

Anker Seacrew Software

Transforming the Anker Seacrew Software solution into a highly scalable, configurable web application using Rocket® Uniface

The Anker Seacrew Software is a proven maritime business solution from Anker Crew Insurance for the management of crew, planning, and payroll. The specialized software is today used by maritime operators worldwide to handle their on-shore and off-shore workforce, document crew changes in their fleets, and coordinate with suppliers. The software readily interfaces with third-party applications via the web and provides over 2,500 Uniface forms for its myriad of maritime functions.

Challenge

To support growing demand, Anker had to constantly send valuable technical staff to install and update the software on customer systems or servers. Besides being time- and cost-intensive, this approach also limited the speed and number of deployments the company could effectively support at a given time. Some of Anker's customers were also allowing suppliers to remotely access and use their Seacrew software, which further complicated support efforts.

It became clear that a web-based version of the Seacrew software was required. "All of our customers were asking for a web-based version, so we knew we had to do it," says Mr. Arnold Tepper, Software Developer, Anker Seacrew Software. "There were important advantages for us in terms of reaching new customers and reducing our implementation and maintenance burden."

Besides being easily scalable, the web-based software would also enable over-the-air software updates and seamless synchronization with Anker's databases, minimizing operational disruption and downtime for existing maritime customers. Anker Crew Insurance also knew that the added convenience of the web-based software would be key to attracting prospective new customers.

Solution

Due to their positive experience with the platform, Anker Crew Insurance decided to develop the web-based version of their software using Rocket® Uniface. The low-code capabilities of Uniface, used with standard JavaScript code libraries, allowed a small team of three full-time developers to seamlessly migrate the entire Seacrew solution onto the web, including core business functions, logic, and forms.

Due to the flexibility of the Uniface interface, Anker's small development team was able to accomplish the migration to the web in record time—all without impacting their day jobs. Tepper adds, "The main advantage is Uniface's speed of development. It's much faster than other technologies that members of our team have worked with. In addition, we take advantage of uniface's ability to interface easily with other systems," Tepper explains.

The web-based software is also easily configurable, due to Uniface's low-code environment. Customers can self-configure their Seacrew solution with ease, allowing Anker to deliver a highly customized user experience, without the usual high manpower, deployment, and maintenance overheads associated with such a service.



In addition, improved data transfer and web synchronization also allow Anker to host a single version of their Seacrew Software online, which customers can run against their own databases to obtain the latest updates or software fixes. Vessel crew can easily access the web version of the software while on-the-go, allowing them to check their documents or update their posts—and synchronize that data in real-time to a customer's database.

Results

Since its rollout, the web-based Seacrew software has maintained an impressive uptime without any critical problems. "The software is very stable. Uniface never crashes, so the system won't fall over when a customer is trying to get a new crew on board," says Tepper. Development and maintenance costs were significantly reduced: Since only three experienced Uniface developers are needed to maintain and update the software, technical staff can be redeployed toward innovation and higher-value work.

This in turn has given Anker's maritime customers the confidence they need to expand fleet operations, implement new processes, and onboard additional suppliers or staff to their Seacrew software. More importantly, with Rocket Uniface, Anker Crew Insurance has the means to ensure their Seacrew software remains relevant to the digital needs of marine operators both old and new, for years to come.

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*Mr. Arnold Tepper
Software Developer,
Anker Seacrew Software*

Impact

- 1 Exposed application core functionality in a web-based interface with no impacts to ongoing operations or staffing
- 2 Significantly reduced time and cost to onboard new clients and maintain/upgrade existing on-premise installations; The configurable SaaS solution also reduced the need for customization to support each client's specific needs
- 3 Improved the user experience: Whether crews are at sea or in an airport on their way to their next assignment, they can access the documents and information they need