

Configuring and generating an application

Arc Informatique's business layer approach



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The technology used in the supervision of industrial and infrastructure facilities must respond to increasingly strenuous demands for performance and user-friendliness.

ARC Informatique's response to this is to add a specific business layer to the standard **PcVue** SCADA software. The business layer promotes faster configuration, ensures consistency across projects, minimizes errors and reduces the maintenance of supervisory applications.

The combination of the business layer and the ability to badge engineer **PcVue** as your own product represents a far superior alternative to a custom development with its longer time-to-market, higher development costs and maintenance overheads.

Each business layer has some or all of the following components:

▶ A DEDICATED CONFIGURATOR

A software component (usually in the form of a "Wizard") developed specifically to meet the customer's requirements. Its primary function is to simplify configuration of the application by presenting options in the customer's own terminology. For example, selection of the equipment from a simple list of pre-defined templates with configurable parameters entered using a purpose designed dialog box.

Templates used by the configuration tool are stored in a database. This approach allows the templates to evolve without making any changes to the configuration tool.

▶ BUSINESS SPECIFIC LIBRARIES

These are sets of PcVue object libraries used by the application generator (graphical symbols, generic mimic templates and generic scripts). They are developed with PcVue's standard tools and can easily be enhanced and modified.

Any change to an object in the library is automatically reflected in its instances in the application.

▶ AN APPLICATION GENERATOR

All of the configuration data—standard templates and user data—are stored in a database. The application generator scans these data and sets the parameters for PcVue's configuration interfaces (in XML) so as to generate the application.

All the application objects are generated in this way (OPC Communication, variables, alarms and histories). For the mimics, the generator creates instances of symbols in an ordinary mimic. The graphical editing is simple and the results can be adjusted manually.

PcVue's XML interface to the application generator also offers synchronization services. When changes have been made in the configurator to add, delete or modify elements, you can re-synchronize the application automatically.

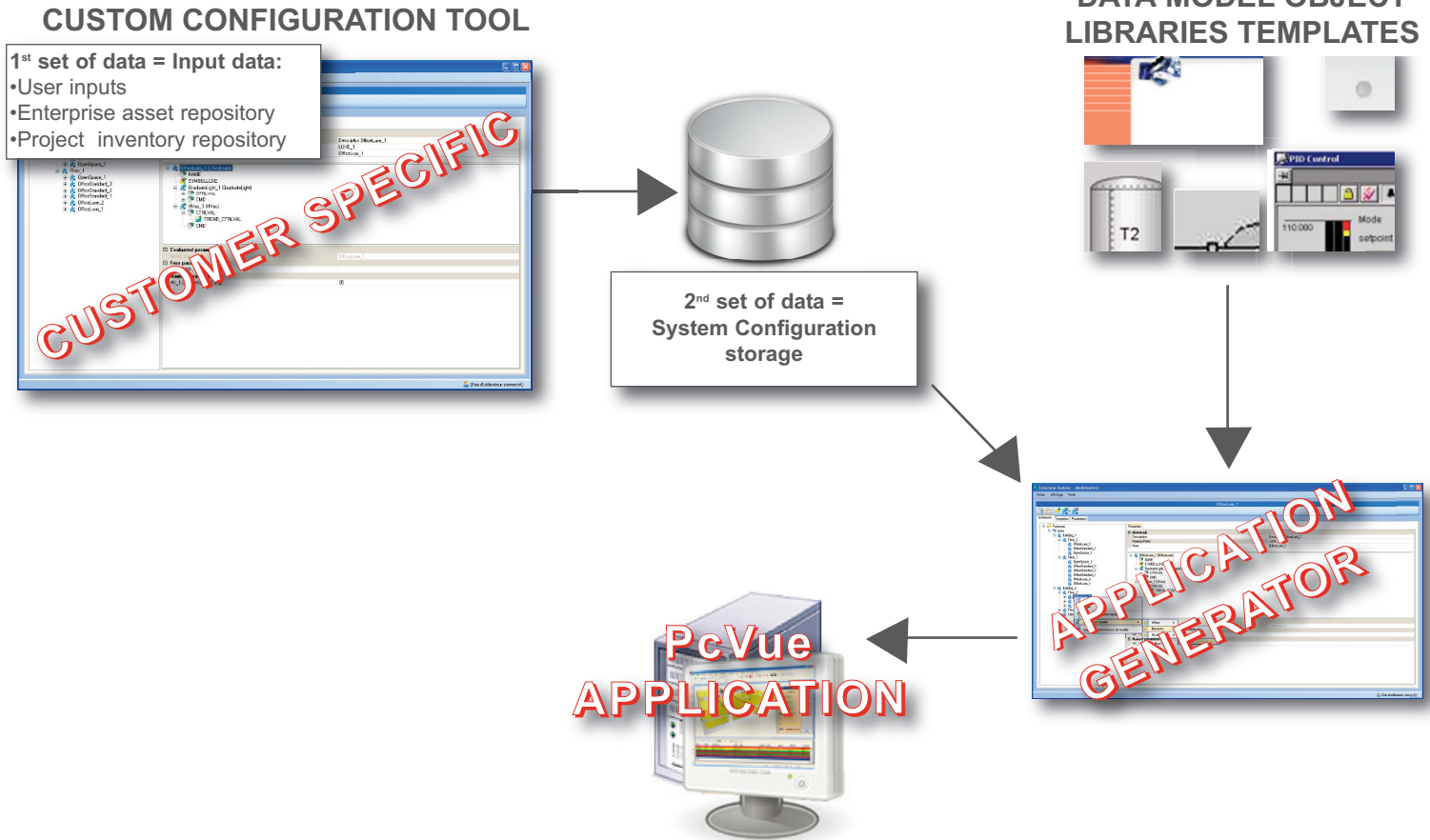
The application remains modifiable via PcVue's standard configuration tools. However those changes and additions are preserved during further synchronization.

▶ STANDARD PCVUE

The Business Layer approach is based on the standard version of PcVue. This software base serves to simplify and underpin maintenance of the business solution. ARC Informatique guarantees forward compatibility of its products, so a Business Layer evolves naturally by benefitting from new functionalities introduced in standard PcVue.

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PROVISIONAL DIAGRAM:



The external configuration tool and application generator can range from simple manual editing of configuration files to partly or fully automated generation of the variable database according to I/O lists and naming rules, or even to higher level, comprehensive data modeling tools.

The productivity improvement goals can be limited to a one-shot tool designed to ease the configuration of a given project and accelerate late modifications during commissioning, to a long-term comprehensive enterprise level management tool ensuring data modelisation and consistency on multi-site or recurring projects. This approach is suitable on both project and business terms.

When the targeted environment is wider than the **PcVue** application, it usually covers the generation of:

- PLC I/O & program skeleton
- Project documentation
- CMMS configuration
- ...

The tools used in the Business Layer can vary depending on the complexity of the customer's requirements. For the simplest requirements the process of configuring and generating the application may just mean editing **PcVue**'s standard configuration files. For more complex requirements, generation of the variable database can be partly or fully automated according to I/O lists and naming rules. For the most complex requirements a comprehensive data modeling tool and application generator (wizard) is used.

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OFFICES

FRANCE ARC Informatique - Headquarters and Paris office
2 avenue de la Cristallerie - 92310 Sèvres - France
tel + 33 1 41 14 36 00 - fax + 33 1 46 23 86 02 - hotline: Tel +33 1 41 14 36 25
email: arcnews@arcinfo.com - web: www.arcinfo.com

FRANCE - Aix Office
tel + 33 4 42 52 36 83
fax + 33 4 42 29 74 55
email: arcaix@arcinfo.com

FRANCE - Grenoble Office
tel + 33 4 76 18 73 01
fax + 33 4 76 41 06 71
email: arcgrenoble@arcinfo.com

FRANCE - Lyon Office
tel + 33 4 78 35 93 93
fax + 33 4 78 35 35 92
email: arclyon@arcinfo.com
hotline: + 33 4 78 35 93 54

FRANCE - Strasbourg Office
tel + 33 3 88 21 02 10
fax + 33 3 88 21 02 11
email: arcstrasbourg@arcinfo.com

CHINA PcVue China
Representative Office
1 WanHangDu Road,
Building B,
Office 702, Jing An District,
200040, Shanghai, P. R.
China
tel + 86 21 3214 0708
fax + 86 21 3214 0733
email: n.trang@arcinfo.com

GERMANY PcVue GmbH
Mohnweg 2 A
84079 Bruckberg
Deutschland
tel + 49 8765 938 435
fax + 49 8765 938 480
email: info@pcvue.de
web: www.pcvue.de

ITALY PcVue Srl
Linate Business Park
Via Rivoltana, 35
20096 Pioltello - Mi
Italy
tel +39 02 9267248
fax +39 02 92165771
email: info@pcvue.it
web: www.pcvue.it

JAPAN PcVue Japan
1-58, Morisue-cho
Nagoya Nakamura-ku
453-0052
Japan
tel +81 90 2349 7701
email: sales@pcvue.jp

MALAYSIA PcVue Sdn Bhd
Unit 311, block B, Phileo
Damansara 1
No. 9 Jln 16/11
46350 Petaling Jaya –
Selangor
Malaysia
tel + 60 3 7957 5187
fax + 60 3 7958 8760
email: c.vilenstein@arcinfo.com

SINGAPORE PcVue Sea
371 Beach Road
#02-12 Keypoint
Singapore 199597
tel + 65 6396 9186
fax + 65 6296 0943
email:
pcvuesea@pacific.net.sg
web: www.pcvue-sea.com
hotline: + 60 3 7957 5187

SWITZERLAND PcVue
GmbH
Harzachstrasse 2b
8404 Winterthur
Switzerland
tel + 41 52 682 19 38
fax + 41 52 682 19 58
email: info@pcvue.ch
web: www.pcvue.ch

UK Control Technology
International
Regal Chambers
49/51 Bancroft, Hitchin
Hertfordshire, SG5 1LL
England
tel + 44 1 462 45 77 00
fax + 44 1 462 45 33 77
email: info@ctiweb.co.uk
web: www.ctiweb.co.uk

USA PcVue Inc
10 Tower Office Park,
Suite # 204
Woburn, MA 01801 - USA
tel + 1 781 569 0646
fax + 1 781 569 6105
email: pcvueinc@arcinfo.com
web: www.pcvueinc.com

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