HOW ISS GROUP
MAKES PROGRESS

For over 25 years, Progress partner ISS Group has continued to deliver innovative technology to suit the demands of the market and the needs of its customers. Leveraging the Progress® OpenEdge® application development platform, ISS Group has consistently evolved its solutions over the years, most recently adding a mobile option for its customers. Today, the company offers a number of industry-leading web-based approval routing solutions. And ISS Group is poised to quickly and easily take advantage of new opportunities as they emerge, including the delivery of a SaaS or Cloud-based offering, as well as developing new applications.

EMPOWERED TO DRIVE MARKET SHARE AND CAPITALIZE ON NEW OPPORTUNITIES WITH PROGRESS OPENEDGE

A sales professional is onsite with a new strategic prospective customer. They have been negotiating aspects of a lucrative contract for days and are close to

CHALLENGE

Provide customers with the best solutions to meet their challenging business needs

SOLUTION

The Progress® OpenEdge® application development platform

BENEFIT

Delivers innovative technology to suit demands of the market and is poised to quickly take advantage of new opportunities as they emerge, including the delivery of a SaaS or Cloud-based offering, as well as developing new applications

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reaching a final deal. Success now hinges on the sales rep's ability to provide a specific discount—a discount that must be approved by his manager. With a competitor waiting in the wings, the sales rep is eager to close the sale immediately. He takes the deal back to the office, urgently trying to secure approval. However, his manager is on vacation and won't be back for two weeks. By the time he returns the deal has been lost. Now imagine if that same sales rep could have submitted the request via his smartphone while onsite with the customer and received approval within hours of the request— while still with the customer. The deal would have closed; the sales rep would be one step closer to realizing his quota; and the company would have a new strategic customer to add to their client base.

It is this very situation that motivated Progress partner ISS Group to develop its line of its web-based approval routing solutions. Today, QAD end-users organizations like Superior Essex, International Automotive Components, GHSP, Advanced BioHealing, Acclarent (a division of Johnson & Johnson), Ameriforge, Laird Technologies, Avery Dennison, John Crane, and many others rely on ISS Group's solutions to electronically route various types of requests throughout their organizations for review and approval, including PO Requisitions, Customer Sales Quotes, New Supplier Catalogs, and CapEx/Project requests, just to name a few.

EMBRACING INNOVATION

Since the company was established in 1986, ISS Group has consistently embraced innovation—evolving from a distributor in the 80's to a leader in web-enabled technology today. Over its 25+ years in the industry, ISS Group has maintained its commitment to excellence and providing its customers with the best solutions to meet their challenging business needs.

Through the mid to late 80's, ISS Group realized tremendous success and rapid business growth as a distributor of Progress OpenEdge-based solutions, at one point tripling its revenue in just 18 months. By the mid 90's, ISS Group (part of BDO Seidman at the time) attracted the attention of QAD — a leading provider of enterprise applications for global manufacturing companies and a Progress Software partner. The two companies teamed up, and ISS Group became one of QAD's first resellers in the U.S. "We had

Organizations like Carlisle, John Crane, Superior Essex, Johnson & Johnson, Laird Technologies, Avery Dennison, Eaton, and Ameriforge rely on ISS Group's solutions

"In the course of doing business, organizations generate many different types of requests every day which require review and approval by one or more people within the organization... Our solutions improve this process by enabling organizations to electronically route any type of request based on a set of rules they configure themselves and the data in the request."

Andrew Weinstein
CEO
ISS Group

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a staff of 20-25 progress developers at that point on staff. So it just made sense to leverage our existing investment in progress," explains Andrew Weinstein, CEO of ISS Group.

The relationship quickly evolved, as QAD looked to ISS Group for more than just distribution. At the time, well before the Internet became main stream, QAD wanted to develop an e-commerce strategy and asked ISS Group if they were interested in web enabling. "We said absolutely," explains Weinstein. "And using Progress OpenEdge, we developed a web development platform product called eFramework™, which has been re-branded as iFramework™. Using iFramework we developed the first QAD B2B e-commerce application jointly with QAD in 1996 called MFG/PRO on the Web: Trading Partner Transactions (TPT)."

The TPT solution allowed new and existing QAD customers to web-enable their QAD ERP systems (then known as MFGPro), and allows their customers to perform real-time self-service e-commerce transactions over the web, such as order entry/status and stock status inquiry. Some of QAD's largest customers have implemented the TPT solution, including Eaton, Ingersoll Rand, GE Lighting, Johnson & Johnson, and Tyco just to name a few. ISS Group continues to support the TPT product to this day.

CONTINUOUS MODERNIZATION AND MOBILITY DRIVE ONGOING SUCCESS

Since its initial partnership with QAD, ISS Group has continued to grow its business. And the company is constantly evolving its solutions to meet the needs of the market and its customers. For example, in 2004 one of the company's $100 million customers specializing in medical device manufacturing asked ISS Group to expand the functionality of TPT. To that point, TPT was developed primarily to serve the needs of its customers' clients. ISS Group's customer wanted to extend that functionality to the supplier side of the supply chain. From that initial enhancement grew an entirely new product called iPurchase™—one of ISS Group's premier solutions. Now in its latest release, iPurchase™ continues to provide organizations such as QAD end-user Ameriforge, a recent implementation taking less than 90 days from project approval to 'go-live', opportunities to generate significant

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value in many areas of their business. In fact, Ameriforge has been so happy with their investment in iPurchase that they have requested ISS Group expand the functionality of iPurchase to provide advanced RFQ processing functionality. The RFQ 'sub-system' as part of iPurchase is scheduled to be released in early Fall 2012.

Today, ISS Group offers a number of industry-leading web-based approval routing solutions built on the Progress OpenEdge application development platform:

> **iApprove**™ is a web-based approval routing solution designed to create request forms quickly and efficiently, and to 'dynamically' route a request to one or more people within an organization for review and approval based on the data in the request and the rules that the customer configures. Once a request has been approved, iApprove will perform a function such as creating a Project/Budget in QAD, or updating a master file, or sending an email to accounting to cut a check, etc.

> **iPurchase**™ is an application of the iApprove approval routing engine specifically designed for creating Purchase Order Requisitions and Purchase Orders. In addition to the approval routing, iPurchase delivers complete Purchasing Management functionality including RFQ processing, Supplier eCommerce shopping, Supplier Catalog shopping, project budgeting & spend tracking, QAD PO Inquiry/Re-print, Mobile functionality, and Purchasing Analytics.

> **iQuote**™ is an application of the iApprove™ approval routing engine specifically designed for creating Customer Sales Quotations and Sales Orders. In addition to the approval routing, iQuote™ delivers complete Sales Quote functionality including creating a sales quote for new Prospects or existing Customers, creating a sales quote for new or existing Items, multi-line sales quotes and volume discounting, creating a new sales quote from quote history, and more.

> **iBridge**™ is the integration solution that allows customers to integrate iApprove, iPurchase, and iQuote with the back end ERP system.

"As opposed to an Oracle database, there is very little maintenance required; it is like night and day. That is important to us as application developers and also important from a sales perspective. Our solutions don't require our customers to dedicate full-time DBAs. That is a major advantage for us."

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"In the course of doing business, organizations generate many different types of requests every day which require review and approval by one or more people within the organization," explains Weinstein. "Many of these requests are performed either via email or paper forms, or in the worst case, verbally. The review and approval process for these requests is in many cases inefficient and difficult to track, causing delays in the process. These delays can cause production issues, sales order processing issues, cash flow issues, employee morale issues, and ultimately negatively affect the bottom line. Our solutions improve this process by enabling organizations to electronically route any type of request based on a set of rules they configure themselves and the data in the request."

Important to note is that while ISS Group is primarily focused on the QAD end-user customer base, all of its products will work within a non-QAD environment as well. Therefore, if a large client has both QAD and non-QAD ERP systems, ISS Group's solutions can adapt to that hybrid environment.

Today, all of ISS Group's products are 100% web-based. "All these solutions require of the user is a browser," explains Weinstein. "We have not yet had a request to offer our solutions via Software as a Service (SaaS) or the Cloud. But with our flexible, web-based OpenEdge technology and the Progress Arcade Cloud deployment platform it would be a very simple thing to do. There would be no code changes; we would be up and running in the Cloud in an afternoon."

MOBILITY FURTHER EMPOWERS ISS GROUP'S CUSTOMERS

Mobility and the web go hand-in-hand. All of ISS Group's solutions are available on mobile devices, specifically, the company supports iPhone, Blackberry and Windows powered devices. Weinstein says their applications are particularly well suited for mobility.

"For example, one of the primary objectives of iPurchase is to shorten the approval cycle from the time a requisition is created to the time a purchase order is created. Through our rules-based approval routing engine, the appropriate person will be notified when they are required to approve a request. If that person is traveling, at home sick or even stuck in traffic, he

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can sign off on that request using his Smartphone. The same goes for a sales quote, credit limit request, or IT purchase request. Such streamlined efficiency has a direct effect on a company's ability to accelerate the sales process, recognize revenue more quickly, increase efficiency and productivity levels, and offer a higher level of customer service."

OPENEDGE ENABLES RAPID DEVELOPMENT, LOW TCO AND FAST RESPONSE TO MARKET DEMAND

A current user of OpenEdge 11, Weinstein says Progress offers a number of advantages over competitive platforms. "First and foremost Progress OpenEdge offers us rapid development which is extremely important to us, and truly, to any Progress partner developing solutions. It enables us to quickly respond to market and customer demands and stay ahead of the competition."

The second most valuable aspect of OpenEdge is that "the database takes care of itself," says Weinstein. "As opposed to an Oracle database, there is very little maintenance required; it is like night and day. That is important to us as application developers and also important from a sales perspective. Our solutions don't require our customers to dedicate full-time DBAs. That is a major advantage for us."

ISS Group was an early adopter of the latest version of OpenEdge, version 11. "Even though we are not a huge company, Progress is dedicated to our success and focuses on ways to empower us by helping us move up to the latest technology so we can take advantage of all of the new capabilities that can help drive our business and increase our productivity."

Weinstein says the transition from version 10 to 11 was very smooth and that ISS Group's developers are thrilled with many of the new features and functionality. "The migration was very successful, completed without a hiccup. Features like Multi-tenancy are very interesting to us. Since we do plan to bring our solutions to the Cloud in the near future Multi-tenancy will be an important component of that initiative. My technical team also tells me that the JSON parser enhancement in version 11 was a very important feature. They love it!"

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Beyond technology, ISS Group also values Progress as a business partner. "Progress is a very responsible organization. I always have access to the people I need when I need them. Progress is always there for us. With Progress as our partner, and with such a flexible platform, we have so many options at our disposable when we are ready to move forward, whether it is with SaaS, Cloud or new solutions. We are empowered to drive market share and explore new opportunities when we decide the time is right."

ISS GROUP

Founded in 1986, ISS Group has over 25 years of business process knowledge and experience servicing the Manufacturing & Distribution sectors. Over this 25 year period, ISS Group has completed hundreds of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), eCommerce, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and specialized Point-Solution implementations. They continue to innovate and offer low cost Business Process Enhancement (BPE) solutions, with a specific focus on the QAD® Enterprise Applications (QAD EA) user community.
http://www.issgroup.net

PROGRESS SOFTWARE

Progress Software Corporation (NASDAQ: PRGS) is a global software company that simplifies the development, deployment and management of business applications on-premise or on any Cloud, on any platform and on any device with minimal IT complexity and low total cost of ownership.

WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS

Progress Software Corporation, 14 Oak Park, Bedford, MA 01730 USA Tel: +1 781 280-4000 Fax: +1 781 280-4095 On the Web at: www.progress.com

Find us on facebook.com/progresssw twitter.com/progresssw youtube.com/progresssw

For regional international office locations and contact information, please go to www.progress.com/worldwide

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