

Clickability Saves Time and Strengthens Brand Value for Carnegie Mellon West

Major University Employs cmPublish to Manage Multiple Tasks Including Website Content, Newsletters and Reporting

Carnegie Mellon West is the Silicon Valley presence of Carnegie Mellon University, a private research university located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The school's website and alumni newsletter are vital methods of communicating to prospective and current students, as well as alumni and the surrounding community.

THE FACTS

Business

Major West Coast University

Location

Mountain View, CA

Website

- west.cmu.edu

Size

60,000+ page views per month

Users

3

Challenges

- System too complex for non-technical users
- Time-and-labor-intensive manual change process
- Two week turnaround on website changes
- Restrictions on improving site quality
- Limited content in text-only newsletter

Solution

- cmPublish core content management
- cmPublish Newsletters
- cmPublish Search
- cmPublish Reporting

Advantages

- Dramatic time savings
- Improved site quality
- Stronger brand value
- Competitive advantage

"Clickability saves me at least a day or two every week."

THE CHALLENGE: ANTIQUATED SYSTEM DRIVES DECISION MAKING

"Our website is one of the first ways a prospective student sees our campus," said Brian Hurley, Senior Systems Engineer at Carnegie Mellon West. "It is important to have as much information as possible, presented in an intuitive way. This strengthens our brand value."

Before Clickability, Carnegie Mellon West's content management system did not support this objective. Non-technical business people could not use the system, so every change had to go through Hurley, creating a bottleneck.

On the previous static website, all changes had to be made manually, and any new web page would impact the navigation for every other page, turning even simple changes into frustrating time-and-labor-intensive tasks. Prior to deploying cmPublish, it took Hurley one to two weeks to implement any major change. The manual process introduced potential for errors as well.

"Because it took so long to make changes, the antiquated system was driving the decision-making process," Hurley explained. "We often decided not to make a change because of the time and associated problems. This impacted the quality of the site because we were not able to do everything we wanted to do."

Carnegie Mellon's alumni newsletter was also prepared manually, requiring redundant time-consuming aggregation of data for a simple text-based email. The lengthy task of gathering these basic facts precluded the university from establishing an alumni "voice" via the newsletter, the original objective.

SOLUTION: MULTIPLE TIME-SAVING TOOLS ROLLED INTO ONE

Carnegie Mellon West now uses the cmPublish hosted content management service from Clickability to manage all website content and create the alumni newsletter.

Ease of Use

"The cmPublish interface is straightforward and easy to use," said Hurley. "The learning curve is low for non-technical users. The more people I get to use this system at Carnegie Mellon, the more time I have to work on other projects. That has been a huge benefit."

Integrated Newsletter

cmPublish has transformed Carnegie Mellon's alumni newsletter from a text-based email to a dynamic HTML-based communication vehicle with the same look and feel of the website. One column in the newsletter automatically pulls content from cmPublish for news, resumes, job openings and events, eliminating the need for manual aggregation. Meanwhile, the newsletter editors now have more time to establish the voice of the alumni in the body of the newsletter.

Comprehensive Reporting

"Prior to cmPublish, our reporting mechanism was very rudimentary and data was not usable," Hurley recalled. "cmPublish provides us with complete reporting capabilities and data in a very usable format. I can generate reports or view information on the dashboard in seconds."

RSS Feeds

Carnegie Mellon leverages RSS feeds through cmPublish to post event schedule information on the university's internal and external websites.

Software as a Service

"We contemplated hosting a new system ourselves," said Hurley. "We needed hardware, software, servers, and internal resources to do everything ourselves. We performed a cost benefit analysis, however, which



"Clickability offers a high-quality suite of tools to get the job done — but perhaps Clickability's greatest asset is the Professional Services team. Without their above-and-beyond efforts, I would not have made my project deadlines."

*Brian Hurley, Senior Systems Engineer
Carnegie Mellon West*

showed that Clickability's hosted service would cost us 40% less and provide us much more functionality."

Professional Services

"Clickability's people are knowledgeable, helpful, and friendly — and the reason I got my project done on time," Hurley noted. "Furthermore, all the experiences with the Clickability Professional Services team, from requirements gathering to changes after going live, have been pleasant and productive."

Low TCO

"We have everything we need to deliver the website we want," Hurley confirmed. "And at a significantly lower cost than doing it ourselves. Choosing cmPublish was almost a no-brainer."

ADVANTAGES: SAVING TIME AND STRENGTHENING BRAND VALUE

Dramatic Time Savings

Previously, a request such as changing the name of an academic program, took about 40 hours to complete, because it would impact almost every page on the site. Since Hurley had other tasks as well, the job would have at least a two-week turnaround. With cmPublish, the same changes take only a day or two.

cmPublish offers Carnegie Mellon additional time savings by enabling other users to quickly and easily make their own changes to content.

"With other people in the system making changes, Clickability saves me at least a day or two every week to work on other tasks," Hurley confirmed.

Improved Site Quality

"The ease of prototyping in Clickability's development environment enables us to maintain a site that looks better, is more functional, and offers high quality content," Hurley said.

*Clickability has reduced
turnaround on changes to
Carnegie Mellon's website
from 2 weeks down to 2 days.*

Stronger Brand Value

"With cmPublish, we add value to our brand by presenting a more professional site, in terms of the design, intuitive navigation and the way content is related," Hurley explained. "From the visitor perspective, we have drastically improved our site, and that increases the value of the university for students, alumni and the community."

Competitive Advantage in Streamlined Application Process

In addition to deploying cmPublish, Carnegie Mellon used AY Recruiting's Apply Yourself solution to take its paper-based application process completely online, including taking applications, receiving recommendations, sending acceptance letters, and processing enrollment fees.

"Having cmPublish in place enabled us to seamlessly integrate the prospective student application system from Apply Yourself," Hurley said. "Now we can review applicant data and make decisions much quicker. Before it would take so long to get the acceptance letter out that we could lose potential students. With faster decision turnaround, we have gained another competitive advantage."

About Carnegie Mellon West

Founded in 1999, Carnegie Mellon's West Coast Campus has created a learn-by-doing project-centered curriculum for software engineering and management masters programs. These programs promote hands-on experience, team communication, creativity, critical judgment, as well as the basic skill set within a field of knowledge. Carnegie Mellon West is the Silicon Valley presence of Carnegie Mellon University, a private research university located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

About Clickability

Clickability is the leading single source provider of on-demand web content management software, delivering award-winning, fully integrated hosted solutions to the top names in the publishing and enterprise worlds. Clickability is a privately held company headquartered in San Francisco.