

Porter Novelli Case Study

THE CUSTOMER

Porter Novelli was founded in Washington, D.C. in the belief that the creative, strategic marketing approaches used in the commercial sector could and should be applied to help nonprofit organizations improve public health and address social issues.

Porter Novelli today is one of the world's top ten public relations firms, helping clients in 50 countries reach out and grow in the commercial, government and not-for-profit sectors. Porter Novelli manages more than a dozen global programs for clients such as Wyeth, Gillette, Qualcomm and Dow, coordinating global and regional strategy and execution.

THE CHALLENGE

A Demanding Client Need

Porter Novelli, a leading public relations firm serving some of the world's most respect and demanding clients, delivers a high quality service while meeting their clients' needs with ease. An internationally influential energy council recently selected Porter Novelli to assist in a large-scale collaborative effort to enhance communication and interaction among a regionally displaced team of over 100 industry executives. Porter Novelli was able to fulfill their client's very detailed and specific requirements with a single, synergistic solution.

Detailed Requirements

The requested solution had several requirements that were not negotiable, this would prove to make the search for an adequate solution extremely difficult causing them to consider building an in-house solution that would run them far over budget. The primary factor was the delivery of a fully customized navigation and design structure to integrate as a seamless component to their existing site. As the portal would house and cater to many levels of users with varying access rights, a full-scale system to effortlessly manage permissions and monitor activity was essential.

THE JOURNEY

Mitra Falli, Senior Interactive Producer at Porter Novelli was tasked with finding a solution that not only met the needs of their client, but was deliverable within the allotted budget provided.

Robust Simplicity

On top of the detailed requirements regarding customization, permissions and some of the more standard collaborative components such as shared documents and calendar functions, the system was to be administered by a non-technical division of Porter Novelli; thus, it was a major requirement for the portal to be easily administered- creating new users, structures and permissions.

The Cost Factor

Initially Mitra proposed the development of an in-house solution to accomplish the complex and detailed requirements of their client. After a cost estimate ran them far over budget in this scenario, it became apparent that this solution was not plausible. This brought them to entertain installed solutions such as MS Sharepoint as an option; though it delivered what was needed within budget, it required a hefty investment in hardware and with uncertainty of their client's project duration. Mitra began to take a look at hosted solutions that required no investment or maintenance.

THE DISCOVERY

On the Upturn

As Porter Novelli began their search for a collaborative solution, it became clear that the hosted collaboration market is a rapidly growing medium for communication and coordination. After reviewing a number of solutions provided by small start-ups and organizations with limited history and untested reputations it became essential that if they were going to present a hosted product to their client, it must be an application that is confirmed to be reliable with a history of stability and integrity.

Reliability and Reputation

This search brought Mitra to HyperOffice, the oldest and most respected player in the hosted collaboration market. With over ten years in the market, use of the largest hosting facility in North America and a strong

international presence it became clear that the other organizations evaluated were merely opportunists catching the market on the upturn. The availability of training and consultation services and a free support line, served as icing on the cake.

An Immediate Decision

Following a web-based demonstration of the HyperOffice product and its capabilities, it was verified that the complex and detailed requirements requested by their client was able to be successfully accomplished with HyperOffice. With a price point at a fraction of the other relevant solutions and no investment, the choice was clear.

THE SOLUTION

Personalized Customization

Upon purchase of HyperOffice a number of hours of training and consultation services were included in the contract; these sessions were positioned to apply directly to their intended application of the product. During these sessions the focus was to get the system up and running as quickly as possible and to ensure that the portal was to be implemented as a seamless addition to their client's existing site.

A Unique Process

Traditionally, the publisher function of HyperOffice is used as a means for a nontechnical user to customize the look and feel of the portal. Since Porter Novelli is a large international organization with a full design and web development team, the design and development would be approached in a separate capacity.

Professional Design and Structure

To fully customize the homepage and navigation associated with the portal, Porter Novelli was able to task their design team to mock-up how the portal would look. Following this the HyperOffice representative assigned to assist in the implementation of the product was able to review the mock-up and make suggestions and point out potential limitations and solutions. The next phase was to send the revised portal mock-up to their internal web design team to translate it to HTML. Once the code was completed, it is dropped into the publisher function of HyperOffice.

THE IMPLEMENTATION

Full HyperOffice Integration

Once the design was imported into HyperOffice Porter Novelli was able to link sections, documents or events within HyperOffice to images or text, creating a seamless intranet solution. With the use of modules to populate information from the calendar section directly on the homepage, users are immediately aware of the events applicable to them since the information populates dynamically based on the user that is logged in. In addition, the login to the portal was placed on the client's site and the URL branded, with this application, the client did not know that their portal was a third party solution.

Content and Structure

Once the structure was in place, full implementation was just a matter of adding users, assigning permissions and populating the content to get the team started. The full implementation has two general levels of users, board members and standard members, as one may imagine, the level of permissions would be very different between these levels. In addition to securing certain groups and documents from regular members, the use of profiles allowed the personal section within the portal to be disabled and certain aspects of the group section were removed. This allowed not only for a secure environment where sensitive documents could be held, but it helped ease the usability of the portal and simplify the navigation to improve the implementation's effectiveness.

THE RESULTS

A Resounding Success

The program was a major success and implemented below budget. Moving forward, following the upcoming release of the new HyperOffice user interface Porter Novelli plans to utilize HyperOffice within other departments and in additional client applications.