SOA Solution to Bank On

Trustmark Relies on UltraStart as Framework of the Future

Overview

This publicly traded banking and financial services corporation with over 150 offices in four states took a hard look at many software packages to address evolving business requirements. After conducting an exhaustive search, a perfect fit seemed unlikely. Then IBM suggested they consider UltraStart Business Solutions from Ultramatics — and the focus shifted in a new direction: a strategic Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) platform with immediate and far-reaching impact.

The SOA Answer:
From Buzzword to Practical Implementation

Most IT professionals by now have picked up on the "SOA buzz" permeating the trade press these days, but few truly get the meaning behind the hype. For industry veteran Paul Williams, SVP and Director of Information Technology at Trustmark National Bank, SOA didn't amount to much more than another overused acronym. That was before he discovered Ultramatics, an IBM Premier Business Partner that is quickly becoming one of the most highly regarded providers of cost-effective Service Oriented Architecture-based solutions.

Williams, who has been in the IT field more than 30 years, learned of Ultramatics and its UltraStart solution while conducting a detailed analysis of middleware market offerings. Trustmark had standardized on IBM systems more than two decades ago because of the reliability, service and support of their products. As they upgraded and expanded operations with IBM's Blade Servers and began exploring myriad applications to support evolving business needs, however, Williams and his team faced pressing questions.

Trustmark At-A-Glance

Year Founded:	1889
Publicly Traded:	TRMK on NASDAQ
Headquarters:	Jackson, Miss.
Asset Value:	$8.8 billion
No. of Employees:	2,700
Branch Offices:	Over 150 across Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee and Texas

> *"This selection came down to the architecture, the strategic foundation that Ultramatics established based on our specific business criteria. They took the time to understand what we were trying to do and why."*
>
> Paul Williams
> SVP & Director of Information Technology

Dramatically Reducing Development Time

Immediate information access and secure transactions have always been the lifeblood in the financial services industry, and growing internal requests and changing industry dynamics placed unprecedented demands on Trustmark's legacy systems.

The current processes were developed for point-to-point solutions that were not easily reusable. The development for each process required more time and more effort for ongoing support. This driving factor led Trustmark on the search for a faster approach that could be repeated for similar business needs. Batch processes were frequently relied upon to ensure data consistency and integrity throughout the enterprise, which includes over 150 offices across Florida, Mississippi, Tennessee and Texas.

Internal development and synchronization challenges, however, were only part of the concern. As the Trustmark team reviewed ways to support long-term requirements, the potential answers started to look more complex than the existing issues. Trade-offs, greater risks and new uncertainties emerged. They applied a comprehensive "score card" to aid decision-making. Multiple vendors were considered, but no clear solution emerged until IBM introduced their business partner Ultramatics.

ULTRA START
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

Trustmark preserves and leverages its core mainframe investment while cutting-edge tools and development languages streamline programming, enhancements, third-party product support as well as ongoing maintenance for current and future needs. Key advantages include:

- *Reduced development time, faster response to critical business needs*

- *Simplified integration and real-time synchronized transaction data without batch processing*

- *Customer service efficiencies through more current and consistent information access*

Proven Architecture for a Solid Foundation

Ultramatics' UltraStart Business Solutions — heralded as a winner of the prestigious IBM Beacon Award for SOA innovation — stood out as the ideal choice.

"The tangible ROI justification and price points of UltraStart represented key factors, but it wasn't a typical 'product-based' decision," Williams explained. "This selection came down to the *architecture*, the strategic foundation that Ultramatics established based on our specific business criteria. They took the time to understand what we were trying to do and why. They helped us see how previous assumptions could cause setbacks, and they presented definitive ways to better support, integrate and streamline all development efforts. The UltraStart solution was the obvious answer because it provides the framework for quickly and methodically achieving our objectives."

Checks and Balances in Real Time

A key priority of the initial UltraStart installation was to establish a reliable methodology for reusable code — a more efficient means of addressing multiple business requests. The first project: a real-time interface for Trustmark's Internet banking product.
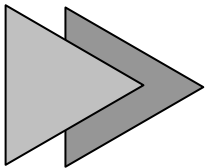
"From a development standpoint, Ultramatics helped us uncover new ways to apply the same data structure and coding to meet multiple project, product and integration requirements."

— Debbie Walker
Vice President & Data Integration Support Manager

This would provide more timely balance and transactional information that could be obtained from other sources within the bank. "While we weren't experiencing a high number of customer service complaints or errors prior to UltraStart, our focus extended beyond current needs and how to maximize all of our IT investments and resources," Williams emphasized. "By taking a strategic architecture-based approach, we chose a course for faster development turnaround timeframes today as well as a means of keeping pace with regional and super-regional competitors as our industry evolves."

Addressing Business Needs, Integration Fundamentals

With UltraStart, the needs — the services a business must deliver internally and externally — take center stage. Combined with Ultramatics' straightforward consultative approach, clients can count on superior execution in accordance with the fundamentals of business integration. At Trustmark, UltraStart results were evident in a few short months, on time and on budget.

"From a development standpoint, Ultramatics helped us uncover new ways to apply the same data structure and coding to meet multiple project, product and integration requirements," commented Debbie Walker, Trustmark's Vice President and Data Integration Support Manager. "UltraStart addresses the 'big picture' and short-term interoperability factors for us. We are very confident about our direction and the efficiency gains we anticipate, and we have realized significant benefits quickly."

A 'Partner' Versus a 'Sales Rep'

Trustmark chose UltraStart with another important consideration in mind: the architecture needed to be sustainable in-house. "It was imperative to find a solution that our developers could leverage and maintain without extensive external support," Walker explained. "We're on the right track and gaining great related experience and training from Ultramatics. They're fully committed to supporting our self-sufficiency."

"Ultramatics is very good about explaining what we need to do to capitalize on the SOA framework today and in regard to future applications," she added, noting that UltraStart's core functionality is being applied toward other applications that are under consideration for future replacement.

"Just as we chose a 'solution' here instead of a 'product,' we also selected a dedicated 'partner' versus a sales rep. The Ultramatics difference is clear on both fronts."

Taking the SOA Proposition 'from Promise to Reality'

With UltraStart and its Service Oriented Architecture now in place, Trustmark expects to ultimately gain new insights and opportunities for matching customers to its continually evolving scope of products and services. With a diversified portfolio of banking, wealth management and insurance solutions, Trustmark is in strong position to capitalize and grow in a highly competitive environment.

Trustmark's slogan sums up its backbone marketplace positioning: "People you Trust. Advice that Works." In every way possible, the organization strives to fulfill this commitment, and the IT leaders and staff know their role is instrumental.

ABOUT ULTRAMATICS

Founded in 2001, Ultramatics is a strategic IT solutions provider headquartered in Oldsmar, Fla. with offices in Chennai, India; Jacksonville, Fla.; Ft. Lauderdale, Fla; and Atlanta. Ultramatics is recognized as an IBM Premier Business Partner for its commitment to excellence and leadership.

The company has a strong track record of delivering "mission-critical" solutions to companies in the Healthcare, Financial Services, Travel Transportation, and Telecommunications industries.

This strong base foundation positions Ultramatics to deliver solutions using industry best practices, proven methodologies, skilled resources, and products engineered for quick ROI.

Ultramatics proudly serves industry leaders IBM, AT&T, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Bell South Corp., Crowley Maritime Corp., The State of Florida , Perot Systems, Trustmark Bank, UnitedHealthcare, Scholastic, and Panasonic among others.

"Everyone here needs the highest quality information to meet the highest standards of excellence in their jobs," Williams points out. "The UltraStart solution gives us the platform for growth and the architecture for superior service. We chose this SOA-based approach because it makes tremendous business sense — not because it's among the most talked-about IT developments in recent years. With Ultramatics, you have a partner that knows how to take the SOA proposition from promise to reality in a real-world context."