



White Paper: Union Built PC Grievance Manager

February, 2008

Purpose

Grievance Manager applications are custom built for each customer's grievance process and data needs. Each application is a real-time tool to facilitate the representation process for grievances, as well as an archiving application for research.

Benefits for representing active grievances

- Process flow.
 - ✓ Open Grievance tables show active grievances at a glance, may be pre-filtered according to characteristics of the logged-in user, are quickly searchable, and may be sorted by any column.
 - ✓ Look-up forms allow users to quickly and correctly select information where applicable. (Example, all members may be in a convenient and searchable look-up feature that pops up on the grievance form. When a member is selected, his/her work location, member ID, address, phone and any other known and relevant information can all be auto-populated on the grievance form. Likewise for shops or stewards.)
 - ✓ Email notifications may be sent after dispositions or other events are recorded in the application. These may go to parties specified in the particular grievance, or to others (by work location, for example) as set by an application administrator.
 - ✓ Email notifications of approaching deadlines per grievance. These may go to parties specified in the particular grievance, or to others (by work location, for example) as set by an application administrator.
 - ✓ Automated production of printable letters as PDF files.
- Secure document storage.
 - ✓ Documents (in PDF or MS Word format) may be conveniently and securely uploaded as attachments to grievances. Documents are stored in the database and are streamed to and from the server in 128 bit encrypted format.

- ✓ Process standards.
- ✓ Correct data entry can be enforced through Administrator-controlled drop-down lists for forced-choice fields. (Example: if you want to remove an obsolete grievance category and add a new one to replace it).
- ✓ Form validated on save. Fields may be required or validated for specific content requirements before a save is allowed (Example: validating proper format for an email address).
- Information sharing and control.
 - ✓ Applications are Internet-based, and may be used from anywhere.
 - ✓ Access is controlled through user logins, and users with different roles may see different data and/or different forms and reports.
- Secure but flexible communication among staff.
 - ✓ Staff may securely “send” grievances to each other by email, using application features that send only a secure link which requires the recipient to securely login to see the grievance.

Benefits for long term archiving

- Electronic storage and backup.
 - ✓ Cost effective and portable
 - ✓ Hot swappable disk drives for backup and easy restore
- Accessible from the Internet
 - ✓ Possible to research issue histories from any location.
- Advanced search for settled and closed grievances.
 - ✓ Multiple criteria (usually 10-20 fields) advance search allows quick access to old grievances.
- Powerful aggregate (group by) reporting.
 - ✓ Reports showing grievance counts grouped by any relevant combination of criteria, within date ranges entered.

- Standard open source database (MySQL).
 - ✓ Grievance Manager uses the most portable database format in the world, now running on over 60% of all Internet servers.

Application Servers

The applications run on Net Integrator Mark I Servers, running the Linux operating system, the Apache web server with 128 bit encryption for data security, the MySQL database server, and the PHP hypertext pre-processor for programming. The server has Intelligent Disk Backup, to run nightly.

We sell and install onsite servers (http://unionbuiltpc.com/ni_mark1.php), and also offer remote hosting at our New York facility.

Development Methodology and Process

We develop the applications using the L.A.M.P. (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP) open-source development system. L.A.M.P. technology is preferred for its cost-effectiveness. It is functionally appropriate in all respects, comparable with more expensive methods using Microsoft .NET and Java 2 Enterprise Edition technologies.

Applications are built to explicit specifications in a Project Plan document, produced for each customer, which will include cost guarantees and serve as a contract between Union Built PC and the customer.

Application Security

Each user has his/her own login account, with a username and password. It is strongly recommended that users do not share logins; doing so compromises security for this or any network application.

Users will have to login to see any part of the Application, including viewing links sent by email. All access occurs only through a web browser enabled with SSL (secure socket layer) security. The Application will only accept encrypted data, so any attempt to circumvent SSL (to send or receive non-encrypted data) will result in the user being immediately logged out and re-directed back to the secure login page.

Additionally, passwords use a one-way hash algorithm, so that only the person who creates (and remembers) the password will know it, regardless of database or server privileges. Administrators will be able to create or reset passwords, but not retrieve an existing one. After a login is created, the user may change his/her password at any time.

Copyright to Application, Source Code and Open Source License

Grievance Manager applications are developed for the customer as a “work for hire,” and source code will be delivered at the time the application is launched. The Customer may modify source code, but may not gift or resell the application.

About Union Built PC

Union Built PC was incorporated in 2001 as a Maryland Corporation. The Company is committed to using entirely union labor, organized by CWA Local 1101 in New York, NY; UWUA 223 in Dearborn, MI; and IBEW 17 in Southfield, MI. The Company has staff in Maryland, New York, Southeast Michigan, Kansas City, and San Diego.

Union Built PC sells desktop and laptop computers, assembled with union labor in its Maryland facility. The Company also sells computer peripherals and projectors; the Net Integrator family of network servers; software and software training services; website development services; and custom software development services.

The Company’s software development services are provided from offices in Kansas City and the Chicago area. All software code is written by Union Built PC employees, members of UWUA 223. Union Built PC development staff members average over ten years full time experience in software development of data-centric applications for Linux, Unix, and Windows server platforms.

Union Built PC has built its business providing low-overhead, cost-effective methods of delivering high-quality products and services to unions. Excellent cost-to-value ratio, as well as unique, stable products, programs, and methods, distinguishes the Company from competitors.