

CASE STUDY

Tennessee University Transforms Flat Economic Data into Visual Dynamic Applications



Industry

Education

Challenge

For years, the Business and Economic Research Center (BERC) at Middle Tennessee State University wanted to develop database applications to publish state economic data, but was confined by tight budgets and limited resources preventing the team from building a complete solution from the ground up. The legacy system was slow and difficult to update data on an ongoing basis. BERC needed an affordable, user-friendly web-based solution that would allow for continuous updates and improvements to the overall web experience.

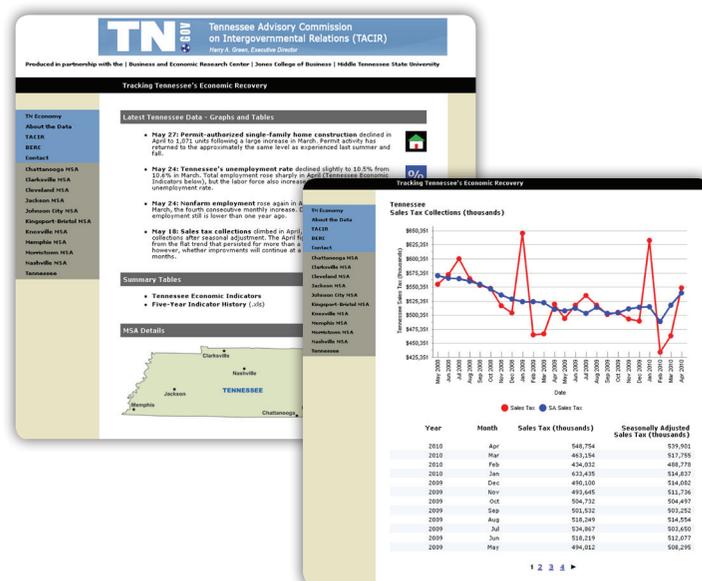
Solution

BERC tapped Caspio's Professional Services team to develop several integrated database and charting applications on the Caspio Bridge platform, reducing costs by 95% compared to traditional development methods. The simple point-and-click wizards allow everyone on the team to make real-time changes to the dynamic applications without coding. BERC now publishes the economic information with exciting visual charts and interactive search capabilities, which keeps visitors returning to their site to analyze the latest data.

Tennessee citizens rely on Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) to provide the latest state economic data, but the online portal was difficult to use and MTSU lacked the resources to develop a new system from scratch. The University utilized Caspio's platform to publish dynamic database-driven applications and charts, reducing project costs by 95% while empowering citizens to access the latest economic data in an interactive online format.

Statewide Data Responsibility

In association with the state of Tennessee, the University's Business and Economic Research Center (BERC) is dedicated to providing accurate state-level economic data and reports. Students, faculty and the general public regularly look to the BERC website as a reliable source for the most up-to-date employment, permit and state tax information, but the constantly changing nature of the data made it difficult for the web team to make changes as often as they needed.



Searchable Database for Tennessee Sales Tax Collections Data

MTSU Transforms Flat Data into Visual Dynamic Applications

Balancing Usability and Budget

The BERC website was cumbersome to update and time-consuming for users who had to download individual excel files of Tennessee Labor Force data. Sally Govan, Publications/Web Specialist for BERC, wanted to increase the traffic to the website by making the data more accessible and user-friendly. However, tight budget constraints eliminated the possibility of hiring a programmer. As a non-profit higher education institution, the center needed to find a quality solution for their website that was also financially feasible for BERC.

A Truly Economical Solution

Govan had wanted to utilize dynamic search and reporting capabilities for several years, but no one on the staff had the expertise or the available time to learn. That's when she found Caspio and its Professional Services team. After specifying the project goals and technical requirements, the team quickly got to work. BERC leveraged Caspio's platform and in-house expertise to launch the applications fast and under budget, estimated at 95% less cost than traditional programming. And because the applications were built using Caspio's wizard-driven framework, the BERC team can quickly make updates and add new data sets themselves at any time.

The result was a searchable database portal that incorporated charting to give users a quick and handy visual representation of the data. Caspio Professional Services was there to support the BERC team throughout the entire process, including ongoing technical support for new feature additions. The website is now described as more up-to-date, easier to work with, and overall more fun for end users.

“Cloud computing offers one way for institutions to increase operational efficiency and focus scarce resources on services that are institutional differentiators.”

EDUCAUSE

Going Beyond the Bottom Line

The project success goes far beyond cost savings. Lacking the time and resources to learn programming or hire a full-time application developer, Govan had doubted the project would have ever become a reality. The partnership between the BERC web team and Caspio's Professional Services ensured the entire initiative met the needs of Middle Tennessee State University. The website continues to be a valuable resource for the state to access the very latest economic data.

To learn more about how educational institutions are using Caspio's database platform to publish interactive online databases, visit <http://www.caspio.com/education>.

About Caspio, Inc.

Caspio, Inc. (www.caspio.com) is the world's leading do-it-yourself online database and web application creation platform. Since 2001, the platform has powered over 400,000 applications for Fortune-500 corporations, government agencies, educational institutions, and over 80 percent of the largest American newspaper websites. The company's philosophy is to empower business users to create and deploy web databases, forms, reports and applications easily and without programming. Caspio's platform-as-a-service replaces coding with intuitive point-and-click wizards, enabling users to rapidly produce web database apps for capturing, publishing, and managing data online. Caspio shrinks development time from weeks to hours, and from thousands of dollars to a small monthly fee. Caspio's customers range from one-person entrepreneurs to Fortune-500 corporations, digital media giants, government agencies, and educational institutions.

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