



## Advertising Company Modernizes Core IT Infrastructure with Microsoft Technologies

### Overview

**Company:** GroupM

**Company Website:** [www.groupm.com](http://www.groupm.com)

**Company Size:** 24,000 employees

**Country or Region:** United Kingdom

**Industry:** Media

### Company Profile

GroupM is WPP's consolidated media investment management operation, serving as the parent company to agencies including MediaCom Worldwide, MEC Global, Mindshare Worldwide, and MAXUS.

### Business Situation

The advertising world is adapting to the rapid consumer adoption of digital media. GroupM must form new business models and integrate new sources of data to make intelligent purchasing decisions.

### Solution

GroupM used the Microsoft .NET framework and Visual Studio integrated development environment to develop a central data repository and flexible platform to manage business processes.

### Benefits

- Comprehensive analysis with central data repository
- Reduced time to market for new services
- Faster development with Microsoft technology

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Javier Campos, CIO, GroupM Europe

Experiencing the rapid changes in the advertising industry first-hand, industry leading media investment management company GroupM decided it needed to take a new approach to data management and analysis to better support its clients. About two years ago, the firm undertook a modern development project to deliver a central data repository that could support current and future business processes. It chose Microsoft .NET and Microsoft Visual Studio to develop the mission-critical solution because Microsoft could deliver on the whole spectrum of technologies needed, including databases, security, identity management, and modern user-interfaces. Now in production in Spain, with a Europe rollout planned, the GMCore solution is helping GroupM agencies better serve their clients with comprehensive data analysis across the traditional advertising channels and new digital technologies.



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José Enrique Monedero, CIO  
GroupM Spain

## Situation

GroupM is the parent company for the media investment management agencies owned by WPP, the world's largest communications services group. GroupM agencies include MediaCom Worldwide, MEC Global, Mindshare Worldwide, and MAXUS. GroupM provides the technology and oversight to help these agencies provide their clients with volume and scale in trading and innovative services such as content creation, digital communications, new business, finance, and proprietary tool development.

GroupM constantly develops new initiatives to keep its agencies at the forefront of media services. It has a history of innovation including renowned marketplace analytics, benchmarking, and market simulation modeling, which are used to develop trading strategies and deliver best-in-class results for its clients. Despite having best-of-breed applications in place, the IT team of GroupM Europe believed that it needed to modernize its strategy and systems in order to meet the requirements of the company's clients in the future.

The media industry is changing rapidly with new media consumption types, the generation of massive amounts of user data, location services, programmatic buying, and many new business models. "Our business is undergoing great changes and will be vastly different in 10 years. Thinking ahead we decided to implement a new strategy with a new technology platform," says Javier Campos, CIO, GroupM Europe.

Though its systems helped GroupM become a market leader, the team thought they were not flexible enough for the future. GroupM wanted to be able to implement new business strategies quickly

and handle complex requirements including those for managing massive volumes of data, security, and Sarbanes-Oxley compliance. "Our business comes down to the ability to manage a huge amount of data. We have to be able to consolidate data from a regional and global level for our clients," adds José Enrique Monedero, CIO, GroupM Spain. "Today we have a lot of smart people using Excel to combine data from many sources for each client, but we know that wastes a lot of time and talent. We need to reduce these administrative steps and make it easier for staff to get insights from the data."

The IT team of GroupM Spain was tasked with developing the new software, called GMCORE, with support from the GroupM Europe architecture team. The goal of the project was to build a central data repository for all of its business applications and define an application framework to support the business logic for current and future business models.

## Solution

Aptly named, GMCORE would be fundamental to GroupM's business processes so the firm pursued the best technologies available to build it. "We chose Microsoft technologies because they provide full coverage of our technical needs. By using Microsoft products and technologies for every aspect of the project we know the technologies will work together," says Monedero. "Microsoft also has a stable and proven platform with a great roadmap so its low-risk for this long-term project."

Microsoft's impressive partner ecosystem to support .NET development projects was also a factor. "Sogeti Spain was our partner of choice for this important venture. They have delivered invaluable skills and

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Ainara Rasines, Applications Director,  
GroupM Spain

expertise to the project over the past two years,” says Monedero.

Sogeti worked with the business experts from GroupM to implement the road map for the project that was designed by the GroupM Europe architecture team. GroupM chose to build GMCore as a domain oriented n-layered application meaning that Domain-Driven Design (DDD) principles were followed along with a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) for the applications.

“This is a huge project that integrates technologies in many layers. We worked with the domain experts from GroupM to answer the necessary DDD design questions to create the domain based on .NET classes and interfaces, says Carlos Mendible, .NET Architect, Sogeti Spain. “The .NET framework makes developing a complex DDD system easy.”

To build the application GroupM used Microsoft Visual Studio and Team Foundation Server. “Visual Studio has every component, tool, and extension to meet our development needs and it’s perfectly integrated with Team Foundation Server, which, in our opinion, is the best application lifecycle management solution in the marketplace,” says Ainara Rasines, Applications Director, GroupM Spain.

One chief capability of Visual Studio is the code generation using T4 templates. “We have all of our business processes modeled using classes. If we need to make a change, we just modify the graphic representation of the model and use the code generator to produce the artifacts. We can produce 95 percent of the code automatically,” adds Rasines.

The GMCore application is in production in Spain and will be shortly rolled out to

several countries in Europe. It is designed to be global with support for global currencies and many languages.

## Benefits

GMCore builds on the history of technical innovation at GroupM and provides the capabilities it needs to continue to be an industry leader as the firm adapts to the growth of digital media. By developing GMCore using the Microsoft .NET framework, GroupM was able to take advantage of the latest technologies to produce a flexible application that can quickly support new business models and enable access from nearly any device.

### **Making analysis easier with consolidated data repository**

“Data is very fragmented in the digital space. This platform allows us to pull all of the disparate data together and gain a lot of structure on top of it, including comprehensive data quality services,” says Campos. By combining market data and transactional data into one repository, GMCore makes it easier to extract insights from that data for GroupM clients.

### **Reducing time to market for new services**

By spending time to define its business processes in the core domain with the DDD approach, GroupM has made it very easy to change the framework in response to business conditions. Business logic is completely separate from the core domain and new services can be added quickly without affecting existing business models. “Our challenge was to create a framework that we can expand and adapt quickly and easily—Microsoft and Sogeti have helped us do that. GMCore is easy to manage and scalable and our time to market for new services and new functionality is much faster,” says Rasines. “Our data is now centralized and we can easily add new

## Visual Studio

Visual Studio 2012's Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) capabilities provide your teams with powerful tools that span the entire modern application lifecycle to ensure quality and reduce cycle times while delivering continuous value from design to deployment. Whether you're developing applications for SharePoint, the web, Windows, Windows Phone, or beyond, Visual Studio is your ultimate all-in-one solution.

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For more information about Sogeti Spain products and services, visit the website at: [www.es.sogeti.com](http://www.es.sogeti.com)

For more information about GroupM products and services, visit the website at: [www.groupm.com](http://www.groupm.com)

sources plus we have the technology to make changes quickly with the code generators."

### Speeding development with Microsoft technology

The .NET framework and Visual Studio Integrated development environment (IDE) were instrumental to the success of the project. "Microsoft .NET and Visual Studio, provide a good foundation that enabled us to build a great platform. We gained flexible technology, ease of use, and access to valuable partners like Sogeti," says Campos.

Rasines adds: "The .NET framework was a great starting point and we could adapt core components to our requirements. Once the definitions of DDD were clear it was easy to implement the solution using .NET."

Having the entire development environment in one platform also sped development. "Both developers and managers have improved their productivity using Visual Studio and Team Foundation Server as a single collaboration platform for version control, continuous integration, work item tracking, project planning, and reporting," says Rasines.

Looking ahead, GroupM is confident that Microsoft will stay on the leading edge of programming technology. "Microsoft keeps

on enhancing the .NET framework and Visual Studio IDE, so we will have access to the latest technologies as we enhance GMCore," says Rasines.

### Software and Services

- Microsoft Visual Studio
  - Microsoft Visual Studio Ultimate
  - Microsoft Team Foundation Server
- Technologies
  - Microsoft .NET Framework