



eSeeds grows online store with Net.Commerce and DB2.

Legend says that for 49 years John Chapman traveled across 100,000 miles of American wilderness planting apple trees—some of which still bear fruit today. Certainly, the man we now know as Johnny Appleseed never dreamed of a day when transporting plants over hills and valleys would be as simple as a few keystrokes and mouse clicks. But today, eSeeds, an online garden store based in Vancouver, British Columbia, is doing just that.

“We need to assure our customers that shopping with us is safe. Net.Commerce and the IBM e-business Mark provide that assurance.”

—Mala Gunadasa-Rohling, Founder and President, eSeeds

Mala Gunadasa-Rohling, founder and president of eSeeds, provides Web-savvy gardeners immediate access to a catalog containing over 10,000 items, including hard-to-find seeds and live plants as well as garden-related books, tools, art and gifts. The force behind eSeeds’ powerful storefront is the IBM Net.Commerce suite of products, which includes IBM Net.Commerce merchant server software,

IBM DB2 Universal Database for Windows NT, IBM Net.Data and IBM HTTP Server. Running on the company’s IBM Netfinity 3500 server, the system assures customers that the store is open for business at any time of day.

“We shopped around thoroughly before deciding on Net.Commerce,” says Gunadasa-Rohling, who developed the site at www.esseeds.com. “We knew what services we wanted to provide, and we knew what support we needed to provide them. Net.Commerce with DB2 Universal Database offered the stability, ease-of-use and scalability to ensure a

Application	Online gardening store
Business Benefits	100% ROI in one year; up to 900% monthly increase in sales
Software	IBM Net.Commerce IBM DB2® Universal Database™ for Windows NT® IBM Net.Data® IBM HTTP Server
Hardware	IBM Netfinity®



eSeeds is turning thumbs green across the Web with its online catalog of seeds, plants and gardening accessories.



long-term solution and a full return on our investment within the first year." eSeeds is well on its way to achieving that goal, as the company has experienced 900 percent monthly sales growth since the Web site went live at the beginning of the year.

Sowing seeds of prosperity

Gunadasa-Rohling began cultivating gardening Web sites in 1995 as a public service for local gardens and gardening clubs. Finding a niche in providing high-tech Web site hosting solutions for low-tech users, Gunadasa-Rohling recognized the astounding potential for a successful enterprise. "Long before eSeeds opened its doors to the world, I was receiving e-mail requests for information about purchasing hard-to-find seeds and plants," she recalls. Her casual referral service evolved into the current site. Now, her users can view pictures and other useful information about thousands of plant species before placing an order.

"We have suppliers in Canada, England, the U.S., Japan, South Africa and Europe," explains Gunadasa-Rohling. "Now that eSeeds is gaining notoriety, suppliers are seeking us out, wanting to include their catalogs in our database. Although some of these are large companies with their own Web sites, they see the advantages that eSeeds' customer base provides them."

Net.Data is a component of Net.Commerce, providing connectivity to information stored in the database. It also allows Web site developers to create macros that simplify complex tasks, such as calculating purchase totals or tax. At eSeeds, Net.Data extracts product information stored in DB2 and creates customized Web pages unique to each registered customer. eSeeds carries no physical inventory but takes a percentage of each transaction. Knowing that selecting a local supplier can shorten delivery time, eSeeds allows its customers to choose from a list of suppliers for more common items. IBM HTTP Server supports industry-standard, 128-bit Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption, which ensures that private information is kept that way. As Gunadasa-Rohling explains, this is important in building user trust: "We need to assure our customers that shopping with us is safe. Net.Commerce and the IBM e-business Mark provide that assurance."

Growing up fast

Like many new companies experiencing accelerated growth, eSeeds needed to find an e-commerce solution that would expand accordingly with them. The company expects to increase its database to hold information including pricing, distribution and gardening tips for over 15,000 products by year end. "Sales are increasing by eight to ten times each month," notes Gunadasa-Rohling. "We expect to keep that pace up for the next year or two. We didn't want to invest in a system that we would outgrow too soon. Net.Commerce and DB2 have the scalability we need for today as well as tomorrow."

To accommodate its increasing volume of hits, eSeeds plans to buy another server that will enable the company to separate its data warehouse from its Netfinity Web server. "We are very happy with our Netfinity 3500," says Gunadasa-Rohling. "We'll definitely buy another IBM machine." And, as eSeeds tills the Internet for future growth, Net.Commerce with DB2 will continue to ensure that the vision of this Canadian Johnny Appleseed becomes legendary in its own right.

For more information, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

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