



Case Study: Building a Commercial Web Site with Suntek Content Management System

Objective: One of our major value-added resellers in Hong Kong, I-Force Design & Consultancy Ltd. introduced the Suntek Content Management System to its client Cotco Int'l Ltd. Cotco, a major display manufacturer, has offices in both Hong Kong and China. The company web site contains product news, press releases and most important of all, product information that needs to be updated frequently. The web site has to be easy to maintain by employees in both Hong Kong and China offices.

Challenges: I-Force quickly recognized that Cotco has a large array of products that are categorized into product lines and product families. Each product family has different technical specifications. The CMS therefore had to be flexible enough to allow Cotco to use different input and display styles for different types of data, and to organize the products into product lines with product summaries to help user navigation.

I-Force also identified that a powerful search engine was needed to allow users to search the entire web site, including product pages, as well as a product-specific search interface for finding the products based on product features. I-Force quickly realized that combining Suntek's CMS system with Suntek's powerful search engine software represented the perfect solution – the best of both worlds!

Product specifications include technical specification such as sizes, voltages, and viewing angles, etc. Schematics and PDF files are included as a part of the product details. The CMS users have to be able to input the specifications conveniently. And since employees in both the Hong Kong and China offices maintain web pages, I-Force specified that the web site must be very easy to maintain and support workflow management, starting from content creation, to content editing and approval, and to content publication and retraction.

(See Web site: <http://www.cotco.com>)

How Suntek met the challenges?

With this complex range of content and site requirements, I-Force naturally chose Suntek Content Management System (CMS) as the solution. Suntek Content Management System (CMS), an award-winning total solution for web content creation, management and search, is designed to address the need for handling multiple languages, especially Chinese, which includes Traditional and Simplified Chinese, as well as the Hong Kong Supplementary Character Set. Its add-on powerful search engine allows indexing and search of free-text and structured data, including attachments written in rich text formats (e.g., Office WORD, PowerPoint, Excel, PDF, Postscript, etc.) which could contain Chinese as well.

I-Force and Suntek together developed Cotco's website with a web-based interface to enter data in structured way and supports workflow management to meet the most demanding requirements on user friendliness and ease of use. Further requirements for the Cotco web site were answered by the Suntek CMS solution. For example, Suntek CMS can generate web pages with rich graphics designs from the input data. In addition, complex table-of-contents (summary) pages can be generated automatically. This ensures data consistency across the whole web site – a great pain for most web site administrators.

Return on Investment

The Cotco web site contains hundreds of products frequently updated to reflect the dynamics of the company and industry. With Suntek CMS, non-technical employees from both Hong Kong and China offices can maintain the web site with high quality. The search engine and automatically generated product summaries designed by I-Force have proven to be essential for matching customer interests with product features and enhancing the company's e-business.

Functionality

a. Creating Web Pages

The Cotco web site contains several types of structured and frequently updates pages, namely, news, press releases, events and products. This was a major challenge for I-Force and Suntek in development of the client interfaces.

The CMS administrator defines the data fields for each type of pages. The CMS automatically generates web-based input pages for users (or the administrator himself) to enter data for different types of data. To make data input as painless as possible, the input pages mimic the actual layout of the final pages, and allow data to be structured in tables, which is important for technical specifications, and special characters to be input from pull-down menu. Since products in the same family share many common values, default values can be pre-defined and invoked with one click.

b. Producing the Final Web Page from structured Data

The CMS administrator defines an output template for displaying the data in the final HTML format, which could include rich graphics design to enhance the look-and-feel. An output template is essentially an "empty" HTML page that contains only the graphics but without the data. The CMS fills in the data and adjusts the layout automatically to fit the data.

The output templates designed by I-Force provide flexible control on the display layout to suit the value displayed. For example, when a field does not have a value, the header or label of the field will omitted altogether.

c. Automatic Generation of Table-of Contents Pages

The summary pages or table-of-contents pages designed by I-Force contain concise information on large collections of data items. They are important for users to navigate a large web site. For example, a product list containing the part numbers and other vital information such sizes and colors would be very useful to the users before they dwell into a product. When a product is updated, the summary pages need to be updated. When there are many summary pages, it is often a nightmare for the Webmaster to keep the data consistent, especially when a product can be enlisted in more than one product summary page. Suntek's CMS System provided the solution.

Cotco's CMS system from Suntek can be configured to automatically insert important fields of the data into table-of-contents pages. The TOC pages can have different display styles.

Search Engine Capabilities

The Cotco website search engine offers users convenient access to the web pages. For casual users a simple search box is provided on each page so that users can type in a few keywords to find all pages containing these words.

For users with specific product needs, the advanced search interface provides different search interfaces for different types of products. Users can specify conditions on the product fields to find the product they want. There is no limit on how many product search interfaces you can use.

The Suntek designed search engine supports search on Chinese, phrase, queries with logical connectors (e.g. AND, OR and NOT) and wild card characters, etc. The search result displays key data in a structured view and allows users to click into each field to explore further details.

We thank our value-added reseller, [I-Force Design and Consultancy](#) for the client approval to feature this case study as well as their guidance and consultancy advice in the application of the Suntek CMS system to Cotco Int'l Ltd.'s website.