

# LANSA Case Study

## LANSA for the Web makes ordering books as easy as 1, 2, 3!

Scholastic Canada, the leading publisher and distributor of books for children in Canada is using LANSAs for the Web and the AS/400 to let teachers place school book club orders over the Web. Currently orders are received by telephone, fax and mail. The September 1997 launch of ClubsOnline, Scholastic's online ordering system, will make it easier for teachers to place orders and also speed up the delivery of books. The benefits of online ordering have already been enthusiastically greeted by a test group of teachers, who can place book club orders when it suits them in real-time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



**Bob Shrewsbury-Gee**, Director of Operations, welcomes this long awaited initiative. "It's simple. Teachers are looking for a helping hand in the classroom and Scholastic Canada wants to meet the challenge. We have long supported teachers and strive to bring books and children together. Now, with the new technology from LANSAs and the creative initiative of our team, we have a perfect fit. We're bringing teachers and technology together."

"With LANSAs for the Web and the AS/400 we were able to easily develop our first eBusiness application. In two years time we hope to halve the number of telephone orders and process a large number of orders via the Web. Since Web order entry has lower processing costs compared with taking orders over the phone this will be a substantial saving."

"In phase two of this project we plan to take online orders in French as well as English. This should be easy because of LANSAs's multi-lingual facilities. We are also thinking about adding electronic funds transfer facilities to the system in a later phase. This would reduce the cost per order even further." Ordering is now a simple three step process saving teachers' time and improving customer service. The system calculates both the amount owing, the bonus dollars earned and checks the status of previous orders. Once the order is submitted over the Web, the

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process of picking, packing and shipping the books begins automatically. Scholastic's customer service representatives can attend to pressing matters sooner.

**Frank Deme**, Director of MIS at Scholastic, explains how Scholastic brought this innovation to life. "A few years ago we started to look around for an order entry method that would provide better service to our customers and at the same time reduce our costs. Online order entry seemed the way to go, but none of the offered solutions were appropriate for us as they either needed expensive new hardware or software and often both."

Frank continues "Early this year Greg Best from LANSAs Canada told us about LANSAs for the Web which targets secure transaction processing, rather than static Web pages. At that point, Shell Canada had a Human Resources Intranet application using LANSAs well on its way."

"This was clearly the solution! We could use our existing AS/400. We could use our existing skills. We did not have to replicate our data and the Web order entry could be fully integrated with our existing order processing system."



“To prove the concept, we created a working prototype using LANSA and I/NET’s WebServer/400 in only 4 or 5 weeks time. The prototype could move an order through the complete process from start to finish. We could re-use the existing back end processing of telephone orders. The new and old systems are totally integrated and the processing code is shared.”

“Next we used a select group of teachers to test and further refine the system. We contacted about 50 teachers who sent their orders by email and gave them a short introduction to the online order process. We got very good reports and positive reactions from these early adopters.”

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“The ClubsOnline project is going well”, Frank concludes. “Now we want to use the same LANSA Web technology to provide our field representatives with a facility to look up information on the AS/400 about their accounts, while in the field.”

## Company and System Information

- Scholastic Canada is the country’s largest publisher and distributor of books and magazines for children. Its parent company is Scholastic Inc. in the United States and sister companies are located in Australia, Mexico, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.
- Scholastic Canada’s operations include:
  - Book Clubs: Classroom book clubs in English and French for children, teachers and parents in schools across Canada. These include Elf, SeeSaw, Lucky, Arrow/Tab, Criterion, Arc-en-ciel/Clic and other related offerings.
  - Book Fairs: Celebrate reading and provide fundraising opportunities for schools.
  - Education: Classroom, curriculum and professional materials in French and English. Trade/Publishing: Canadian and international children’s titles sold in retail stores across Canada.
  - Home Continuity programs: Subscription service delivering children’s books to the home.
  - Magazines: Classroom and professional magazines for schools.
- Scholastic Canada has its head office in Richmond Hill, Ontario and has eleven branch locations across Canada. The company employs 250 full-time staff and takes on approximately 200 temporary staff work during the school year.
- To learn more about Scholastic Canada visit their Web site at [www.scholastic.ca](http://www.scholastic.ca).
- Scholastic Canada’s AS/400 model 510/2144 with 90 PC’s and 150 green screens connected locally and via a WAN in remote locations. Next year Scholastic moves to an AS/400 Advanced Server model.

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