Financial & Equipment Manufacturing Company uses ComponentOne ActiveReports to Build an ERP System for Financial and Manufacturing Companies.

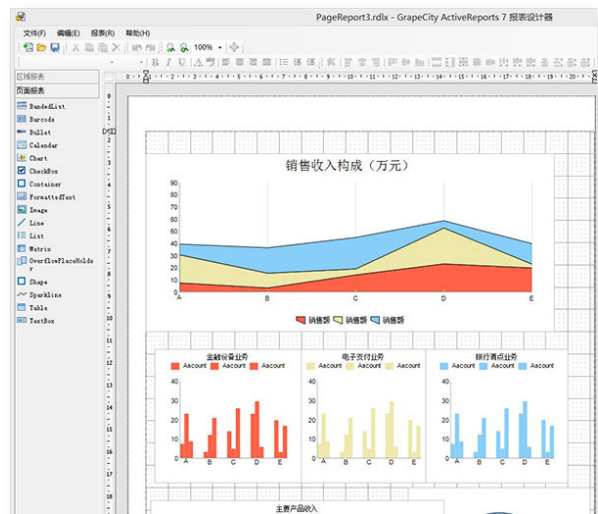In 2004, Liao Ning Ju-long Financial Equipment Co. Ltd was founded in China and their product Ju-long Financial Equipment ERP Information System was developed for financial and equipment manufacturing companies. The ERP Information System aims to help companies build a real-time information database, while optimizing the inventory and business management areas found within organizations.

Known for being one of the best solutions in the Chinese market, this ERP system is designed through a series of modules, i.e. sales, production and inventory. Within the modules, administrators can acquire information pertaining to production, inventory and product control and track the status of production and the related materials. A key differentiator is that the Ju-Long Financial Equipment ERP Information System can help administrators control the cost of production and analyze details of production quantities and inventories in real-time, allowing for rapid decision making.

When the company first began developing the ERP system, they knew the system would need to be able to generate a large amount of reports, including predefined and customizable reports. During their evaluation for a reporting solution tool, they paid close attention to understand the interaction abilities in the tools, like data drill-down, multi-dimension data analysis and collection, data visualization and big data performance. "After a thorough evaluation of a number of reporting products, we decided to purchase ActiveReports by ComponentOne, a division of GrapeCity," said YuWang, program manager at Liao Ning Ju-long Financial Equipment Co. Ltd.

Ju-long Financial Equipment ERP Information System uses the browser based n-tier architecture, and independently deploys to Web servers, Application Service Centers, Data Service Centers and Report Service Centers. Through the use of load balancing technology, they are able to ensure stability and optimized and scalable performance even with high load, concurrent access and large data sets.

All good ERP systems need a report designer to help design reports, generate code-based reports and to control all stages of a reports life cycle. "The report designer in ActiveReports is the easiest to use," said YuWang. "This is the most significant reason we chose ActiveReports, and we have saved a large amount of time in the following reporting sample design." Picture 1-1 shown here is a screenshot of the ActiveReports end user designer. The Report Designer in ActiveReports integrates with the Visual Studio IDE, therefore developers will have the same design experience as end users.

Picture 1-1: *ActiveReports end user designer*

ActiveReports provides three report types: Fixed Page Layout Reports, Continuous Page Layout Reports, and Section Reports. "We found that these three report types provide the best solutions for our system," said YuWang. As shown in Picture 1-2, the report structure is difficult to implement using traditional reporting tools. However, by using the Continuous Page Report Layout that ActiveReports provides, this report is able to show several data areas, procedure records, quality monitoring records, testing records and edited records.

Picture 1-2: *Reveal graph, table and form*

Liao Ning Ju-long Financial Equipment Co. used the ActiveReports chart control for the purpose of providing effective data visualization, which helps to make the data easier to understand and read. In addition, data filtering plays a significant role in data aggregation, analysis and search. The filtering options in ActiveReports offer support for single condition, multiple nested criteria as well as cascading filter criteria.

In an ERP system printing is important and printed reports have to be meticulous, such as invoices and other receipts. "ActiveReports provides an array of rich printing settings and offers accurate print control, therefore meeting our needs," said YuWang.

Other ActiveReports features used in the Ju-long Financial Equipment ERP Information System include:

- **Datasource binding -** ActiveReports supports two kinds of data source binding: design and runtime. In the Ju-long Financial Equipment ERP Information System, all bindings are runtime bindings. The runtime datasource options include DataSet, DataTable, Entity object, Entity collection object and XML data.
- **Customizable web based view control -** Offers the ability to add customized buttons for integrating system functions into the report viewer.
- **Bar Codes -** Code128, EAN 128, QRCode and Data Matrix bar code types provided by ActiveReports are used in Ju-long Financial Equipment ERP Information System.

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YuWang highlighted the top six features of ActiveReports that were most valuable when developing the Ju-long Financial Equipment ERP Information System.

- **Ease of use:** The report sample designer is easy to use. The report UI is separated from the business logic in the process of development, improving efficiency.
- **Rich functionality:** ActiveReports provides three report types and includes dozens of built in controls which met the system's needs.
- **Strong user interactivity features:** With data highlighting, filtering, sorting, drill down, and data analysis reporting in the ERP system becomes very easy. Meanwhile, these features are integrated in the control and reduce any difficulties in development.
- **Good performance:** In the aspects relating to the loading of large data sets, data analysis and aggregation, "I am pleased with the performance of ActiveReports," said YuWang.
- **Effective technical support:** ComponentOne's support service provides responses that are complete, fast and accurate which is a significant time saver.