



Aspose.Total for .NET

GENERAC®

Generac Power Systems, Inc.

Industrial Dealer E-commerce Portal

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Product Background / Overview

Generac Power Systems provides a private e-commerce portal for its industrial product dealers. Portal functionality includes quotations and ordering, project management features, documentation libraries, and more. Much of the site is dynamically driven based on integrations to the ERP and other systems.

Generac previously used a combination of custom, open source and commercial 3rd party components to provide document interaction capabilities to the end user. However, these components were limited in features and presented numerous performance and maintenance issues on the web servers.

Requirements Scenario

Generac needed to provide users with the ability to:

1. Produce printable, non-editable copies of Quotations, Order Acknowledgements and Invoices based on data stored in a SQL Server database.
2. Produce editable copies of Customer Proposal documents, including custom logo images and content templates configurable by each user. These documents needed to be made available in different formats, selectable by the dealer.
3. Provide the option for users to download a single concatenated PDF file consisting of several manuals, installation drawings, etc. for a specified product. The single file option is provided for easier downloading and printing since the number of PDF files can be cumbersome.

Solution Implementation

The first requirement was fairly straight-forward since Generac was already using XML data to create PDF copies of Quotations, Acknowledgements, Invoices, etc. The data is extracted from a database and transformed using XSL templates into a schema interpreted by a custom parser. The parser then utilizes an open-source product to create the PDF.

Using Aspose.PDF, the parser and open-source product use were eliminated by simply modifying the existing XSL templates to output a schema compatible with the Aspose.PDF DOM. Converting the existing XSL templates only required a few hours to complete.

The second requirement was slightly more complex, as the process of generating customized Customer Proposals involves more steps. This process also relied on the use of XML data and the same open-source product, with the output limited to Rich

Text Format (RTF) only.

Using Aspose.Words, the XML transformation and open-source product were eliminated from the process and the DocumentBuilder object was used to enhance the capabilities previously available by allowing insertion of formatted HTML markup provided by the user. The basic layout of the proposal is still handled using a Word document template and merge fields. The customized proposal text is the merged into the template using the DocumentBuilder.InsertHTML method. Aspose.Words also allowed the user to choose for the format of the generated document.

The third requirement was new functionality. The portal did not previously allow users to combine multiple documents into a single PDF for easier downloading and printing. Each document (sometimes as many as 20-30) needed to be individually downloaded and printed – a time consuming process. Bundling the individual files into a single “zip” archive could make it easier to download, but still required each one to be opened and printed separately.

Using Aspose.PDF.Kit a button was provided to the user that allows the option of combining the individual PDF files into a single document which can be downloaded as well as printed in a single step. This saved a considerable amount of time for the users and has proven to be a very popular enhancement to the site.

Benefits

The Aspose.Total for .NET suite provided Generac with the ability to enable end users to use the portal in a way that works with the products they have installed on their own systems, rather than limiting them to a specific format and version. The products also allowed considerable enhancements to the applications that did not exist before due to technical limitations.

Not needing to rely on document automation saved Generac considerable cost and provides a more stable environment.

Working with a familiar technology and programming language allows Generac developers to be more productive, as opposed to projects that rely on undocumented open-source products.

Future Implementations

The portal is large and complex, presenting many opportunities for future uses of the Aspose suite of products. A few of the enhancements under consideration include:

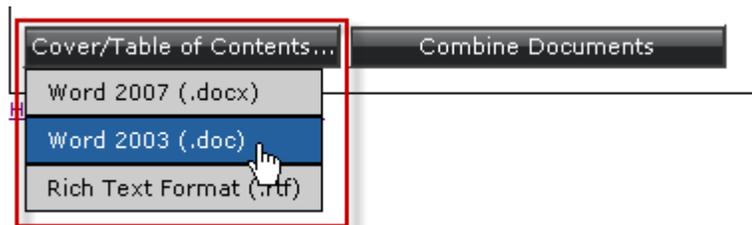
- Using Aspose.Flash or Aspose.Slides to present sales and/or marketing PowerPoint presentations in the Portal site.
- Using Aspose.Cells for budgeting/forecasting data imports and exports.
- Using Aspose.Words to add advanced mail merge capabilities so Dealers can generate campaign and promotion letters to end customers.

Conclusion

Generac selected Aspose.Total for .NET based on the flexibility of document formats and ease of use. The extensive features of the product suite will provide considerable time-savings for not only the development team, but also the end users of their web site and in-house applications.

Screenshots

For editable documents, users are provided the option of selecting the format of the generated document:



Some product quotations will include several individual files, intended to be printed and delivered as part of the submittal package. The user has the option of combining all of the PDF files into a single document for easier downloading and printing:



Users have the ability to specify custom default content for predetermined proposal sections, which is merged into a document for downloading in the format of their choosing:

» Customer Proposal Template	
Section	Section Text
Date:	{DATE}
To:	(replace with contact name)
Attn:	
Reference:	{PROJECTNAME}
	We are pleased to offer the following quot
Bill of Materials	{ITEMLIST}
Notes	Estimated Delivery: Prices valid for 90 days from above date FOB: Jobsite
Terms and Conditions	Net 30 days, subject to review and approv contingent upon the manner in which purc will be permitted unless agreed to ahead Start up will be done during normal busine weekends or off normal business hours.

Edit Copy Submit Order
 Generate Proposal Summary Report
 Word 2007 (.docx)
 Word 2003 (.doc)
 Rich Text Format (.rtf)
 Submit
 Category description
 Unit Specification 0173620SBY SPEC SHEET D16.0V

