

Content Management Framework



www.gov.im Isle of Man Government

The Isle of Man Government were seeking a solution to the problem of managing the huge volume of content on their successful web portal.

PDMS implemented a new Content Management Framework using a combination of their Foundations TM platform and Microsoft .NET.

The project has delivered substantial cost savings, improved the timeliness & accuracy of information and created a robust platform from which the Government can launch new services. "In the drive to joined-up Government, Isle of Man Government has benefited significantly from the delivery of its joined up website. At its simplest, it has given the Isle of Man a way to mask the complexity of Departments, Offices and Boards and their individual information flows and processes underneath the intuitive and consistent template approach that the website delivers, while still allowing the business units to portray a differentiated image. But the real value comes from the measurements available to us which clearly demonstrate that the development of this integrated approach has effectively managed to automate answers to information requests in a timely manner that otherwise would have consumed significant manpower." Allan Paterson Director, Information Systems Division



Flexible and efficient web content management delivers cost savings

Challenge

The Isle of Man is a Crown Dependency with a population of approximately 75,000 and its own autonomous Government. The Government consists of a Council of Ministers (similar to the UK Government's cabinet) comprising a Chief Minister and 9 ministers, each of whom has responsibility for each of the 9 Departments. In addition, there are numerous Offices and Statutory Boards who report to the Council of Ministers. The Isle of Man Government supports the reach and range of UK National government together with some local government services, but with a fraction of the budget.

PDMS have been working with the Isle of Man Government on the design, development and maintenance of their website (www.gov.im) from the very beginning. The site first went live in July 1995 and evolved from an initial source of reference material for those with an interest in the Island, into an interactive portal incorporating many elements of e-Government. The

Government worked in close partnership with PDMS, establishing a steering group with monthly meetings to drive the continual improvement of the website.

By the end of 2002 the website had grown to over 5000 pages, whilst visitor traffic had increased to over 150,000 visitors per month. At the time, the updating and addition of content on the site was carried out by PDMS with each Government department, office or body contacting PDMS directly every time a change was required. As the volume of content on the site continued to grow this process became time consuming and unwieldy for all involved and the steering committee agreed that a new solution to the issue of content management was required.

As a result, early in 2003, the Government, working together with PDMS, decided to embark on an ambitious project, to design and implement a new content management framework (CMF) for the website. The overriding objectives of the project were to improve the quality and timeliness of information provided through the Government website whilst at the same time improving Government efficiency and achieving cost savings on the content management process. Importantly, the new website had to work within the e-Government framework being developed for the JUPITER programme (JUPITER stands for Joined Up Information for The Electronic Resident) and support the delivery of e-Government services in the future.

Key goals for the project included:

- to separate web presentation (style) from content
- real time content editing by 220 Government users
- compliance with international standards such as WAI (Web Accessibility Initiative) and UK e-GIF
- improved indexing and metadata controlled by content editors
- secure and auditable publishing workflow
- dynamic content re-use
- multi channel pilots.

Solution

The ultimate aim of the CMF project was to provide a more efficient and joined up approach to the provision of information and services by the Government to citizen, businesses and visitors using the website. On a technical level, the challenge was to take a large and fragmented website consisting of thousands of pages and disparate database driven sites and integrate them all into a single, centrally supplied, content management framework.

The system was developed by PDMS using their Foundations TM platform to fulfil the key requirements. PDMS implemented the content management framework using Microsoft. NET and C# and integrated an XML authoring tool into a new administration site. XML technology allows the content of a web page to be stored separately from the presentation or style of the information, allowing any Government agency to edit their own content directly from their PC, whilst ensuring that the framework delivering the web page is unaffected.

On a corporate level one challenge was to achieve a greater sharing of content. This gives considerable efficiency gains overall and for the individual content editors, a far greater sense of involvement and responsibility for the quality and timeliness of the information. Achieving this management objective was challenging as it involved gaining acceptance of a larger corporate vision by disparate organizations with their own individual brands, skill levels and business requirements.

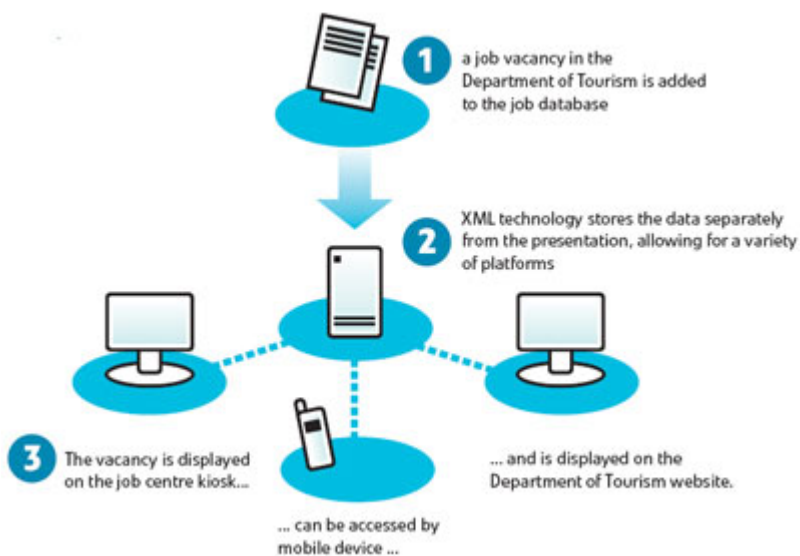
With an in-depth understanding of both the business, as well as the technological requirements of the project, the PDMS project team worked closely with the Government's Information Systems Division who were responsible for the overall management of the Government website. Given the scope of the project and the number of disparate organizations included within the Government who needed to adopt the new CMF, strong project management was imperative. This became even more crucial as the project progressed and the CMF was implemented simultaneously across all the different Agencies within Government.

Following a successful pilot the CMF project was started in 2003 with a planned phased approach to the roll out of the system within each of the Isle of Man Government's 46 Agencies, Departments and Boards due for completion in the summer of 2004. To encourage those who would be using the system to become involved in the project, the Government and PDMS undertook a number of internal 'project awareness' seminars.

Training was an essential element and PDMS worked closely with the Government to ensure that each 220 Government employees were not only competent but also confident in using the new content management framework.

XML technology

Multi-platform data



Result

One of the aims of Government was to address the issue of true content ownership. The CMF has empowered the Government to really “own” their page content which has led to greater accuracy and an improved frequency of information updates. The new CMF consists of over 5500 XML pages, 7000 images and 3500 downloadable documents with over 50 pages a day being edited or added. Visitor statistics have increased to approximately 3 million visitors a year and the site now receives more frequent feedback from users.

Significant value has also been created by the project in that it has created the ‘Corporate Framework Business Standards’ which all of the Government agencies now adhere to. The project has taken an uncompromising approach to the introduction of the latest in XML/XSL (XPath) technology to meet e-Gif interoperability standards, WAI accessibility and to support the wider business change agenda.

The new CMF has transformed how each of the Government agencies updates and improves their website. Prior to its introduction, there were often delays in publishing new and sometimes important information as hundreds of changes had to be relayed by e-mail which due to the sheer volume, then had to be scheduled into the web developers programmes. Government employees can now carry out changes to their content in seconds, resulting in a better, faster and cheaper service.

Given the cost of implementing high volumes of changes to the website before the introduction of the CMF and taking into account the increase in the amount of changes that are now undertaken, the Return On Investment for the project has been less than 12 months.

PDMS continue to work with the Government on the Content Management Framework project providing consultancy, design and development work.

The Government website has now developed into a Government business portal and future development will see the delivery of more transactional based services emerging from the JUPITER programme of work. This will provide better, faster and more convenient ways for citizens, businesses and visitors to access Government services directly not only through the website but through a variety of channels such as mobile devices and kiosks.