Cisco Collaborates with Partners via Clickability

World Leader in Networking Solutions Builds Global Alliance Extranet on cmPublish Platform

Cisco Systems is the world leader in networking solutions, and the company's success is strengthened by partnerships with technology leaders such as HP. Cisco and HP formed a strategic alliance to jointly develop and sell network-based solutions using products and services from both companies. Cisco maintains an extranet site to facilitate collaboration with HP. The site is intended to enable Cisco and HP to communicate with both sales forces, equipping them with news, product collateral, presentations, videos, technical documentation -- all the resources they need to sell Cisco-HP networking solutions.

THE FACTS

Business
Networking Solutions

Location
San Jose, CA

Website
Extranet Site for Cisco-HP Alliance

Size
15,000 plus salespeople in the field

Time to Deploy
2 Months

Challenge with Previous Solution
- Too much technical expertise required to publish
- No ability to interact with audience
- Site rarely updated
- Readership almost zero

Solution
cmPublish

Key Requirements
- Single vendor
- On-demand solution
- Integrated email newsletters
- Robust search and navigation
- Secure authentication for site visitors
- Scale easily to support multiple sites

Results
- Up-to-Date resources for the field
- Leveraging information from the field
- Competitive advantage
- Greater productivity
- True usability and interaction
- Lower total cost of ownership

"Clickability enables us to equip our sales force with the resources they need to be competitive."

CHALLENGE: KEEPING THE EXTRANET FRESH

"Before Clickability, we had an extranet for the Cisco-HP alliance, but we had no content management tool," explained Ann Almeida, marketing manager, Cisco.

The previous extranet was difficult to use, and required technical expertise when adding content. This created a bottleneck that would cause a delay of several days when updating the site with new materials. And it was impossible for field sales people to directly contribute content.

"Content was stale, it was difficult to find information, and it caused people to not use the site," added Rich Matsuura, Internet Strategist for Cisco. "The site was getting almost zero visits when we decided to switch to Clickability."

SOLUTION: DEPLOYING AN EASY AND FLEXIBLE SYSTEM

Cisco used cmPublish to develop an extranet site that delivers all the resources the sales team needs, keeping content updated regularly. Now salespeople from both companies go to the extranet site first when looking for sales and marketing materials.

Design Flexibility
"cmPublish is so easy and flexible," said Almeida. "Clickability allows us to publish any content we want, anywhere we need it. Salespeople no longer have to guess at how resources are categorized. Instead we can place and cross-reference content anywhere they might look. We can also change the content whenever needed, without a lot of pain, cost or time."

The simplicity of cmPublish is that the system enables Cisco and HP to publish content in multiple locations, including email newsletters, just by clicking a check box, instead of having to maintain several copies of the same document

throughout the site.

With the success of cmPublish in the alliance with HP, Cisco is currently developing extranet sites for other alliances as well. "Clickability provides the flexibility to give each alliance site a different look and feel, customized to that partnership's specific needs," said Matsuura. "The other content management systems we looked at were much more rigid, with very limited options for working with multiple sites and audiences."

Ease of Use
One of Cisco's requirements was a system that was easy for non-technical users. The individuals managing content day-to-day are marketing staff with no technical background, so ease of use was critical.

"The cmPublish interface is very easy for non-technical users," Matsuura said. "They just tag the content and it shows up in the right place."

On-Demand Service
"Having Clickability host everything is a great advantage to us, in terms of cost and rapid deployment," Matsuura said. "Clickability took all the headaches out of it."

Responsive Support
"Clickability's responsiveness is great," Almeida noted. "The company provides very prompt support. We can use the system easily on our own, but when we do need help, it's always there."

"Relationships are a key component of making alliances successful. They are also an important factor when working with vendors. Clickability is responsive, collaborative and great to work with," added Janet Cardinell, Manager, Strategic Alliance Marketing Operations at Cisco. "They understand our

"Clickability helps us manage our alliance with HP, and get information out to our sales force, making them more competitive."

Janet Cardinell, Manager, Strategic Alliances Marketing Operations, Cisco

needs, and help us to see where they can add value. Because we have a good relationship, communication is very efficient between us."

ADVANTAGES: EQUIPPING THE SALES TEAM FOR SUCCESS

Up-to-Date Resources for the Field
cmPublish enables Cisco to distribute timely news and other resources to the sales team. News items are published on the extranet as soon as they go out on the newswire, and they are placed on the home page in a noticeable spot. In addition, Cisco uses the integrated newsletter feature of cmPublish to instantly package website content for distribution by email to the sales team. All these capabilities were not possible before, due to the limitations of the previous extranet.

"The site is easy to update so the content is always fresh," Matsuura said.

Leveraging Information from the Field
cmPublish empowers the Cisco-HP sales team to contribute content to the extranet from the field, providing key feedback about sales wins. Using the robust contribution and workflow features, Clickability configured cmPublish to give readers the ability to contribute content and attach media for editorial review. This means sales intelligence is quickly shared across the vast geographically-dispersed sales team.

"We wanted to create a greater sense of connection between the sales force and the alliance," Cardinell noted. "Now, with cmPublish, we have information efficiently flowing in both directions."

Competitive Advantage

"From a competitive standpoint, Clickability permits us to get more and better resources out to the field faster, so they are better prepared to sell our products," Matsuura added. "For example, videos are an important sales tool, so getting the latest videos out to the field quickly is a competitive advantage to Cisco, and cmPublish makes it possible."

Greater Productivity

cmPublish provides a productivity advantage for the Cisco team because they do not have to duplicate content when publishing to multiple points on the site. "The ability to designate more than one destination for items has saved us a substantial amount of redundant work," Almeida said. "And the fact that we can package content and send email newsletters from inside cmPublish without having to log into another system is a huge time-saver."

Clickability also boosted Cisco's productivity because there is no longer a bottleneck at a web production manager's desk, which would slow down the process. "There is a definite productivity gain from the fact that the content owners are able to post their own content," Matsuura said. "With cmPublish, we got rid of the middleman bottleneck."

True Usability

The new site can be easily browsed via many paths, and content is well-tagged for finding the right information through the site search feature, making content available to the right audience at the right time. And with the management of site security built directly into cmPublish, Cisco is able to ensure that only authorized users have access to each of the Cisco alliance sites.

"Our previous site's security caused difficulties for new users who needed access, resulting in a negative user experience," Matsuura recalled. "Many people stopped using the site altogether because of this issue. In addition, it was extremely difficult to manage security. With Clickability, providing users with access is simple and transparent."

Lower Total Cost of Ownership

By deploying the extranet solution as a hosted service through Clickability, Cisco achieves significantly lower total cost of ownership (TCO). Cisco achieves even lower TCO with the addition of each new alliance site, since most of the initial work done on the Cisco-HP site can be utilized as the foundation for other sites.

"We had a tight time frame but we needed certain modifications so the tool would reflect how Cisco views content," Matsuura explained. "Clickability was able to customize the interface for us in a very timely manner, without incurring significant additional charges. They were on time and on budget for this very challenging project."

Previously, it took up to 3 days to make a video available online. With Clickability it takes minutes.

About Clickability

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