

Corporate Background: Performance Solutions Technology, LLC

Performance Solutions Technology (PST) develops award-winning management software that applies focus, follow-through and visibility to propel goals and plans into results. Combining project management and performance management features in a single collaborative solution, PST's tools put the information that managers need to respond to today's business realities at their fingertips.

PST was founded in 1998 by a group of experienced consultants and corporate leaders who share the philosophy that effectiveness is based upon leveraging the value of shared information, a focus upon goals, and actively recognizing people for their contributions. The group formed PST to ensure the continued availability and development of a software solution that was built on that philosophy—ManagePro®. The privately-held company has been successful in achieving its goals of continuing to improve upon ManagePro and its companion products, as well as in developing accompanying resources and methodology to help organizations shift successfully to a goal- (objective) based work structure.

PST's Focus

PST develops and delivers tools that aid manager's in responding to today's business realities, by leveraging information to ensure visibility, focus and follow-through across all of their job functions. Using a framework of goals, action plans and results, PST's solutions pull together the processes of planning and execution that bridge the span:

- from managing strategic goals to daily tasks
- from managing people to managing projects
- from managing meetings to managing the information exchange of reports, email and documents.

PST's portfolio of management software includes ManagePro, MproWeb, MPro-Link and Review Writer, all of which are developed with the objective of:

- Organizing collaborative and coordinated work effort around a focus upon goals, supporting action plans/tasks, and results,
- Providing a one-stop, single source information management system for the fragmented and multi-tasking business environment,
- Making it easy to track visibility, follow-through and focus, by putting the information that managers need to respond to today's business realities at their fingertips.

Streamlining Management

Today's executives, business owners and managers all share the need to continually improve performance while confronted with the demands to improve resource utilization and manage ever-increasing amounts of information—a volume that exceeds the capability of the traditional collage of management tools of to-do lists, email, spreadsheets and word documents. To succeed, managers must be able to easily:

- Store and retrieve relevant strategic, project and people performance data.
- Plan and track the progress towards goals, initiatives, project milestones and deliverables.
- Collect, administer and track tasks.
- Regularly take the time to address supervision and mentoring in responsibility for direct reports and their development.
- Use tools that transfer information across and between the six common spheres of management: Projects, People/Performance, Planning/Estimating/Budgeting, Meetings, Knowledge and Correspondence.

The Market

While managers need to multi-task across six functions, software integration for managers has historically focused on only exchanging data between software forms, not on matching the role/tasks and needed information sharing functionality. The management software market has produced a number of tools, but they have focused on one of two elements of the managers' functions: project management, with emphasis on scheduling and resource allocation; and task management, defined by management of to-dos, event scheduling, document/communication management and organization of email.

In the mid 90's there were several drivers that effected what the management software market has developed into today. One driver was the move to integrate word-processing, spreadsheet calculation and presentation software tools into "office suites." Office suites were organized around the theme of using data across different software functions and tasks. They focused on software functions that were already well defined, such as word processing and spreadsheet calculations. This resolved the problem of having to do duplicate entry across different software packages. It only secondarily organized functionality or data exchange around job functions.

A second driver was the emergence and decline of "MBAware." MBAware was much more targeted on providing tools in concert with a job role, specifically business management tools. However, MBAware did not see the same successful growth cycle as office suites, because of the lack of emphasis on two fundamental issues:

1. Assisting managers in successfully leading the change process involved in utilizing this type of software across a team.
2. Transferring the tools to the medium of meeting management as the primary or foundational management interface with both peers and direct reports.

Software developers' response to the need for business management and productivity software has moved in several directions in response to the market and perhaps as much in response to emerging technology. This response has included:

- **Exchange**

In a manner parallel with the office suite integration, developers have moved to integrate exchange of information. This time it is focused beyond the office suite to a wider expanse of separate locations via the Web.

- **Shared "Workroom" Interfaces**

An emphasis upon sharing information "packets" between separate sites using the interface of email, documents, threaded discussions and report visibility.

- **Project Tracking Solutions**

The consulting/business perspective of "projectizing" businesses or organizing work around the structure of projects, has lead to the development of increasingly powerful and complicated project management tools. Lead by MS Project, the software development community has moved to provide tools with an emphasis upon providing enterprise capability to track large projects, as well as provide solutions to the challenge of planning and estimating task-durations, critical path and resource allocation.

- **Consolidation**

In the last three years, the market has also seen project tools and their originating companies being purchased by larger organizations as an addition to their "industrial" software tool set. This is essentially a higher ordered integration of software tools, focused less upon the user perhaps than organizations improving their competitive stance by adding a project management solution to their suite of software tools.

PST's Solutions

PST's target customer base includes individuals in management roles across all types of businesses, and currently numbers more than 65,000 installations at both small business and

Fortune 100 firms. It particularly appeals to those seeking a tool to improve individual and team performance in completing projects and goals that matches their management needs, their multiple project environment, and the value they place on planning, tracking and achievement through people. PST has developed comprehensive management solutions that go beyond what the competition offers in its two flagship management products, ManagePro and MProWeb.

ManagePro

Written in C++ for the Windows environment, ManagePro is based upon a shared access database. It achieves its functionality using an integrated toolset of table/spreadsheet, tree-view, Gantt chart and color board displays, all of which are highly configurable by the user without requiring a programming background. ManagePro has won a number of awards, including PC Magazine's top 100 programs of the year and the Codie award.

MProWeb

MProWeb is written in Asp.Net for use in a Windows IE 5.5/6 browser environment. It provides 75% of the functionality of ManagePro, using Microsoft SQL as its back-end database, and is designed to function within an organization's intranet as an enterprise solution, or across the Web as an ASP solution. MProWeb is able to communicate data seamlessly with ManagePro when ManagePro is web-enabled using a synchronization process with the MProWeb SQL database.

In both products, the entire cascade of work objectives, from strategic goals to daily operations, is tied together by a focus upon goals, supporting action plans and tasks, and a documentation of results. A flexible use of customizable filters allows ManagePro and MProWeb to exchange data readily across management functions. Data is displayed in a manner specific to each user's need, based upon their unique business environment and demands.

MPro-Link

A third PST offering, MPro-Link, is a middleware product that provides several key functions while residing on a Windows 2000 or 2003 server:

1. It manages the MS SQL database with which MProWeb communicates directly.
2. It manages the synchronization function between ManagePro databases on users' local drives and its MS SQL database on a Web server.
3. It provides a bridging technology such that data can be pulled from outside Excel spreadsheets, MS Project files and other SQL databases to update both MProWeb and ManagePro to support its ability to be a one-stop management software tool.

Review Writer

Rounding out the management toolset, a fourth PST product, Review Writer, provides an employee evaluation and automatic review write-up solution. Built for the individual manager and his or her individual team, Review Writer facilitates the performance evaluation process with built-in and build-your-own performance review forms. Users choose an existing Review Writer competency form or build one easily by selecting from a list of performance factors. Review Writer notes the user's scoring across the performance factors and writes the suggested appraisal text, which is checked for legal language errors, quality and completeness. Review Writer also accepts data from ManagePro's basic employee review data-source.

Differentiators

A number of deliverables and user structure distinguish PST's products in the market, including:

1. ManagePro and MProWeb each provide a single tool to span the range of a manager's responsibilities while coordinating and collaborating across the organization as well as with their direct reports.
2. ManagePro and MProWeb both combine project and performance management tools into a management by objectives structure. Their focus on achieving organizational goals through a high performance format of clear goal setting, working a plan, and responding to results provide significant advantages over project management tools' scheduling and resource allocation capability.
3. ManagePro and MProWeb are unique in their ability to customize and repackage information, such that it is quickly available and adds value throughout all management activities.
4. The ease of use and speed at which a team can come on line is underscored by a standard learning curve of hours, not days, to master essential competencies.
5. They structure work around goals versus tasks (and the inherent performance boost as verified by more than 400 research studies) and shared interaction, using a collaborative versus largely reporting framework found in competitive products.
6. Their unique ability to cross-reference all action items and progress notes against both projects and people is a significant aid to effective work group task management.
7. Finally their adaptability and ease of configuring allow the user to adapt to displays quickly to their work needs, language and changing environment.

For more information about PST and its products call the company's headquarters at (562) 430-7096, or visit it on the Web at www.performancesolutionstech.com.

PST's ManagePro Generates Talk...

"With ManagePro, I can handle everything my responsibilities entail. Currently, I am working on a 5-year plan for my end of the business. It is easy with ManagePro. I simply hold a brainstorming meeting, enter the goals into ManagePro, and then fill in under the goals with the tasks and assignments needed to accomplish the goal. As we near the goal, it is easy in ManagePro to change and add the tasks and assignments needed to redirect our efforts toward our goals... it is easy to change goals too. ManagePro is my key to success in the business of managing." *Dave Childs, Manager, Emissions & Testing, Mitsubishi Research & Development.*

"ManagePro is so versatile I can apply it to any work situation. It is only limited by your own creativity." *Larry Lahtinen, Knowledge Manager, Pacific Fleet, US Navy*

"As a consulting firm that specializes in Strategic Planning for corporations and government organizations, we searched long and hard to find the right product for our clients. Performance Solution Technology's combination of ManagePro and MProWeb is that right product!

Our clients embrace the software because it is easy to use and very little training is needed to become proficient. It makes employee reviews quick and less subjective while allowing them to forecast strategic outcomes. The amount of time spent in the traditional meeting has been reduced 40-60%! Not only is less time spent in meeting but they are now proactive planning sessions and since everyone knows where they stand before they enter the meeting no one meets to 'get an update.'" *Bryan Smith, VP, Stonessmith Leadership*

"ManagePro is the only management software program available that fills my need for follow-up capability, calendars, personnel goal setting and tracking, and appraisals. There just isn't anything else that will do the job." *Bruce Havens, Manager, Air Touch Cellular*

"Using these tools, visibility on executing the strategic plan is a snap. Accountability and follow-through immediately go up. If you are looking for a strategic and project management tool that brings it all together: easy to use, empowers your team and enhances your bottom line, then you need to check out ManagePro and MProWeb. Support before product purchase and after product purchase is excellent. This company doesn't just sell product, they have senior people who help you successfully negotiate the deployment challenges and reap the rewards." *Eric Martin, VP Information Services & Business Systems, MW Manufacturers*

"Using ManagePro and MPro/Web across our organization has allowed us to greatly reduce our reliance on e-mail and other informal communication as well as provide clear direction as to accountability and deliverables. ManagePro has an immediate impact on our organization by reducing miscommunication, missed deadlines, and delays." *James Carboni, EVP/CFO, Global Point Technology*

"Project Management Software for the Rest of Us." *PC Magazine June '01, 5 out of 5 star review*

"Any good project management program can keep a project on track. ManagePro 5.0 goes a step further by taking business theories – like management by objectives and balanced scorecard – and making them part of your operation." *PC Magazine, Feb. 26, 2002.*