

# LAWSON SMART CLIENT

## Challenge

Lawson Software is a global enterprise resource planning (ERP) software company that helps companies to more effectively manage their business through the application of their solutions. In late 2005, Lawson asked frog design to develop a fresh user experience for its flagship application for manufacturing and distribution companies, M3. The challenge was to optimize the application for a broad range of tasks and to empower the user with a simpler, more approachable interface.

## Breaking the Code

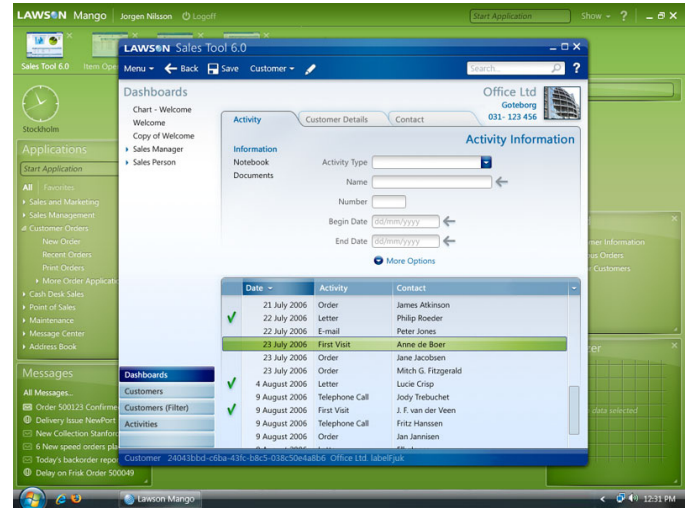
frog recognized that the primary interface for the application offered only limited interaction capabilities. The learning curve for frog was steep and an overwhelmingly comprehensive application scope. To find a better way of interacting with the application we engaged in a rigorous discovery process – analyzing the wide variety of end-user scenarios, reviewing the thousands of integrated applications delivering industry specific functionality to the end-user, and investigating the potential to differentiate Lawson from its competitors through dramatically superior user-interaction. We then set about engineering a new application. The M3 Smart Client would better meet user needs and bring them unprecedented levels of clarity and control.

## The User's Workspace

As the basis of the application, we designed a “workspace canvas” – a primary desktop that can host widgets addressing both peripheral and core user tasks, such as search and system messaging. The canvas also offers configurable variables, such as clocks for multiple time zones and scrolling news headlines. We replaced the traditional single-window interface with a new model featuring stringed and miniaturized windows, making it much easier for the user to comprehend and complete complex workflows.

Overall, these changes create a cleaner and more natural user experience, free of the frustrations that can hinder user acceptance, job satisfaction, and also productivity. Whereas before, pulling up information from a table may have been a multi-step process of clicks and dialogs, frog's redesigned program brings up in-context data as it becomes relevant to the user – reducing the number of steps required for each action. Smart Client even remembers the applications that have been run, making it easy to return to one later on.

At every turn, we have empowered users of Smart Client to create a workspace conducive to their individual needs.



## ABOVE

The new Smart Client canvas enables a cleaner, more natural user experience.

Content and layout can be adjusted with intuitive drag-and-drop actions, and successful templates shared with others. Options for color change, image replacement, and data structure allow users to effortlessly customize their workspace – creating a system that's right for them.

## A Richer Experience

For years, user interfaces have relied upon a “thin client” approach, also known as a web client, with screens delivered from the server as HTML or Java applets. Lawson M3 Smart Client, which deploys 8–10 megabytes of software to the desktop upon installation, offers a much richer experience. System refreshes happen automatically and invisibly, minimizing maintenance costs and ensuring that updates and changes are deployed to the user community in a timely and effective manner.

## Results

Unlike its predecessors, Smart Client moves users to the center, putting the right tools and resources onscreen to aid in productivity. In doing so, Lawson is able to boost not only the commercial success of its clients, but to dramatically improve the satisfaction of their users.

“In collaboration with frog design, we have worked to deliver great ergonomic design which results in intuitive user-friendliness and simple configurability – the response of our Customers has been overwhelmingly positive.” Harry Debes, CEO, Lawson Software.