



What is the Windows Live Platform?

The Microsoft® Windows Live™ Platform is a web services platform that enables developers, designers, and enthusiasts to quickly create compelling web applications or embed web services in new or existing applications. By offering simple and consistent terms of use (TOU) across a full set of web services, the Windows Live Platform will enable developers and enthusiasts to quickly deliver rich, personalized experiences in a range of applications and websites.



Partner Profile

Microsoft® registered partner Genexis Consulting (<http://www.genexis.com.au>) is a specialty IT consulting firm specializing in mobile computing, desktop computing, Web 2.0, and infrastructure management. Based in Sydney, Australia, the company is a leading

provider of “software plus services” applications for a range of clients, with particular focus in mobile and e-payment solutions. These solutions offer a combination of web-based computing and data handling services with client-side software, enabling connections through a wide variety of hardware devices. Technical Director Alfred Wong describes Genexis as having a culture of innovation that effectively balances client needs while staying at the industry’s leading edge. “We have a strong R&D focus, so we embrace new technologies,” says Wong. “But we have to balance that by meeting our clients’ needs today with solid, robust solutions.” We discussed with Alfred how the Microsoft Windows Live™ network of Internet services is helping Genexis deliver value to their customers.

What solutions are you building for your customers?

We are concentrating on areas of high growth. Here in Australia, the number of mobile devices is growing faster than the number of PCs. When we started, not many companies specialized in mobile computing, so we moved aggressively into that market. We are also responding to the huge growth in social networking, but with more of a business focus. For example, we recently developed SoSo Network (<http://www.sosonet.com/>), an Australian business review portal where consumers can locate, rate, and get feedback on local businesses. Traditional review sites tend to be rather formal and inflexible in the way they present information. Consequently, consumers visit them only when they really need to—maybe a few times a month or less. We wanted to create a more attractive and entertaining review site that encouraged visitors to come back more often.

We built SoSo Network on a wide range of Microsoft® technologies including the Windows Live™ network of Internet services. Visitors can join the SoSo community using Windows Live ID identity and authentication system, find locations and directions to a business with Virtual Earth™, chat online with Windows Live Messenger, upload and watch videos using Silverlight™, or participate in a blog using Windows Live Spaces.





How do customers benefit from your solutions?

Clients tell us our solutions provide greater flexibility, increased growth potential, and a fast return on investment. Many benefits result from better overall customer user experiences. Let's take SoSo Network as an example. Unlike traditional review sites, SoSo Network is engineered with a focus on collective intelligence and community, so it becomes more enjoyable to use and more useful over time. We designed the network to be simple and user-friendly. Joining SoSo Network is easy because we use Windows Live ID to sign in a visitor. Over 380 million people already have a Live ID, so the chances are good that a visitor will need no other registration to join. Once on the network, the visitor can customize their experience based on what they want to see and whom they trust. This informality and flexibility should keep visitors on the site longer, and encourage them to return. In addition, registered businesses are part of the social network, so they can respond to reviews or answer questions interactively.

How do you as the Microsoft partner benefit from using the Windows Live Platform?

A large part of our success relies on robust, well-supported computing services we take "from the cloud." These might include secure authentication, streaming multimedia, instant messaging, and mapping. The Windows Live platform is such a cloud. We see many advantages to using Windows Live Services; the most critical to our business are:

- **Speed and flexibility** We do not develop software from scratch unless it is absolutely necessary. With Windows Live Services, we can quickly mock up and deploy very powerful, feature-rich web applications without having to create new code. That is a huge advance over the traditional development and delivery model.
- **Cost savings** The Windows Live platform saves our company substantial development costs. Silverlight Streaming is a great example. Previously, developing a video stream for your website was difficult. It was very expensive in terms of the back end infrastructure and data storage. With Silverlight streaming, these issues are nonexistent.
- **Collective expertise** As a Partner, we benefit greatly from other Microsoft developers' collective knowledge and skills. We share expertise both formally and informally at conferences, trade shows, and seminars. The online support, documentation, and development community is also very strong.
- **Large user base** The user base is one of the primary assets of a site like SoSo Network, and it is costly to develop one from scratch. With Windows Live ID, we are taking advantage of the very large user base that Microsoft has accumulated over a number of years. We tap into an existing social network, and can take advantage of its natural growth.

What are the benefits of using the Windows Live Platform for your customers?

Our customers receive very high value for their investment because we can deliver applications today faster and for much less cost than just a few years ago. Another benefit they have is continuous improvement of the Windows Live Platform. Once our customer has a Windows Live ID, they have access to many Live services and content which continues to expand and improve over time.

Resources

- For more information on Windows Live Platform Services, visit <http://dev.live.com/>
- For technical information on the Windows Live Software Development kit (SDK), visit <http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/bb264574.aspx>