Bauverein der Elbgemeinden (BVE)

With Micro Focus® Reflection®, BVE gains mobile host access and a seamless migration to Windows 7.

Overview
Bauverein der Elbgemeinden (BVE) is one of Germany’s largest building cooperatives, and Hamburg’s largest apartment provider, with nearly 20,000 members and 13,600 apartments. Because it answers to its members, rather than to its investors, BVE’s business model poses major challenges. As a result, the organization is dedicated to limiting its dividends, breaking even, and committing to assets.

When BVE wanted to upgrade its workstations to Windows 7, it turned to Reflection software.

Challenge
BVE runs GES, an enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution tailored for the property sector and customized to meet its particular business process needs. Users access it via local workstations that interface with the mainframe. Software providers unfamiliar with the property industry and GES rarely venture into this highly specialized field.

A problem arose when BVE wanted to upgrade its workstations to Windows 7, which its current host access solution didn’t support. The building cooperative found itself between a rock and a hard place: How could it equip its IT for the future and make its ERP interface more user-friendly, while also maintaining its legacy system?

By leveraging the MobileNow strategy and technologies, we helped BVE make its system more user-friendly in other ways too. BVE users now also have access to legacy systems.

With the help of Reflection, BVE addressed this challenge. The Reflection software provided the host with a .NET front-end that seamlessly connects the ERP with the workstations. Our company’s support and consulting department also played a key role in the implementation.

Solution
BVE’s customized applications ran in a legacy development environment until the property cooperative decided to switch to a state-of-the-art .NET environment. Thanks to Reflection, this migration was executed simply and painlessly.

BVE is also now able to integrate an external janitorial services application. Connected to the network by a terminal server, service personnel use BVE’s new software solution to keep track of maintenance jobs. The solution simplifies janitorial work since custodians no longer have to enter their tasks into the GES system. “We created an easy-to-use interface overlaying the GES interface. As soon as the janitors enter their data, it’s passed on to the GES system. This way they don’t have to deal with the sometimes cryptic abbreviations in GES,” said Volker Kunze, software developer for BVE.

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At a Glance
- **Industry**: Real Estate
- **Location**: Germany
- **Challenge**: The existing host access solution didn’t support Windows 7 or user-friendly interfaces.
- **Solution**: Use Reflection to provide a user-friendly interface and support for Windows 7 desktops.
- **Results**:
  - Provided seamless migration to Windows 7.
  - Modernized the user experience with familiar interface elements and access via mobile devices.
  - Enabled integration with critical external applications.
  - Switched to a state-of-the-art .NET development environment.
via various end-user devices such as iPads, tablets, and Windows RT—in line with the co-operative’s forward-looking guidelines.

**Results**

Reflection provides a number of benefits: Host logins are automated, and users can define certain favorite functions and even create a history of recently queried functions. Certain processes trigger automated responses; for instance, when a bill is assigned to an account, the system checks in the background whether that task is a recourse or insurance issue, sending the user the appropriate message. The screen for opening invoices even generates a barcode in the user interface.

Reflection is also integrated with Microsoft Office 2010, allowing users to insert host data into Word documents, emails, or PowerPoint slides with the click of a mouse. Reflection features a clipboard and a progress display, simplifying collaboration of host and Office applications.

BVE’s transition to the new Windows environment was so easy because Reflection is designed with Windows 7 in mind, and leverages its security and productivity features. “Thanks to Attachmate (now part of Micro Focus) Reflection, migrating our clients to Windows 7 was a cinch,” said Kunze.

Ultimately, Reflection gives companies like BVE the flexibility they desire, while reducing the complexity of their IT. “You never know what the future holds and what the situation will be 15 years from now. But from today’s point of view, we are very pleased with our completely revamped IT,” said Kunze. “And we couldn’t have done it without Attachmate’s (now part of Micro Focus) outstanding support. No matter how challenging this project got, we have always been able to rely on Attachmate.”

**About Micro Focus**

Since 1976, Micro Focus has helped more than 20,000 customers unlock the value of their business logic by creating enabling solutions that bridge the gap from well-established technologies to modern functionality. The two portfolios work to a single, clear vision—to deliver innovative products supported by exceptional customer service. [www.microfocus.com](http://www.microfocus.com)