

# Marathon Technologies

Innovative high availability software firm enables IT teams to easily select and protect applications running on virtual machines using an intuitive console built in Adobe® Flex™

## Marathon Technologies

[www.marthontechologies.com](http://www.marthontechologies.com)



## In Partnership With

UI Foundry

[www.uifoundry.com](http://www.uifoundry.com)



## Industry

Technology

## Challenges

Provide IT administrators with an intuitive web interface that simplifies notoriously difficult availability management

## Solution

- RIA management console for virtual server availability

Marathon Technologies embraced the Adobe Flex framework to build an elegant RIA console that visually simplifies complex configuration activities, fault detection, and policy management into a simple, clean user highly branded interface.

## Results

- Cut development cycle and staff requirements in half
- Built more functional product faster than previous Java generation efforts
- Enhanced overall functionality and usability of award-winning product
- Helped position Marathon product as superior to Microsoft HyperView
- Set stage to move to Adobe AIR™ platform
- Leveraged Adobe's consolidated approach to building full-service software

## Systems At A Glance

- Adobe Flex

## Keeping enterprises up and running

Two of the most unwelcome words in an IT manager's vocabulary are unplanned downtime. With most companies now relying on round-the-clock availability from their essential applications, IT managers need to do everything in their power to achieve uninterrupted availability, 100% data protection, and rapid disaster recovery.

Marathon Technologies, a privately held corporation based in Littleton, Massachusetts with offices worldwide, enables IT managers to do just that. Using the Adobe Flex framework, Marathon teamed with UI Foundry to develop a rich Internet application (RIA) console that manages and monitors the world's first fault-tolerant, high availability software (everRun VM) for server virtualization. The software integrates with Citrix XenServer environments, all through one-click operation.

"Our management console created with Adobe Flex enables people to set up and protect virtual machines in 30 minutes or less—and maintain availability protection without needing specialized IT skills," says Jerry Melnick, chief technology officer at Marathon.

Marathon has over 2,000 customers in more than 34 countries, ranging from midsize businesses to Fortune 500 companies. These companies use Marathon's everRun software family to protect business critical applications such as Microsoft Exchange Server, SQL Server, and SharePoint as well as mission critical applications in regulated industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, and gaming. Marathon's customer roster includes four out of the world's top five broadcast networks, five of the top ten global pharmaceutical companies, and hundreds of entertainment properties. everRun is distributed on servers via an OEM agreement with Fujitsu Japan and over 300 ISV and reseller strategic partners.

## Simply visualizing complex activities

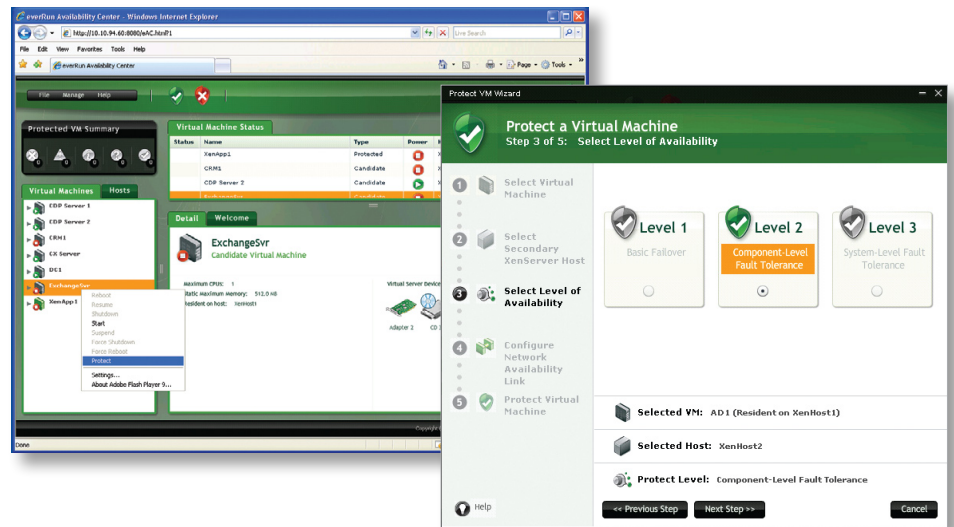
Marathon needed to replace Java™ components used in previous generations of its products with a web-based, centralized console that had features, functionality, and performance typically found in traditional desktop applications. The solution had to visually simplify complex configuration activities, fault detection, and policy management into a simple, clean user interface. Additionally, the solution had to be platform independent, enable remote management capability, and provide consolidated, intuitive views of complex server environments.

"Most of our software lies deep beneath the covers where users can't see," says Melnick. But they can see the interface. "The value proposition of using Adobe Flex lies in how we cost-effectively built a rich, elegant user interface that consolidates and simplifies huge amounts of data across complex server environments—positioning our product line even further ahead of the product curve."

From a development standpoint, Marathon compared Flex to many other products, including Java-based technologies, but opted for Flex because they could get their developers up to speed fast and cost-efficiently leverage outside help as well as resources found on the huge Flex community. They wanted the richness of a Flex UI that could also provide robust interoperability.



Marathon and UI Foundry used the Adobe Flex framework to develop an RIA console that manages and monitors the world's first fault-tolerant, high availability software (everRun VM) for server virtualization. The teams developed a dashboard-like interface that monitors the state and availability of protected virtual machines. The interface permits storage and network device configuration, integrates context sensitive help and documentation, and enhances the everRun VM product line through its branded look and feel.



*“The value proposition of using Adobe Flex lies in how we cost-effectively built a rich, elegant user interface that consolidates and simplifies huge amounts of data across complex server environments—positioning our product line even further ahead of the product curve.”*

Jerry Melnick,  
Chief technical officer,  
Marathon Technologies

### Rapid development cycle bears better product

The project team started out with two developers. To expand its capabilities, Marathon turned to UI Foundry, a firm known for its Flex expertise and prowess in strategic design and development services for rich Internet applications that illustrate a commitment to thoughtful user interaction, visual design, and enterprise-grade engineering.

Together, the two teams developed a dashboard-like interface that monitors the state and availability of protected virtual machines. The interface permits storage and network device configuration, integrates context sensitive help and documentation (based on the WebHelp layout in Adobe RoboHelp®), and enhances the everRun VM product line through its branded look and feel.

Sandy Scott, Principal Software Engineer at Marathon, explains that the team allocated four months to the project. “That’s half the time it took us to build previous generations in Java that had significantly less functionality,” she says. At the end of the day, it took half as many person-hours to deliver a higher functioning solution that looks a whole lot better than its predecessors.

The open source nature of the Flex framework was critical to the project’s success, according to UI Foundry RIA Architect Kenneth Garee. The developers made great use of the built-in communications components in Flex and relied heavily on worldwide community resources to maximize the dashboard’s usability. They found the Flex profiler to be particularly useful throughout the process. Now, the team is positioned to leverage their development investment as they move forward with plans to move the Flex dashboard to Adobe AIR.

Ben Pearson, UI Foundry Information Architect adds that the Flex SDK component’s highly customizable skinning properties and interaction models were ideal for rapidly building out the interface—resulting in a branded, user-centric experience that has proven to be a strong product differentiator for Marathon over the competitive field. Based on the success of this project, both the UI Foundry team and the Marathon team agree that the Adobe Flex framework provides the most consolidated approach to building full software service than any other technology on the market.

### For More Information

[www.adobe.com/products/flex/](http://www.adobe.com/products/flex/)



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