




NEC

Customer Self-Service Portal for NEC

Introduction



Incorporating a digital payments strategy is crucial for any organization. Now, as digital payments keep gaining a solid footing globally with e-commerce and mobile payment adoption skyrocketing, failing to capitalize on this growing trend can significantly impact a company's bottom line. Besides, customers expect companies to offer a seamless digital experience across all channels including payment portals. The stakes remain high if an organization fails to streamline processes in invoicing or payments as it very likely impacts the cash flow due to delayed payments and other inefficiencies thus disrupting the overall revenue generated.

Our client, NEC Financial Services was in a similar situation, where their existing intermediate solution only allowed customers to view their invoices but not make any payments from there. This proved to be largely inefficient in NEC's case as they struggled to close in on payments between dealers and customers, which hampered their cash flows and did contribute to administrative overhead. Realizing this, NEC was in desperate need of a secure solution to handle all customer payments in one place.

Upon approaching us, Fingent went ahead and proposed a unified self-service solution that streamlined payment transactions for its customers.



The Client - NEC Financial Services, LLC

NEC Financial Services, LLC is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NEC Corporation of America that provides leasing services. Established in 1986, NEC Financial Services delivers a range of financing services to solutions providers, system integrators, resellers and dealers, and their customers by supporting the sale of products and solutions to businesses in the United States.

NEC's Challenges

Before deploying the solution, NEC resorted to manual processes like pen

and paper to manage and track invoices for customers, which was highly inefficient. Getting each invoice processed manually takes more time, involves a lot of hassles, is error-prone, and causes delayed payments. Besides, the existing intermediate solution that NEC had in place was limited in its functionality. Through this customers could only view their invoices as it lacked the option to make payments directly.

Since customers are more accustomed to the interactive and self-servicing nature of digital payment platforms, NEC wanted to figure out a way to integrate a payment solution that combined and even extended the functionalities of its previous application. NEC envisioned a unified portal through which customers can make payments while also having the ability to view, manage, and track their invoices and transaction history in one place.

Fingent's Approach

A major financial leasing firm like NEC was clearly in need of a secure digital payment interface where its customers can view and download their invoices and make payments directly. Besides, NEC wanted a solution that had a multifaceted role other than handling customer payments such as accessing transaction history, applying additional financing, reviewing billing and contract details, and managing a whole other aspect related to each customer like raising help tickets, fees, requesting support and so on.

After undertaking an extensive analysis of NEC's requirements and the challenges they faced, Fingent's solution architects proposed a customer portal where customers can log in, view invoices, and make payments online. Fingent with its deep expertise in crafting custom software solutions created the perfect solution that resolved NEC's core issue surrounding managing and tracking customer payments on-time.

Once NEC green-lit the proposal, Fingent went ahead with the development of the customer portal tailored to their exact requirements. Throughout the development phase, the teams maintained regular collaboration to bring out the finished product exactly as NEC had envisioned.

The Solution - Customer Portal

The Customer Portal enables NEC's customers to easily make payments online. Featuring an easy to use interface, the customer portal is a convenient and secure place for customers to view and download invoices, track all payment history, review contracts, and billing details, etc. all in one place.



Customer Portal - Features



Contract Management

This module allows NEC to view their active customers and their contracts. Contracts are pulled in from middleware at a regular interval of 5 - 6 minutes. With this, NEC and their customers can view the details of the contract like current due, outstanding balances, next due date, etc. They can also view and download the invoices, and view their payment history. Customers can make the payment against the contract or request for a buyout.



User Management

This module allows customers to manage their employees.



Forms and Documents

This module holds a repository of various forms and documents which are often required and used by NEC customers. NEC has the privilege to upload documents and share them with a specific customer. Customers have the privilege to view and download the forms, whenever necessary.



Requests

The module allows NEC to track and manage the numerous help tickets raised by the customers. Customers can also attach supporting documents to their request thus allowing NEC to get precise information on the item that they would need help with.



Additional Financing

This module allows NEC's customers to request for additional financing from NEC bypassing the dealers. Customers have been provided with flexible payment options and can view the monthly quote using the calculator. NEC employees can view and track additional financing requirements. They also have the option to create customer calculators for their customers and the customers can use the same to see their monthly payments for the additional finances.

Other Modules



Transaction fees

This module allows NEC to manage the fees that they charge for their customer. They have the option to add a fee for Credit card and ACH (Automated Clearing House) separately.



Banner Ads and FAQ

These modules allow NEC to showcase their latest offers to their customers and the common questions that customers ask and their answers.



Email Trigger

This module allows NEC to manage the emails that go out of the system. They will be able to edit the content and add the recipient rules to the email types.



User Management

This module allows NEC to manage NEC employees.



Signup Request

This module allows NEC to view the list of customers who have signed up and they will be able to approve the requests if it does not go through the automatic approval process.



Report

This module shows the payment history of the customers and the login timestamps.

Technology Stack and Platforms

IDE	Visual Studio
Programming Language	C# .NET
Database	MS SQL Server
Framework	ASP.NET MVC - Web Application Framework
Version Control	TFS
Target Operating System	Windows 10 1809

The Implementation Challenges

During the implementation process, the development team came across a few challenges, which were successfully overcome.

Firstly, the customer portal sourced the data from NEC's application called Infolease. This was challenging for the team as they had to source the data from NEC's application which was behind their firewall and organize the data as well. Besides, another main challenge faced was while organizing the data as it remained mostly scattered in the Infolease application.



Solution's Impact at NEC

Overall, deploying the customer portal helped NEC streamline its payment transactions that led to faster invoicing and flexible payment options for its customers. By enabling customers to log into the portal for making payments directly, NEC was able to make way for a secure payment system that helped them get paid faster than before.

The different modules inside the portal gave customers and NEC's personnel better control and access to all payment-related processes. From pulling up contracts to viewing due transactions, invoices, raising help tickets, requesting finance, etc. the customer portal was able to combine everything that NEC wanted to speed up its billing process. As a result, NEC was able to do away with manual processes that bogged down their efficiency and replace it with a customer portal that handles payments and its associated processes with the utmost efficiency.



Fingent helped us replace our technology with a new platform solution that included ASP pages and SQL databases. They're very good at explaining things, not overwhelming us with technical buzzwords.



Herschel Salan, President, NEC Financial Services



About Fingent

We are a Global IT company providing strategic IT business solutions and services for complex business problems, in multiple industry sectors including retail, healthcare, finance, education, and more. Our technology and industry expertise enables us to deliver cutting-edge internet technologies and scalable, secure, and easy-to-use web applications that work across multiple devices. We believe that the judicious use of technology, together with a good design can reduce complexity, connect individuals, and provide valuable insights, all of which ultimately help businesses succeed.



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