in a Web browser – exactly like they do when they're on the internet at home. Our dated green-screen interfaces were too cumbersome and complicated to master, especially on a seasonal work schedule. We were at the point where we either needed to remove features and limit the deployment of new features from our existing applications, or modernize. The applications and keystrokes were becoming too numerous and complicated for use."

Porter began looking at solutions to bring these applications into the next generation, but most weren't the right fit. "Many of the solutions available were expensive and required significant development time and training," he explains. "Others were too simple; they only put a modern face on top of our applications. If we truly wanted to modernize our systems, we needed tools that would make our applications both accessible and extensible."

For these reasons, Profound Logic Software's IBM i solutions were just what Porter was looking for – specifically its Genie and Profound UI products. Genie from Profound Logic offers a low effort, on-the-fly option for web-enabling and enhancing 5250 greenscreens. It allowed Porter to quickly create Web browser interfaces for the departments that needed an immediate solution.

Profound UI took his modernization efforts to the next level by converting existing DDS source code into Rich Display Files so that he could design and deploy custom user interfaces for the company's applications, in addition to integrating applications without source code. "I'm not an RPG programmer or expert in JavaScript, and I found these tools incredibly easy to use. Within days we were able to deploy interfaces we needed immediately using Genie, and were able to Web-enable other applications with additional features in a matter of weeks using Profound UI."

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**Justin Porter**  
Technology Director, Westside Produce

## The Results

Porter noticed the benefits of working with Profound Logic's tools almost immediately. "Our workforce became much more efficient. The modernization efforts made our departments' applications, including those used for shipping and receiving, more intuitive which made our workers' jobs much easier." Additionally, Porter says that he had more time to focus on other efforts because he spent much less time re-training the staff on how to interact with the 5250 interfaces.

Even better, Westside Produce's employees now take an active role in improving business systems and processes. "Before, because many of them didn't really understand the systems, there was very little feedback about improvements," says Porter. "Now our workers are very involved in improving how our systems work because it's easy to visually identify where changes can be made."

But perhaps the best result of working with Profound Logic is that Porter can now plan for the company's technological future. "We were limited in scope due to the challenges with creating applications to support new systems and my lack of experience with RPG or JavaScript," he says. "With cutting-edge tools like Profound UI that support RPG Open Access, there's literally no limit to our growth or acquisition of new technologies while using our existing IBM i systems. Working with Profound Logic is a no-brainer."