



*High performance. Delivered.*

## Web publishing platform

### Realizing high performance by empowering Accenture website users

When the internal web publishing platform debuted, it represented a state-of-the-art, enterprise solution for hosting online content with self-publishing capabilities. The publishing platform, accessible through the Accenture Portal, served not only as an internal value creator and as a point of competitive advantage, but also as an exemplar to clients grappling with portal management issues.

Accenture is closer to achieving high performance due to the publishing platform which provides a common structure enabling business users to build websites without the need to master HTML programming and with the ability to manage information on a real-time basis. Because website creation without appropriate guidelines leads to information chaos, Accenture's internal IT organization implemented a model portal governance structure that has since accommodated explosive growth of more than 470 individual websites in an orderly, integrated manner.

### The business challenge

In the 1990s, when Accenture's internal information exchange was facilitated using Lotus Notes, employees generated thousands of e-mails and databases that took time to locate and sort through for relevance.

Accenture needed a more efficient way to streamline this information sharing. The challenge confronting Accenture's internal IT organization was to develop a publishing platform with appropriate governance and oversight that would provide needed access to mission-critical data throughout a complex, global organization. Ideally, the platform would allow users to maintain websites with virtually no need for technical support, saving time and reducing both operating and start-up costs in the process.

Before the creation of the web publishing platform, there used to be a vast network of disparate websites. User experience differed by source, and navigation tools were often created with proprietary applications. Without central control over operating and deployment costs, any economies of scale were lost. That all changed with the introduction of Accenture's web publishing platform.

## What we did

A commitment to structure and to operating the publishing platform like a business proved to be a critical factor on the rapid road to high performance.

The platform allowed business users to identify their individual needs and choose a specific solution from a menu of options.

The web publishing platform transformed the user experience in four essential ways:

- Enabling business users to own and control content directly.
- Establishing governance by defining content areas and associated change management procedures.
- Creating a common user experience and navigation for employees.
- Instituting integration across content with robust cross-referencing abilities and search functions.

Accenture's web publishing initiative delivered high performance by ceding control directly to the users generating content, removing the IT bottleneck and improving timeliness. "We eliminated a major pain point for our clients," says Chris Miller, senior executive—Business Applications Delivery, CIO Organization. "By allowing content owners to be more responsive, to truly take ownership of the site, and to make a change within 30 seconds, a major benefit in a fast-breaking business environment where information accuracy and timeliness represent competitive advantage."

Making this work on a global scale required properly defined governance guidelines. From the time of initial launch, the platform adhered to rigorous standards, with each website being assigned to a designated manager responsible for overseeing content and access restrictions. Today, sites surface on the Accenture Portal following a review by the appropriate portal channel manager to ensure compliance with communication and brand standards.

Allison Houston, manager—Global Internal Communications, noted that "The templates are so well-designed and easy to use, that after an initial training session and a little bit of 'hands-on' time, any of our content owners can create an effective website with navigation that is both highly intuitive and consistent for our employees to use."

To facilitate content development and posting, eight customizable templates were designed that require no special technical expertise and readily support attachments, graphics and video files. A uniform graphic interface ensures a consistent experience as users move across Accenture websites.

From concept to execution, the website development cycle is streamlined and straightforward. It begins with a request form outlining requirements. The business owner then designates a content team of site managers, editors and authors, who attend the web publishing platform training. The Creative Services group helps to enhance the look and feel of content pages with customized banners and graphical elements.

The final step involves coordinating portal integration to avoid content duplication and ensure that search tags are properly embedded.

## High performance delivered

With the creation of the publishing platform, users now deploy new websites using standardized templates, following a precise pathway and delivering a consistent user experience, while shaving time and costs in the process.

Evidence of high performance includes the number of websites created—by more than tripling from 140 sites in 2004 to 475 sites and counting by early 2009. The platform averages more than 113,000 page views per day, almost 138,000 unique visitors per month, and comprises over 73,000 pages of content. More than 2,500 content owners,

representing every major area of the company, have used the platform to create a dedicated website.

Typically, web development costs upwards of \$100,000 per site and takes months to design and populate. The publishing platform enables a team to populate a website in as little as 48 hours with zero coding, hosting or design costs. The platform cuts more than \$4.5 million in maintenance and operating costs per year, and reduces deployment costs by approximately \$1.2 million annually. A testament to the efficiency of the delivery center model, it supports hundreds of active sites with just 10 dedicated resources. The upcoming platform upgrade incorporating Web 2.0 capabilities involves 2.5 onshore developers and 10 offshore resources.

By seamlessly putting people, process and technology together, Accenture achieved high performance by enabling the web publishing platform, and proved so cutting edge that years after its inception it remains the gold standard for content management.

### About Accenture

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With approximately 177,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$23.39 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2008. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).

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