

With Microsoft's acquisition of FAST, Aeturnum sees a tremendous opportunity to integrate the breadth of FAST's best-in-class search technology with SharePoint® for solutions that offer extended search capabilities and unique user experiences.



Aeturnum Headquarters:
Westford, MA

Core Business:

A leading provider of enterprise application development services and solutions including business intelligence, data warehousing, and search services.

Objective:

Aeturnum is partnered with FAST to provide a breadth of best-in-class search capabilities for its custom search-based software solutions.

Key Markets:

- Banking & Finance
- Healthcare
- ISV
- Media
- Retail

Solution:

Customized, end-to-end search solutions that combine Aeturnum's software development expertise with the market-leading search capabilities of the FAST Enterprise Search Platform (FAST ESP®). With the Microsoft acquisition of FAST, Aeturnum sees tremendous potential for tying FAST and SharePoint technologies together in solutions that extend SharePoint's existing search capabilities using FAST and that use SharePoint's portal UI as a presentation layer for FAST ESP.

Benefits:

- Innovative search solutions enable and boost the productivity of the information worker
- FAST ESP searches internal and external sources and unifies relevant data, making it easy for users to find what they're looking for with minimal effort
- Integration opportunities with FAST and SharePoint technologies would extend and scale SharePoint's native search capabilities and provide a highly interactive presentation layer for FAST ESP

Betting on the Best

Aeturnum is a leading provider of enterprise application development services and solutions with offices in Westford, Massachusetts and R&D centers in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The company provides IT consulting, solutions, and services including systems integration, information systems outsourcing, software application development, maintenance, and R&D services to an impressive roster of major Fortune 500 and funded technology start-up companies across multiple markets.

The majority of the company's solutions are focused on business intelligence, data warehousing, and search. When it comes to selecting the right product or vendor for each of these solution areas, Aeturnum doesn't hedge its bets. "We select the best platform or product in that market and develop our capabilities around it," says Sashika Dias, Aeturnum's Director of Client Services.

Aeturnum's choice of FAST as a search technology partner reflects that approach. "When you're determining what search solutions are best for your clients it's important to have a platform behind you that can cater to a multitude of scenarios. That's why we like FAST." Dias explains, "It's the breadth of what FAST offers in terms of connecting to external data sources, the open architecture, and performance. FAST has all of these areas covered."

SharePoint—A New Frontier

Aeturnum often works with the FAST Global Services group on search-

specific projects, providing search development and deployment services and custom connectors. Now, with Microsoft's acquisition of FAST—and over one hundred million active licenses of SharePoint in use in the marketplace—Dias sees tremendous potential for tying the FAST and SharePoint technologies together in existing SharePoint installations.

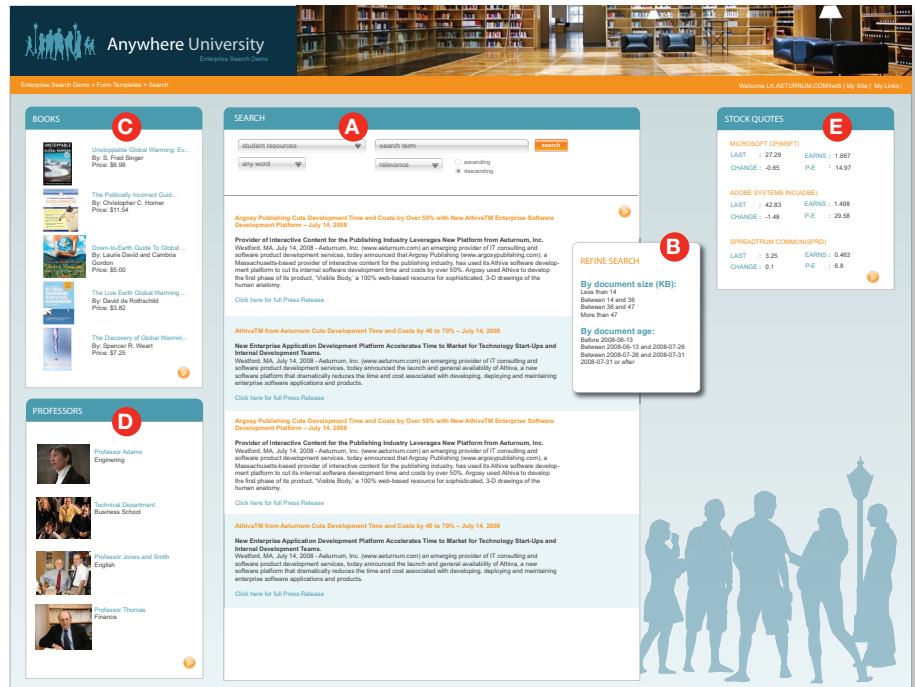
One opportunity for integration is to use FAST ESP to search and index SharePoint content for high-end scalability. SharePoint is an ideal enterprise search solution for about 25 million documents. FAST ESP is designed for even greater scale in content volume, index freshness, and query performance. "When you have a few hundred thousand users and the associated volume of content, FAST ESP can give you the scalability you need," says Dias.

A second area of opportunity is to use SharePoint as a presentation layer for FAST search. SharePoint provides an easy platform: Many organizations already have a SharePoint portal in place—often for managing and accessing content. FAST technology enhances SharePoint content search capabilities and extends search to a variety of data sources across the enterprise—email databases and ERP sources, for instance—and even to external sources. Dias explains, "FAST can unify all of those results and bring them back and display them via the SharePoint portal UI."

Plug-And-Play Parts

FAST and Microsoft already are developing Web parts—reusable UI components—to

Anywhere Student Portal (Figure 1, Screen Shot)



- (A) The pure FAST ESP search interface.
- (B) Selecting certain characteristics further refines search results.
- (C) A Web part utilizes the entered search term(s) to search Amazon.com and return a list of relevant books and prices.
- (D) FAST indexes internal and external databases of professors. Relevant contacts are returned based on search terms.
- (E) The FAST company extractor function displays all of the company names found within the search results and appends up-to-the-minute stock quotes.

facilitate the task of building FAST ESP-based search sites inside SharePoint. Aeturnum is one of a handful of FAST partners selected to assist with this initiative on Codeplex, the Microsoft-hosted open source project site.

Dias comments, "One of the great things about the Web parts is that, for different roles, you can develop different home screens very easily. For instance, for a financial analyst, specific Web parts can display stock quotes or news feeds for financial information. For a marketing manager, a different Web part can enable searchable access to the marketing contacts database."

Aeturnum has developed a proof-of-concept that helps customers visualize the capabilities of Web parts in an integrated FAST-SharePoint solution (see Figure 1, Screen Shot—Anywhere University Student Portal). Dias explains, "We've built in a lot of value-added areas around a central search theme on one screen. It's an example of how Web parts make it very quick and easy to develop, which helps clients visualize the end product early in the process and provide feedback."

With the unifying capabilities of FAST search, the interactivity of the SharePoint portal UI, and the continued development of open and extensible Web parts, Dias says his company is enthusiastic about the opportunities that the integration of

the FAST and SharePoint technologies represent for both Aeturnum and its customers.

About Aeturnum

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About FAST, A Microsoft® Subsidiary

FAST is the leading global provider of best-in-class enterprise search technologies for the most demanding applications. FAST's flexible and scalable enterprise search platform (FAST ESP), empowers people and businesses, allowing them to explore and assimilate vast amounts of data regardless of format. By creating unique user experiences and changing the way people interact with information, FAST technologies can uncover new revenue streams, improve business decisions, and increase productivity.

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