

The Trans Tech Writer Story



The Trans Tech Writer story is interesting and amusing. We hope that you will agree!

Introduction

To begin, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Patrick Tuminaro, and I am the C.E.O. of Software-Dynamics, the company that produced Trans Tech Writer.

The Beginning

In 2004, we were writing clinical applications for large pharmaceutical companies. At that time, during a ride to Los Angeles, the transmission in my personal car took a hit. I had it taken to a shop that I had done business with several times before. While I was there, I was approached by the owner, now a familiar face, and was asked if I could write him a program to run his shop. He was very dissatisfied with anything that was being offered, especially since his business was a niche operation that differed in many ways from a general repair shop. Now, friend or no friend, this is not like asking to borrow a cup of sugar. It can take many months, possibly years, to write such a program, but I told him that I would investigate the possibility. Unfortunately, I was so busy at that time that I did not give it the full attention that it deserved, and without realizing it, years went by. It was now 2013, and I needed another transmission in another vehicle (I have several), so I found myself there again. By this time, the shop owner, a member of ATRA (Automatic Transmission Rebuilders Association), had been purchasing CD's of their Seminar Manuals and Technical Bulletins from their store, and he noticed our name was on the label since we were the ones that made them. Boy, did I ever get an earful. So I told him that I would take a serious look at it and let him know what I thought.

The Concept

Many companies were offering auto repair software by this time, but very few of them met his needs as a transmission specialty shop. And the one's that came close did not balance with the way his operation had been successfully doing it for 30 years, so he was again not happy with what was available. In order to make the application meet his requirements, I decided to spend time with him in his shop and see how he conducted his business. But to be fair, I told him that I could not produce a product for him alone. It would cost more than his house (and he has a very nice one!). So I then went to 5 other shops and told them about the project to see if this was a common issue. They were all excited about the possibility and agreed to participate in the discovery process. I then spent about 50 hours watching

how they documented their repairs. And so it began in March of 2013. Every few months, I took the program to his shop (and the others). I showed it to the owners and had them critique it. I made them basically “vote” on things that they did not completely agree on, and of course, I offered advice about the architecture and complexity. By 2014, the basic program was being used in those shops as a test bed, and the owners were pleased. About the time that we had put a few thousand repair orders through the system, a large transmission firm got wind of its existence and expressed an interest in purchasing the program to sell directly to their clients, but they wanted some changes made to it as a condition of the purchase. I insisted that certain aspects could not be changed since it had to be agreeable to the majority of the people that I designed the program for initially (I had given my word on this, and anyone that knows me understands that this is unbreakable), but most of the changes were welcomed by the test users and we changed the program accordingly. This brought the proposed program release date to 2015.

Disaster

And so, while negotiations were underway for the transfer of the application to the new company, the first real problem came up. No, it was not with the program ... it was with the Lawyers! I'll pass over this part if you do not mind, expressing just the sentiment that there very few entities in the world that I dislike more than Liars (oops, I mean Lawyers ... What's the difference?). And so, I had to either get a marketing company on board, sell the program on my own or give it up.

The New Deal

At the ATRA convention that took place in Las Vegas in 2015, ATSG, the Automatic Transmission Service Group, saw a demo of the program and were instantly interested in working with us on it. But rather than purchase it, it was agreed that the program would be best served as a joint venture. But once again, changes needed to be made to accommodate the new agreement, bringing the program release well into 2016.

Special Design Features

System Architecture – The program could be written in several ways, but the most common would be a Client / Server versus a Web Application. There are many considerations that need to be looked at before this decision is made, but lets keep it simple by looking at the obvious. If you are selling goods and you want to attract the largest possible audience, you do not want them to struggle to find and download your program just to be able to buy your product, so an internet application is the perfect solution. On the other hand, if you are transferring information about your business using a shop application and you do not want anyone outside your network to see it, you definitely do not want to use an internet application. The Web Server is easily the weakest link in the security chain. It's like inviting the world to your private party and it puts the potential for information loss, hacking and security at great risk. Trans Tech Writer uses a Client / Server architecture. Although it is ‘popular’ to use an internet ‘cloud’ structure, it is in fact a far inferior choice for this particular function, not only for security but for other matters as well. And this is especially true with regard to the database itself, which we will address next.

The database is where all your information is stored, and it's really as important (if not more so) than the program itself. Today, being in the 'Cloud' is all the rage. Everything has a function, but nothing is ever right for every situation every single time. Cloud databases merge everyone's data into one large structure. It is then retrieved by software specially designed to find your records. Anyway you look at it, looking through MILLIONS of records takes a lot more time. Additionally, many security experts have expressed concerns about the security and privacy of data hosted in Cloud databases. Issues at Microsoft, Apple and Google have been making headlines all year, and not in a good way. If these tech giants can't guarantee your information security, what chance do you have?

Trans Tech Writer clients are coupled to a private network structure. We have been writing software for the security of Medical Records for many years, so we understand security better than most! We know that there are some places that you simply cannot compromise. The reward is that Trans Tech Writer is a far more secure system, and without a doubt, our data access is the fastest possible over the internet to a secure server. Furthermore, by using a client server structure, we skip an entire step. Whereas an internet application talks to a Web Server that in turn talks to a database, the Trans Tech Writer program on your computer goes directly to the database through a secure connection We've eliminated the middleman!

And The Winner Is ...

YOU ... we hope. That is to say, with testing and use over a 3 year period, thousands of work orders and the many voices that have added to the content of Trans Tech Writer, it purports to be the best tested and most flexible application ever made for any type of auto repair shop. Although Trans Tech Writer was written for shops that specialize in transmission repair, we had the insight to include 2 shops in the test process that also did both transmissions and general auto repair, and we can assure you that the program works equally well for any type of repair job that comes along. However, with the success of the platform, several new versions of the application have been proposed to compliment Trans Tech Writer including one specifically for general auto repair and also one for body shops.

When we talk to our clients about Trans Tech Writer, we always thank them for coming up with the ideas that make the program unique in the industry. Accordingly, the Trans Tech Writer website includes a section where members are constantly adding ideas for new features and changes to the program, and we address these suggestions with updates twice year. We tell our clients the following:

“This is your program. You designed it. We just make the magic happen!”

We are pleased to offer Trans Tech Writer as solution for Automatic Transmission Repair Shops.

Trans Tech Writer ... Fast, Simple, Secure!