Fortis PowerWeb™
The document component for e-business

PRODUCT OVERVIEW

Revised June 2003

Westbrook
technologies incorporated

Contents

Introduction

Fortis PowerWeb is a robust Web server that enables users to access document stored in a Fortis database. A multi-user Windows-based client/server software suite, Fortis enables the capture and retrieval of paper-based, electronic, faxed, and ERM documents and supports several database engines. Using the World Wide Web and Internet Explorer, PowerWeb extends the capabilities of Fortis to your user base regardless of geographic location.

Whether you're running Fortis on a local intranet or on a server on the other side of the world, PowerWeb lets users search for documents, update data, annotate documents, and add new documents – from anywhere. PowerWeb supports standard Web technology, leverages the highest degree of encryption, and permits public or private access to your document repository. Users access data in an easy-to-navigate HTML format, and documents are displayed via an efficient and secure ActiveX control.

PowerWeb uses its own Web server software or runs on the Microsoft Internet Information Server (IIS). Standard PowerWeb is designed to be a complete Web server for organizations that want to host a Web site but do not yet have a Web server. The standard PowerWeb server is a pure HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP) server, compatible with Java Script, ActiveX, HTML, and Dynamic HTML applets. PowerWeb for IIS provides complete PowerWeb functionality for the IIS server while taking advantage of such IIS server capabilities as Secure Socket Layer (SSL) for enhanced security.

PowerWeb is dedicated to Web services and is designed to integrate seamlessly into a company's existing Web strategy. Both the standard PowerWeb server and the PowerWeb for IIS server can be configured to run as part of an existing corporate Web platform where another server acts as the corporate Web site with a link to the PowerWeb server. Either server can also function as a dedicated Web server running the corporate Web site and PowerWeb on different ports.

PowerWeb is delivered with the standard PowerWeb server software, two sample template sets plus the more complex Default template set that enables the PowerWeb administrator to create the Fortis Web site. The template sets can be used as shipped, or a PowerWeb administrator can customize them using standard HTML editing tools. While the templates provide customization flexibility, PowerWeb comes ready to run just as it is delivered.

PowerWeb Architecture

The architecture of PowerWeb involves three components:

1. a Web server

    You can use either:

    *   the standard PowerWeb server running on a Windows 2000 server-class machine, or
    *   the Microsoft IIS server, which is included with Windows 2000 and XP.

2. a set of customizable HTML pages, with Fortis tags embedded, that constitutes the Fortis Web site.

3. an ActiveX Viewer control that automatically downloads and allows users to view Fortis documents within Internet Explorer.

Visit www.westbrooktech.com/products/fortis/fortis_specifications.htm for minimum system specifications. See Microsoft's system requirements for the IIS server.

PowerWeb Server

The standard PowerWeb server is a fully functional HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP) Web server for Windows 2000 and Windows XP. In addition to processing standard HTTP requests, the PowerWeb server also recognizes "extended" URL tags to perform actions on a Fortis database. The actions requested by the browser client dictate which template the PowerWeb server uses to create an HTML page to send to the user's browser.

When browser clients access the PowerWeb server, the server parses the request from the client and displays the appropriate HTML page to the user. The PowerWeb server generates the HTML page based on the information contained in the request from the client, which can include instructions to open a specific Fortis database and retrieve a specific document or run a specific Query. The Fortis tags embedded in the template are replaced with data from the open Fortis database. This capability enables PowerWeb to present Fortis database structures and documents in HTML format, thereby letting users view Fortis documents within Internet Explorer.

The standard PowerWeb server provides the following features:

- standard NCSA logging to the server's hard drive to track the user base and gather site statistics.

- support for cgi-bin extensions to extend the PowerWeb server by adding server processing functionality, including Perl Scripts, batch files, or standard executables.

- automatic MIME-type mapping.

- virtual directories – mapping directories on the server machine to simple aliases.

- user timeouts – configuring the PowerWeb server to "timeout" and disconnect a user if a new request isn't received within a specified time period.

- connection limits – configuring the maximum number of connected sockets to maintain peak performance.

- redirection – configuring PowerWeb to redirect additional users to another machine when the maximum number of sockets are connected

These features are accessed through the Fortis PowerWeb Configuration dialog box, shown in Figure 1.
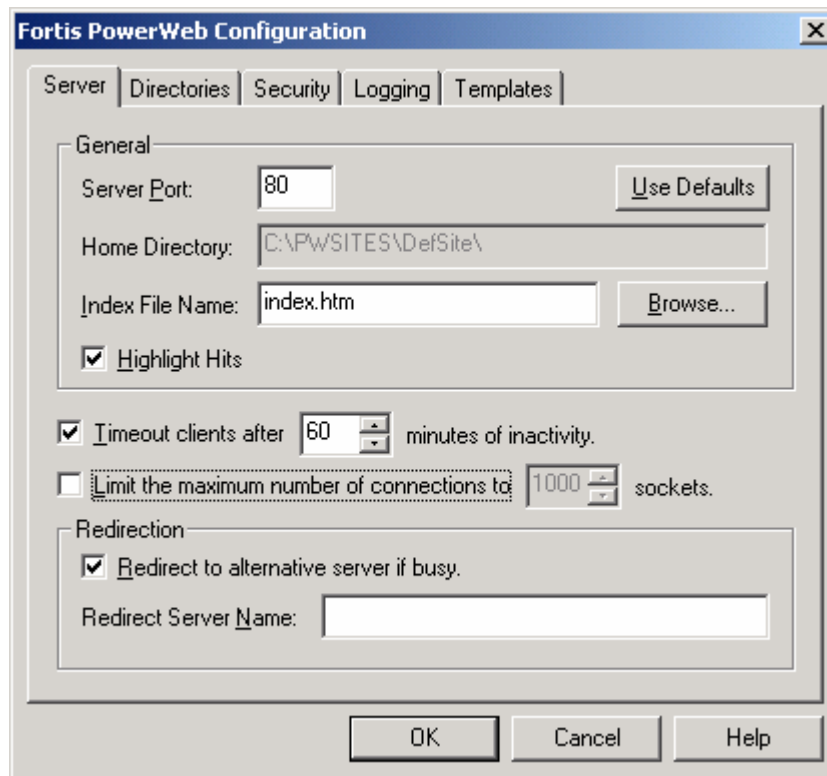

Figure 1: Fortis PowerWeb Configuration Dialog Box

For installations that have not already installed the Microsoft IIS server and are just beginning to offer Web services, standard PowerWeb is a simple solution to starting a thin client user base. However, the standard PowerWeb server does not provide the advanced security and configuration features of PowerWeb for IIS.

The PowerWeb for IIS server supports all the features and advantages of the Microsoft IIS server, including Active Server Pages, Secure Socket Layer for enhanced security and centralized administration for multiple servers.

Standard PowerWeb and PowerWeb for IIS are both fully functional inside or outside a firewall. Configuring PowerWeb behind a firewall is the same as configuring access to any other Web-based service. The network administrator must ensure that the firewall is configured to direct Internet traffic to the TCP/IP address and port on which the PowerWeb server application is listening.

With a PowerWeb server outside the firewall, administrators must make certain the appropriate file access ports are open on the firewall so that PowerWeb can access resource files in the shared-client directory and the database, as well as all document locations. Both network locations must be made available to PowerWeb through the firewall.

PowerWeb Template Sets

Westbrook Technologies provides three PowerWeb template sets to accommodate a wide variety of Web server interface requirements: the Default, Frame, and No-Frame template sets. Each template file contains HTML code, scripts and Fortis tags that enable PowerWeb to construct an HTML page (or part of a page) to present to the user. While some of the HTML code is required for to accurately access a database function, the look and feel of these template pages is entirely customizable. PowerWeb pages can even be designed to identically match the look and feel of a company's existing Web site. In addition, certain functionality can be added or removed from individual template files.

The PowerWeb administrator can present one of four standard PowerWeb views to users once they've opened a database:

- Explore or Documents view – the Folder hierarchy

- Searches or Queries view – the Query Set hierarchy

- Find By view – a list of Document Types

- Import view – for importing a document and index data into the open Fortis database (Edit Station users only)

The Default template set creates a tabbed dialog interface, shown in Figure 2, to provide access to the four PowerWeb views.

Figure 2: Logon Page with the Default Template Set

The Frame template set creates a multi-frame interface with buttons instead of tabs:
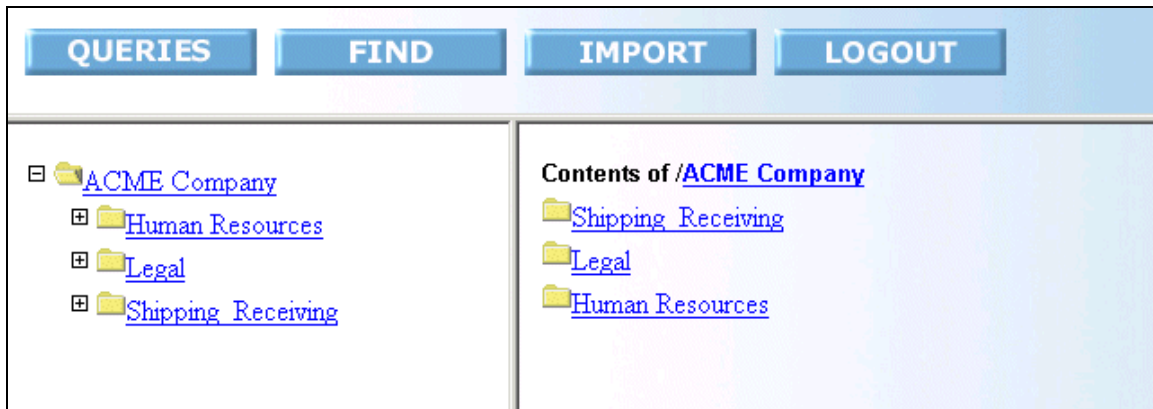

Figure 3: Contents Page with the Frame Template Set

The No-Frame template set creates a simple interface:
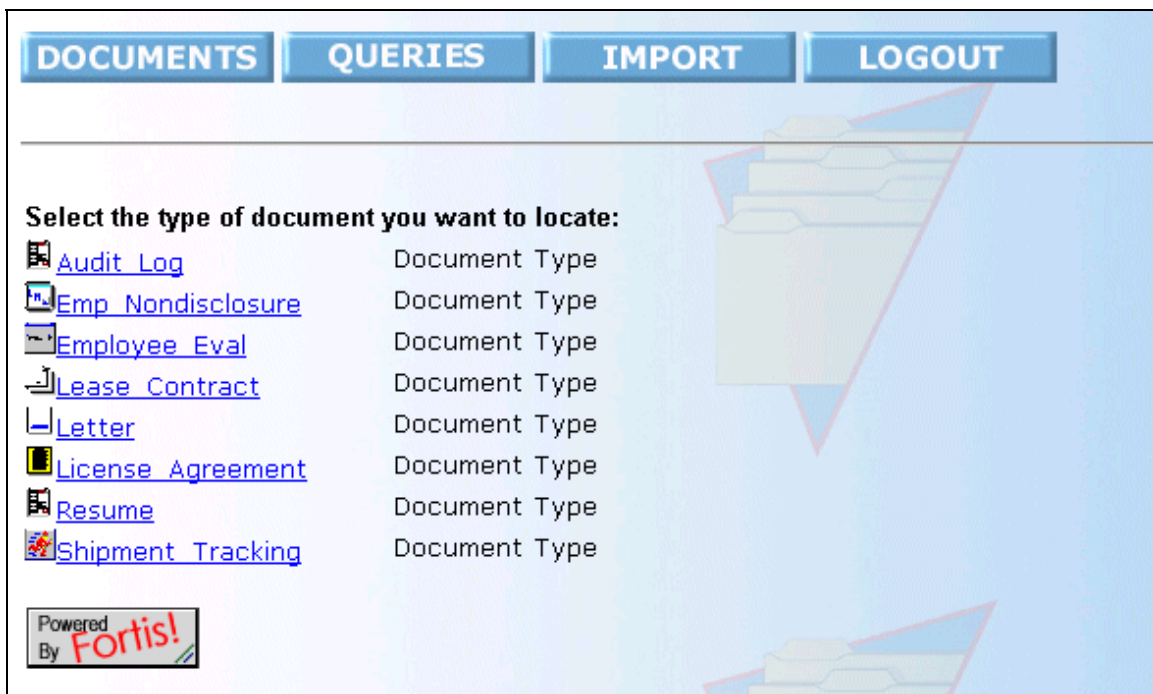

Figure 4: Document Explorer Page with the No-Frame Template Set

Each template set includes a number of template files (.fht) that PowerWeb uses to create each Web page. No-Frame pages often use only one template file, while more complex, multi-frame pages require several template files to construct the complete page. Any of these template files can be customized using any standard HTML or text editor. However, we recommend that you not use an HTML editor that adds extraneous metadata. Because the

PowerWeb delivers results that are standard HTML, the PowerWeb templates can also make use of Java, ActiveX, VBScript, and other standard Web development tools.

The ability to customize the PowerWeb interface enables the administrator to design elegant interfaces, complete with predetermined search routines and user instructions right on the Web page. In addition, a customized PowerWeb interface can present the full functionality of Fortis PowerWeb or present a small subset of PowerWeb capabilities. The interface can be customized for individual customers so that different logon IDs call up different home pages and present content and functionality specific to each customer.

Document Viewer

PowerWeb users find documents just as in a regular Fortis system by executing a Query, using a Find for documents of a certain Document Type, or traversing the Folder hierarchy. Once they've located a document to view, the ActiveX Viewer control enables users to open the Fortis Document Viewer within the Internet Explorer browser.

The browser Document Viewer, shown in Figure 5, provides most of the same functionality as the regular Fortis Viewer. Users can rotate, zoom in and out, print, export, insert files, and delete pages. The ActiveX Viewer control also allows users to turn on thumbnails, set Viewer preferences, and annotate the documents in the Viewer. Edit Station users can add and edit a document's index data.
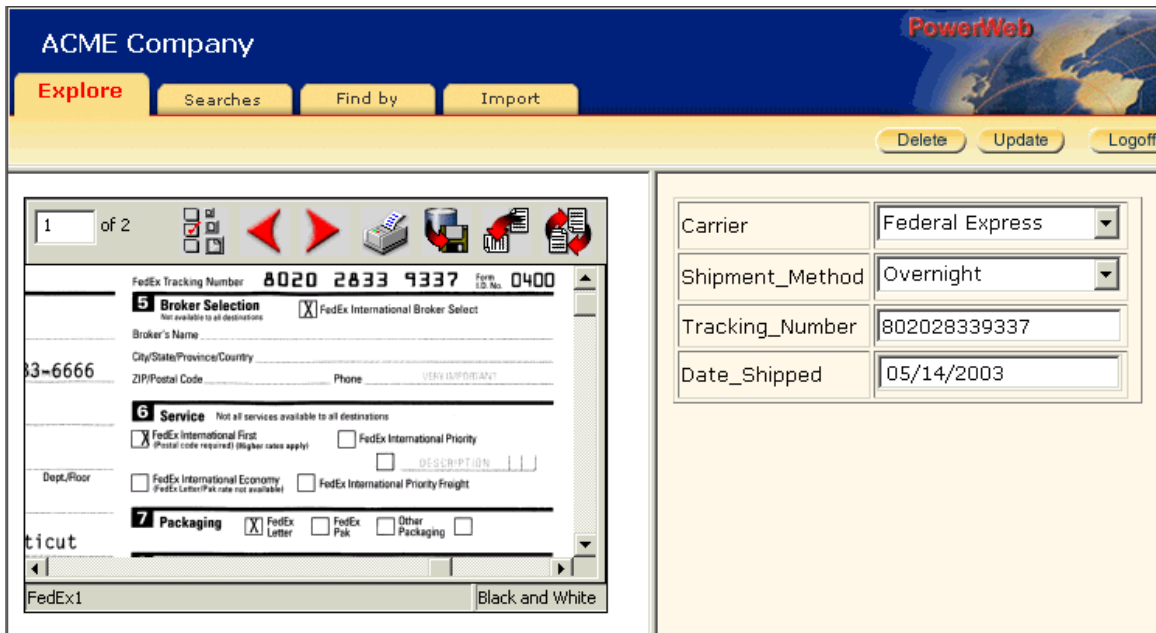

Figure 5: PowerWeb Document Viewer

Fortis Tags

Fortis PowerWeb provides an extensive set of Fortis tags that can be used inside the templates. The PowerWeb and IIS servers recognize these tags and replace them with Fortis data. The Fortis tags, which begin and end with an @ and are all uppercase, embed the functionality of Fortis inside the Web site.

When the PowerWeb server receives a Fortis-specific request, it uses the appropriate template file (or set of files) to return the requested data in the form of an HTML page. The server replaces any special Fortis tags embedded in the template files with data. For example, when the PowerWeb server encounters the Fortis tag @DATABASE_NAME@ in a template, it replaces this tag with the name of the currently open database when it constructs the HTML page.

The Fortis tags can be divided into several groups by functionality:

- Basic tags are replaced with items of information, such as the name of the open database or the hierarchy path of the open Folder.

- Navigational tags are replaced with hyperlinks to other pages in the PowerWeb site.

- Frame-specific tags are replaced with the appropriate frames when the server constructs a multi-frame page.

- Results Set tags are used by the server to create a table of items retrieved from a Fortis database, such as a results table of documents retrieved by a Search or Query.

- Internal tags are used by the server to maintain the appropriate connection and pass information to and from the client.

Summary

Regardless of whether you customize PowerWeb extensively or use it as it comes, PowerWeb excels in providing access to corporate documents from a Web browser anywhere in the world. Users require almost no training because they already know how to use a browser, and documents are easy to find and view, offering users a variety of access methods. PowerWeb also provides an easy roll-out of new documents as users can access the document they need by clicking a hyperlink.

The standard PowerWeb server is a fully functional HTTP Web server that allows users to access documents in a secure environment using the Internet or an intranet. Features available with the standard PowerWeb server include NCSA-compatible logging, cgi-bin support, automatic MIME-type mapping, virtual directories, user timeouts, connection limits, and redirection to another machine when the maximum number of sockets is connected.

PowerWeb for IIS runs on the Microsoft Internet Information Server and provides all the features of standard PowerWeb. In addition, PowerWeb for IIS supports the features and advantages of the Microsoft IIS server, including Active Server Pages, Secure Socket Layer for encrypted communication between the browser and the server, and centralized administration for multiple servers.

PowerWeb is a simple solution to servicing a user base that is geographically disparate, yet because PowerWeb is driven by Fortis, users have access to a comprehensive, feature-rich document management system with no software to install and no application to learn.

For additional information about PowerWeb or other Westbrook Technologies products, go to www.westbrooktech.com/about/want_to_know_more.htm.