

Content DSI adds the MIDAS touch to Hemming Information Services' Internal Production and External Customer Service**Hemming's Goals**

Develop a centralized content management system that allows

- export to print and electronic formats
- creation of subset directories and new publications
- remote access to task lists and databases
- access to system to provide clients with up-to-date mailing lists in numerous formats

The Solution

A comprehensive user-friendly content management system that allows for customized searches and export to print and electronic media.

BACKGROUND

Hemming Information Services (HIS) is a division of Hemming Group Ltd., part of which was formerly known as Newman Books. The company's areas of expertise include: Retail UK & Europe, Food Industry UK & Europe, International Trade, and UK Local Government. HIS publishes a range of directories and trade magazines that include *The MJ*, *Surveyor*, *Importing Today*, *Export Trade*, *Company Clothing & Lingerie Buyer*. Traditionally a directory publisher, HIS also supplies marketing services data and produces the *Municipal Year Book* on CD-ROM, voted best CD-ROM Directory 2000 by the Directory and Database Publishers Association (DPA).

THE CHALLENGE

With faster computers, modems, and Internet access, consumers demand and expect timely and accurate information. In today's customer-focused business environment, Hemming was looking for ways to maintain its competitive edge by improving customer service—by providing up-to-date information to customers on demand in the formats they prefer. Hemming needed to build a content management system that would hold data from all its directories, and would allow authors and graphic designers to export information in print as well as electronic formats. The system would have to allow for the creation of subset publications as well as new publications. To further improve customer service, editors would have to be able to access their task lists and databases remotely. Sales and marketing staff would also need to have access to the same system in order to provide their clients up-to-the-minute mailing lists in a variety of formats.

Hemming needed a partner who had expertise and experience in data conversion, database design,

content management, and Web publishing. A long-standing relationship with HIS led to Content DSI developing Hemming's first database system in 1996—for the Municipal Year Book directory. With 35 years of experience, combined with best-of-breed strategic business partnerships, a proven methodology, and a superb track record with Hemming, Content DSI emerged as an excellent business partner for Hemming Information Services' latest endeavor.

THE SOLUTION

Content DSI began the immense task of converting data from five of Hemming's print directories. This included information on thousands of retailers in 29 European countries, the entire food and drink industry in Europe and the UK, and thousands of UK-based manufacturing companies. The data resided in three separate databases.

Named the Media Independent Directory Authoring System (MIDAS), this content management system contains all the information from Hemming's directories and drives its online, CD-ROM, and print publications. Centralizing the information allowed Hemming to save money, while reducing the time it took to produce custom lists and publications.

Content DSI developed a system that allows administrators to tailor lists by selecting criteria and downloading only the information they request. The "Slice and Dice" feature allows users to export data and produce tailored record sets and publications. Hemming can define users' profiles and security levels so that each staff member has the appropriate access and clearance he or she requires.

Administrators can create new fields in the database and re-sort the data alphabetically, numerically, or

Technology Employed

Filemaker

Microsoft Access

Microsoft SQL Server

Unix

Visual Basic 6

Content DSI Company Overview

Content Data Solutions, Inc., a software and systems integrator, provides custom content management, cross-media publishing and e-business solutions to leading commercial publishers, industrial manufacturers and other content centric companies.

We apply proven methodologies and processes to help enable our clients to author, store and manage information from a central data repository, publish that information in multiple formats and import and export data to and from internal business systems. Our solutions help companies efficiently manage and publish their information.

Content DSI has the experience and expertise to develop a clear understanding of our clients' goals, requirements and business issues. We then recommend, design and implement an effective solution to satisfy their needs.

We highly value the relationships we establish with our clients and are dedicated to delivering the highest level of service.

by any other criteria without destroying the integrity of the information. Content DSI built the functionality that allows Hemming to add new fields or new export formats for new publications themselves. The system is flexible in that users can create their own tagged export formats such as HTML, XML, SGML, CSV, and QUARK Tagging.

Remote users dial in via ISDN, to access the live database and their inbox. Authors have the ability to work within their own inboxes or conduct customized searches to meet customer requirements.

Administrators can assign entries to be mailed to a user's inbox for the user to review once he or she logs in to the database. When an entry is added or edited, an easy-to-read proofing view allows for quick and efficient online editing and proofing. Entries can be allocated to multiple publications.

Customers can call in and order mailing lists that sales and marketing staff run "live" from the Export area. These customized searches usually take less than two seconds; therefore, the most up-to-date lists are sold to customers as they request them.

▣ SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

Content DSI worked closely with Hemming, resolving issues promptly, always acting as a business partner.

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Content DSI developed and implemented the main content management system in approximately five months, and tested it for four more to ensure its successful operation.

The electronic version offers greater flexibility in searching, making cross-referencing data much easier. Visitors to the site can search by company name, location, phone or fax number, contact name, market sector, or company-specific information. The Content DSI-developed database enables Hemming staff to pull lists from the system and sell them to customers.

Hemming staff members have said that they find the system very intuitive and one of the easiest to use. Visitors can navigate easily throughout the site and find the information they need quickly and efficiently. As subscribers, visitors can customize their searches and then purchase the list or they can call or e-mail Hemming with their specific requirements. Most searches take only two seconds to execute.

Hemming sales have increased since it now has ability to publish "on the fly." Customer queries produce the most up-to-date information and help maintain a satisfied customer base.

