

A Smart Client Primer for Staffing and Recruiting Software

The best of both worlds for user interfaces contributes to both productivity and ease of maintenance for staffing and recruiting software

About this paper

This paper is designed to provide staffing and recruiting management an overview of the benefits and issues related to Microsoft's "Smart Client" user interface for staffing and recruiting software.

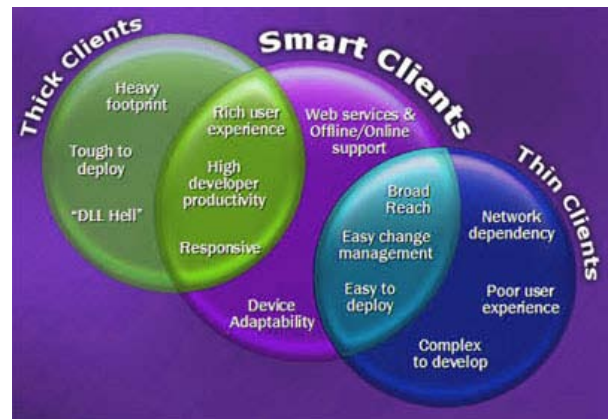
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You may have heard of thin clients and fat (rich) clients, but smart clients? The term smart client refers to a new type of application distribution system that gives you the benefits of a thin client -- including silent install and auto-update functionality -- and the benefits of a fat client -- high performance and high end user productivity in your staffing and recruiting software.

Part of Microsoft's .NET initiative, the smart client is an application that is downloaded from a Web server via HTTP. When the staffing and recruiting application is launched, the local copy is loaded and used as long as a new version is not present on the server. If a new version is available, it is downloaded and automatically replaces the previous version without user intervention. Smart clients offer the best of both worlds -- an application that can take advantage of local processing power (similar to a traditional rich client), with the deployment ease of Web-based computing, yet without the network problems many browser-based applications encounter.

The smart client approach was developed to address the fundamental weaknesses of Web-based interfaces for desktop applications. Web-based user interfaces contingent on server-side HTML generation are typically not as responsive, do not have rich, responsive functionality, suffer from network latency, etc. -- all of which diminish the end user experience resulting in lower productivity and efficiency especially for staffing and recruiting software.

So how does a smart client application work? Smart client applications use Web services that are based on Extensible Markup Language (XML), a widely-accepted industry standard that enables the exchange of data regardless of the application or programming code. Smart client applications also use the Microsoft .NET Framework, Microsoft's foundation for Windows® applications.



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What does this mean to you?

Smart clients combine the reach of the Internet with the robust functionality of more traditional client/server staffing and recruiting software. Unlike a browser-based application, an end user can work within the application with a connection to their database with or without an Internet connection.

Compare this to browser-based applications that suffer from a variety of inherent and unavoidable architectural limitations that impede performance. In a highly 'transactional' business, such as staffing, these performance issues result in lost productivity and revenue. Imagine if each member of your staffing team lost 8-10 minutes or more per day due to the slow response of their browser-based software... what is the annual soft and hard dollar cost of that lost productivity?

Another benefit to smart client applications is that they are easily deployed, updated and maintained across multiple remote offices and home-based offices within a staffing and recruiting company from a central server. Besides end user productivity gains, smart clients enable your company to easily manage the application enterprise-wide. Once deployed, smart client applications can automatically update themselves to the latest version of the software housed on a central server.

Overcoming the limitations of pure Web-based applications while retaining their ease-of deployment and use, smart client applications are the 'smart' choice for staffing and recruiting firms. They offer the benefits of increased productivity through a rich interface and robust functionality that helps speed recruiting and streamline your processes.

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For more information on smart client applications, click on one of these white papers:

Jupiter Research - Smart Client White Paper sponsored by Microsoft: This pdf paper explores what Jupiter Research termed "The Best of Both Worlds — The Desktop and the Web".

Microsoft .NET "Smart Clients in Business: Expanding the Edges of the Enterprise Network" White Paper

