softsource®
computing a better way

Microsoft PowerApps - Turning business expertise into solutions with ease

As a proud sponsor of the Blues Rugby and enthusiastic partner of HP Inc, Softsource was keen to contribute to the excitement in the corporate hospitality. Seizing a last-minute opportunity to donate a HP Elitebook x360 notebook as a prize draw, Softsource had less than 3 days to prepare the logistics of running the competition and collecting the entries.

THE CHALLENGE - Data Collection

Within tight time constraints, Softsource required an easy, quick and dynamic way for supporters to enter the draw without the need to collect and collate data manually. The solution needed to be mobile, available at 6 different venues and because the stand was unmanned, the interface needed to be intuitive and fool proof.

THE SOLUTION

- Microsoft PowerApps
- Microsoft SharePoint Online
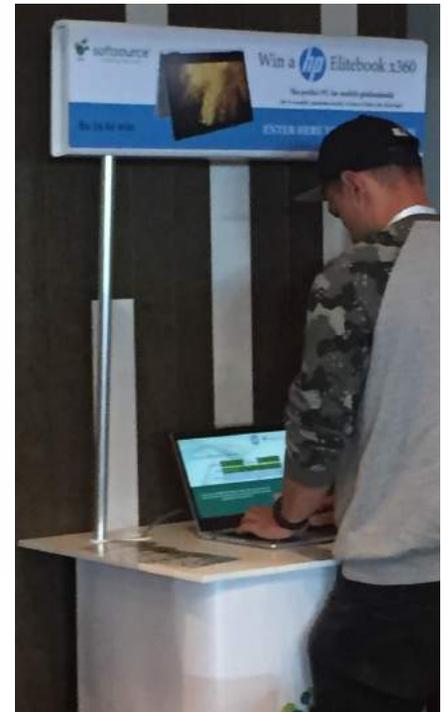- Microsoft Flow

PowerApps

Microsoft PowerApps enabled a very simple approach to a solution that most organisations would face - how to collect leads at a public event. Using full screen images and then overlaying the data entry fields and connecting them to a SharePoint list meant the whole application could be created in less than 2 hours.

Having a range of pre-built templates available within PowerApps made it easy to get started and then working with the visual designer component, we could easily customise the look and feel of the application - without having to write code!

The result was 3 simple screen displays, which led the user through the entry process while collecting the required details. Each entry took less than a minute to complete, enabling a steady flow of participants.

As a user of Office 365, Softsource extensively uses SharePoint so it made sense in our case, to store these leads there, allowing them to be validated before storing them in our marketing system (Microsoft Flow was used to add the valid leads to the marketing system eliminating re-keying or any typing errors).

The captured data could have been stored in any platform that PowerApps supports; SQL Server, IBM's DB2, Informix or even Excel as examples.

Microsoft PowerApps is a well-designed platform offered as both a standalone low-code development tool for building business apps without coding, and included within Microsoft Office 365 and Dynamics 365 plans.

PowerApps is targeted toward power users who understand their business challenges and want to solve them without writing code. The real value of the tool is when used in combination with Microsoft Flow, combining the visual development environment of PowerApps with the process and task automation of Flow for integrated business process management (BPM).

Instantly publish apps to the web or mobile. When done, get your app in people's hands. Publish it to your organisation—no app store required. Web and mobile. Laptops, tablets, and phones. Android, iOS, and Windows.

An advanced data service built right in

The Common Data Service is a secure business data platform built into PowerApps. It comes with hundreds of standard business entities already defined, which means that now all your apps can share the same definition of "customer," "product," "lead," and more. The service also includes workflow automation with Microsoft Flow.

Get started quickly

Only a handful of business apps merit the time and cost of traditional custom software development. These days, many businesses now turn to the cloud to get applications up and running quickly and at low cost. However, only so many problems can be solved with off-the-shelf SaaS. What about every other need your business faces?

With Microsoft PowerApps, Softsource can provide capabilities for creating and using custom business apps across platforms. With PowerApps we can show you how to connect to existing systems and data sources, to quickly build apps, forms, and workflows without writing code, publishing these instantly for web and mobile use.

When combined with Microsoft Flow, we can help you work smarter by automating workflows across your apps and services, including notifications, synchronization of files, collection of data, through to automated approvals.

Contact Softsource now to find out how we can help transform your business by creating custom PowerApps.

"Not only have we solved a common business problem, we have delivered the solution at a fraction of the traditional IT project cost – both from an implementation and TCO perspective."

Pablo Garcia-Curtis,
General Manager, Softsource

PowerApps enabled a very simple approach to a solution that most organisations would face - how to collect leads at a trade show. Having the Marketing Department provide the full screen images and then overlaying the data entry fields and connecting them to a SharePoint list meant the application could be created in a couple of hours.

PowerApps enabled the use of a full screen video for presentation mode after the period of time when nobody was entering their details and a link to Microsoft Flow enabled a notification to be sent whenever a new lead was added.

Chris van der Wal
Technical Architect

Having the Administration App on my phone was ideal as I could view the entries being collected dynamically, even though I wasn't at the game. In fact, in once instance I wasn't even in the country but through this app, I still had visibility as the data was entered and peace of mind that the console was well situated in the corporate lounge and operating to task.

A single online depository for the data, collected over a range of games meant we could refer to the data at any time and gage the success of the campaign as we were progressing through the season.

Sandi Dunn
Marketing Manager

computing a better way