

Content DSI partners with Sosland Publishing Company to streamline the editorial process and establish a dynamic Internet presence



Sosland's Goals

- Update magazine article database to an efficient central data repository
- Develop three industry specific Web sites
- Integrate publishing software to allow publishing to the Web and print
- Allow user personalization on the Web
- Update and automate buyer's guide and directory database

The Solution

Sosland's Web sites are part of an intricate, yet user-friendly system that allows Sosland to publish its food industry directories and buyers' guides in print and on the Web from a single data repository. Readers can access magazine article archives and other information as well as personalize their Sosland Web experience.

BACKGROUND

Since 1922, Sosland Publishing Company has been the leading provider of information services for the grain-based foods industry. Publications include Milling & Baking News, Baking & Snack, World Grain, Baking Buyer, PANamericano, Meat & Poultry, MarketFAX, and Bakery Production & Marketing Newsletter.

In the late 90s, high-tech was still new in the grain-based foods industry. Sosland's competition was in the traditional arena of print publications; the production process was completely print oriented. In 1998, Sosland realized that to gain a competitive advantage, it would need to innovate, and integrate technology into its business model.

Sosland had ten years' worth of articles archived from each of its publications in a legacy database. It was time to take a more comprehensive view of its content: organize it, streamline it, and manage it in order to meet customer demands quickly and efficiently.

After conducting significant research and consulting other publishers, Sosland's director of content management discovered Content DSI by reviewing Seybold's Hot Picks and simultaneously contacted two sites in the UK that were owned by Reed Business Information (RBI—then the parent company of Content DSI). Intrigued by the content management and Web publishing solution Content DSI had implemented, Sosland initiated a prosperous business partnership with Content DSI.

THE CHALLENGE

Sosland needed to update its database of numerous archived magazine articles and make the system

Y2K compliant. It also wanted to develop three Web sites, one for each of its major business focuses—baking, meat and poultry, and grain. It would have to integrate publishing software to allow publishing to the Web as well as to print. The Web sites would need to include access to breaking news, current magazine issues, archived issues, buyer's guide data, an Ask the Expert section, and user personalization features such as customized news through saved search criteria, and e-mail newsletters.

Sosland also sent an annual survey to more than 16,000 customers in order for them to update their listings in the company's seven print—and soon-to-be online—buyers' guides and directories. After converting the company's existing buyers' guide database to SQL Server, Content DSI also needed to update and automate the survey process.

THE SOLUTION

In less than a year and a half, Content DSI developed a multi-phased solution for Sosland that allows the company to publish its food industry directories and buyers' guides in print and on the Web from a single central data repository. Readers can access archives, current issues, and industry information as well as personalize their Sosland Web experience.

Using Crystal Reports, Content DSI reproduced the print surveys and automated the surveying process. Content DSI made the existing database more efficient and Y2K compliant by upgrading to SQL Server. By adding additional fields to the database, Sosland could publish information directly to the Web site.

In order to publish the content of Sosland's five magazines to the Web, Content DSI integrated its core technology for web publishing as the content

Technology Employed

ASP

Crystal Reports

Microsoft Site Server

Commerce Edition

SQL Server

Content DSI's WPS

Visual Basic

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.

management and authoring tool. Editors at Sosland use the tool as the repository for all of the magazine content. Articles are created in the system and are tagged and categorized for subject matter. One database can publish to three Web sites on demand. Non-technical personnel can publish or unpublish to the Web site on schedule or as needed according to their assigned access rights. The solution streamlines the Web publishing process and delivers personalized information to customers.

Content DSI used Site Server, Commerce Edition to build the Web sites, integrate the web publishing tool for the magazine content, and integrate Sosland's buyers' guide content. Site Server has a built-in direct mailer that automates e-mail newsletters based on user preferences and pre-defined parameters and content selections.

SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

"We have received excellent feedback on our Web site from our readers. Content DSI's content management and Web publishing expertise has enabled Sosland to develop, maintain, and deliver key food industry information quickly and efficiently," says Mark Sabo, President, Sosland Publishing Company.

Sosland is one of the first publishers in this market to use this technology. And although the competition has an Internet presence, Sosland's three Web sites offer more comprehensive, more relevant content. Sosland's system pulls all the pieces together into one integrated system—like interlocking pieces of a puzzle that fit and work together perfectly.

Sosland can repurpose both existing content from the print magazines as well as author new and exclusive

content for the Web. Not only did Sosland establish a dynamic and compelling Internet presence, but also Web consumers keep returning to the site because of its easy navigation and personalization features. Registering for the site allows the user to access a personalized home page with articles according to their interests and the ability to save their search criteria and download archived articles. Registrants' membership information is also used to conveniently populate forms when requesting information from suppliers, allow receipt of email newsletters and restrict access to subscriber-only areas of the site.

Advertisers also benefit from the sites. Sosland provides a wide variety of options to advertisers, including storefronts, thus increasing its own ad revenue.

"Dynamic publishing through Content DSI's solution offers the editors of content-rich sites like ours an efficient way to deliver and change site content on-demand without the intervention of technical staff," comments Sue Robinson, Director of Content Management. "Features such as HTML formatting, multimedia capabilities, as well as hyperlinking to other articles, allow our online editors a great deal of flexibility and control of how the material looks and functions online."

By utilizing and integrating best-of-breed technology, Content DSI experience and expertise, and a proven methodology, Content DSI provided a complete, end-to-end content management and e-commerce-enabled Web publishing system that sets Sosland apart from its competitors while substantially increasing the intrinsic value of the company.

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