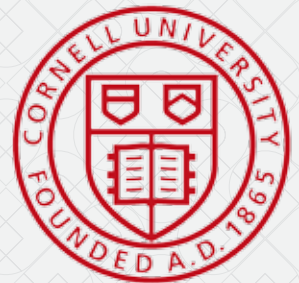
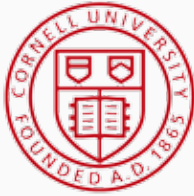




CUSTOMER CASE STUDY



SUMMARY



CUSTOMER	Johnson Graduate School of Management - Cornell University
WEBSITE	www.johnson.cornell.edu
COUNTRY	USA
INDUSTRY	Education

CUSTOMER PROFILE

The Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University offers standard two-year as well as accelerated and executive Masters of Business Administration (MBA) programs. Its two-year MBA program had 275 students enrolled for the class graduating in 2012.

SOFTWARE

- Active Social
- Active Forums
- ZLDNN DNN Article

PARTNERS



PRODUCT IMPLEMENTED



Business School Uses New Website, Intranet, and Social Networking to Foster Better Student-Alumni Collaboration

The website for the Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University was becoming cumbersome to use and navigate. To replace it, the web team at the business school used the DNN content management system to create a greatly streamlined site. Using DNN tools and modules, the team created a visually rich, easy-to-navigate site that includes a compelling, external-facing website and a new intranet for students to improve employment prospects by communicating and collaborating with alumni.

Business Needs

The Johnson Graduate School of Management at Cornell University in upstate New York is one of the nation's leading business schools, usually appearing among the top 15 institutions in BusinessWeek magazine's annual survey of MBA programs. The school offers a traditional two-year MBA program as well as executive and accelerated-timeline business programs.

With the passing of time, the school's website—designed with Cold Fusion and a Microsoft SQL Server backend—began showing its age, resulting in usability issues. The marketing and communications department approached the IT department with a plan to overhaul the site, according to Robin Parker, Web and Database Programming Manager for the school.

"The website was designed to be all things to all users, with internal resources for students, staff and faculty mixed in with external-facing content," says Parker. "It was a monolithic site that was ponderous to use. People had difficulty navigating through it and finding things."



The first task was to decide on a platform. "We were interested in something that was affordable and flexible, was open source, and provided good technical support," Parker says. The team wanted to separate internal content from the public-facing site, with a robust intranet that could help link students with alumni. "Plus, we wanted something that would be easy for our content providers to use," he adds. "With the old website, they relied on the web teams to get content posted. We wanted to move away from that model with a system that would be easy for end users to post their own content."

Solution

The school decided to use DNN Evoq Content¹ management platform, working with an external consulting firm on the design of the new site. "We're primarily a Microsoft shop, and felt that DNN was the right strategy moving forward," says Parker. "It also did a good job of straddling our needs for flexibility and solid support."

Parker's team and a consulting firm created a streamlined site that reflects the basic look and feel of the prior site. Then they added elements that made it much simpler for visitors to quickly find information. A top-level global navigation bar quickly directs users to secondary sites for more detailed information.

The project included creation of a new intranet, starting first with an alumni portal called Jconnect. The school plans to add other elements to the intranet in the future. "Jconnect is a complete departure from what we had in the past, which was a simple directory," says Parker. "Using DNN, we're building a community site that includes the student population and will encourage much more interaction between students and alumni."

The site design included DNN modules such as DNNArticle from ZLDNN, Active Social and Active Forums, which is being used on the JConnect portal, and Events Calendar and Registration from InvenManager.

Benefits

Using DNN, the Johnson School deployed a visually rich site that makes it easy for prospective students to find information while making it easier for current students and alumni to connect with one another. The modules helped the school implement features that are garnering very positive user feedback. The platform was cost effective and easy for the school's technical staff to learn. That, in turn, helped streamline development efforts, allowing Parker's team to meet its deadline for launching the site.

Simple and Effective Modules Enhance Functionality

The modules used by the Johnson School and its consulting partner expedited development

and provided easy-to-understand tools for users. "The Active Social tool, for example, is somewhat reminiscent of Facebook," says Parker. "We made a big departure from the previous site, and didn't want users to come and then have to figure out how to use the tools. We've gotten a lot of positive feedback from people on how easy they are to use." He adds that the Events Calendar and Registration module is an effective calendaring application that will be integrated with the school's Microsoft Exchange Server. And the article management module is used daily by the school's marketing team, which can edit, put articles into templates, and post without any assistance from the technical staff.

Cost Effective, Easy for Staff to Adopt

The low cost and familiar development environment were beneficial to the website redesign project. "In this economic environment, we had to be very aware of what things cost," says Parker. "I don't think there's any other content management system that touches DNN in terms of cost effectiveness and rich features. Our developers had a little learning curve because they were more familiar with Cold Fusion, but they came up to speed pretty fast in the .NET environment."

Supports Rapid Development Time

The wide availability of modules for DNN through sources like The DNN Store at store.dnnsolutions.com expedited the school's development efforts. "We launched the

external-facing site and had a delivery date of the following January to launch Jconnect,” says Parker. “I did some research into DNN modules and found the Active Social and Active Forums modules, which helped us launch the intranet really quickly. When you’re considering a project with as much impact as this one, the choice of tools is really important. In terms of a development environment, we couldn’t be happier.”

¹ Evoq Content was previously known as DNN Professional and Enterprise Editions.

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