**dominKnow|::::**
connect the thoughts

**dominKnow**
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**Results**

- Cut cost of development by more than 75% using ColdFusion over .NET
- Reduced number of developers by 75%
- Delivered innovative product in less than one year, five times faster than on other technology platforms
- Enabled intuitive way for content authors to collaboratively and rapidly create compelling, interactive, standards-compliant learning activities deployed consistently across desktop, web, and wireless platforms
- Achieved cost-effective hosted solution that requires no software set up or IT configurations

dominKnow

# All knowing

Canadian developers loyal to Adobe® ColdFusion® ace the eLearning space with collaborative, cloud-based authoring platform for desktop and mobile learning

The head of the class is an enviable position in the learning content authoring space, which is where the developers at dominKnow strive to be. Since 1997, dominKnow has produced award-winning eLearning and mLearning solutions used by organizations of all sizes across the world to educate and train learners and workforces.

Claro, the company's flagship product, which is built on Adobe ColdFusion combines three distinguishing elements: simplicity, true application experience, and collaboration—a winning triad resulting in an easy-to-use, programming-free environment that enables users to quickly create engaging, interactive content for online and mobile consumption.

Claro is a cloud-based, SaaS solution with a myriad of built-in templates and a robust set of in-tool authoring features for creating compelling activities that maximize learners' potential. With Claro, teams can co-author content, share resources, and provide feedback at anytime in the cloud, from any place, and on any platform.

Luke Hickey, CEO at dominKnow, and his team have been committed to Adobe ColdFusion since its inception. Through real-world business experience, he has found that ColdFusion is the fastest and easiest server-side platform for powering web applications. Now, with dominKnow's latest release of Claro, Hickey and his team have found advanced ways to leverage Adobe ColdFusion specific to online and mobile learning.

"The alignment of features in ColdFusion coupled with readily available community frameworks enabled us to rapidly develop a product that goes beyond what was considered possible to achieve in ColdFusion," says Hickey. Using the capabilities of ColdFusion, Hickey and his team rapidly brought a superior product to market while working with a level of confidence that was not possible using any other development environment.

## Programming-free content authoring

The Claro platform makes it fun and easy for people with no programming skills to rapidly develop compelling, interactive learning activities in a collaborative authoring environment. Customers across all vertical markets are using Claro to build engaging content such as interactive children's books, mobile training courses, and a wide variety of just-in-time learning programs.

While dominKnow enjoys a broad government, education, and enterprise customer base, it turns out the majority of Claro customers are small companies with less than a dozen users who need to publish HTML5-compliant content everywhere—online, on CD, to learning management systems, as well as mobile platforms including iOS, BlackBerry, Palm, and Android™. About 60% of Claro customers develop and deploy content for mobile platforms.

## Challenge

- Create easy-to-use, web-based, collaborative eLearning and mLearning content authoring platform
- Deliver consistent end-user experiences across all platforms and devices
- Reduce total cost of ownership of development platform

## Solution

- Using Adobe ColdFusion, created a cloud-based, subscription web platform for delivering true app-like learning content for mobile, desktop, and web consumption
- Leveraged powerful server technology for virtually future-proof HTML5 compatibility with existing and emerging content standards

## Systems at a Glance

Adobe ColdFusion 9

## Core competencies for rapid, reliable workflows

dominKnow has always been a ColdFusion shop. But, at the request of specific customers, the firm temporarily switched to the .NET platform when Claro first went into development. Four years of effort, millions of dollars, and an engineering team that peaked at 30 .NET developers, the product was nowhere. "Trying to build a high-performance web application in .NET was difficult and expensive," says Hickey.

When the dominKnow team saw the new offerings in the latest version of ColdFusion, they scrapped the .NET development project and started over on the ColdFusion platform. "A mere 11 months later and with less than a quarter of the resources required for .NET we delivered Claro, a stellar solution that is more robust and feature-rich than the original specs for the .NET version ever were," notes Hickey. "Matching the right mix of technology for a project is every bit as critical as the commercial success, and ColdFusion continues to be everything we can imagine."

Hickey points out that the licensing and administration offerings of ColdFusion make the platform a cost-effective choice. Code can be used to build out test environments as part of the production license, thus helping ensure easy standardization of configuration across all servers. Unlike other platforms, ColdFusion developers work with confidence knowing the code and ColdFusion perform equally in all environments. Gone are the days of multi-hour long deployments due to environment and configuration specific problems because the ColdFusion version installed on one server is the same as the ColdFusion version installed on another. In addition, the remote administration module included with ColdFusion helps ensure the systems administration group can verify and rapidly apply configuration profiles to server groups.

Additionally, best practice, performance, and security guides available from Adobe and the worldwide ColdFusion developer community are valuable resources to the dominKnow team when it comes to maximizing performance and security. The ease of using CFML scripting language, the multitude of encryption and decryption algorithms that ship natively in ColdFusion, and the ability to nest database transactions have proved invaluable for better business logic and seamless integration with an array of online services, enterprise platforms, and customers' internal systems. Built-in caching systems in ColdFusion greatly accelerated the process of hardening and optimizing code.

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> **Luke Hickey**
> **CEO,**
> **dominKnow, Inc.**

### Future-proof platform

ColdFusion allowed the dominKnow team to focus on innovation in code and process without facing any obstacles or barriers. "Cycles of try, fail, and rework associated with other development platforms are things no software development team should have to deal with," Hickey says. "These improvements to process, efficiency, and time to market have enabled Claro to exceed typical release cycles delivering feature-rich improvements every six to eight weeks. A clear savings that through ColdFusion and our innovation we are able to pass down to our customers, a win win for everyone."

"ColdFusion is vastly different from other environments—in good ways. You can't really appreciate its value until you run into the problems we encountered with .NET," says Hickey. "A huge advantage of working with ColdFusion is that it is commercially motivated to make us better over time, as opposed to other programming environments that are driven by selling operating systems.

"With ColdFusion, it's like we have Adobe as a strategic partner working alongside us. Adobe listens and responds to our needs by building quality releases on a regular cycle." Because ColdFusion Markup Language (CFML) is so easy to use, and with the help of boilerplate templates and getting started workflows, matching junior with senior developers helps keep overall operational costs low.

According to Hickey, the Adobe team behind ColdFusion is committed to keeping the environment simple, logical, useful, and cost effective. Upgrades are implemented seamlessly, reducing the total cost of ownership in comparison to a much larger capital outlay that other development platforms require for additional hardware, software, and human resources. As well, other platforms require significantly more time for planning, testing, verification, and migration.

Hickey eagerly anticipates ongoing advances to ColdFusion—particularly to meet the demands of the burgeoning smartphone and tablet user communities in the mobile learning space. "Our commitment to delivering consistent, powerful user experiences on all platforms and devices using ColdFusion makes our business model future-proof," he concludes.

**For more information**
*www.adobe.com/products/
coldfusion-family*