



Case study: Consumer Products

Unilever

Taking a global brand to a worldwide audience

More than 150 million times a day, someone, somewhere is choosing a Unilever product. This statistic is hardly surprising when you consider the number of world-leading brands that are incorporated under the Unilever umbrella – names such as Knorr, Birds Eye, Becel, Flora, Lipton, Lux, Dove, Sunsilk and Axe/Lynx, to name just a few.

Challenges: brand management

Unilever understands the importance of brands; especially the value consumers attach to brands that they can trust. For the past thirty years, the Unilever logo has remained constant, but with the changing global environment, it could not afford to stand still.

A decision was taken to launch a new logo to reflect and support Unilever's new mission of 'adding vitality to life'. The 25 different icons that make up the 'U' in the logo represent the company, its brands, the idea of vitality and the benefits the organization brings to consumers and the world we all live in.

The company faced a significant challenge in how to roll out the new identity to not only its 240,000 employees in 150 countries, but its third party agencies worldwide, and ensure it is used in all communication going forward – from business cards to product packaging.

"The Unilever brand is vital to the organisation. The timescale for our project was extremely tight and there's no way that this could have been achieved without the SDL Tridion team"

Katherine Attoe, IT Manager at Unilever

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Benefits: quick and effective

Katherine Attoe, Unilever's IT manager takes up the story: "Our objective was very clear – we wanted to communicate the new logo and branding guidelines to all employees and external third parties as quickly and as effectively as possible.

"The 'traditional' method is to distribute CDs and brochures to all brand managers and then assume that the rollout takes place over time. However, given our size, this would simply take too long, so the decision to rebrand was made in December 2003 and our aim was to be live by May 2004.

"Cost was also an issue and that is where we were brought in – we would use the Internet to communicate the new corporate mission."

The Web implementation team partnered with Wolff Olins, the design agency, to come up with the specification, the concept and the design of the brief. The team then turned to SDL Tridion to provide the content management solution.

The Unilever team was already familiar with SDL Tridion, as it had been instrumental in setting up the new Unilever Web site in 2002. What Unilever was looking for, was an online brand guidelines brochure aimed at four different audiences – employees, Unilever brand guardians, key suppliers and external audiences, such as design and marketing agencies.

Proof: e-brochure online

The e-brochure would explain to these key groups the thinking behind the new brand and associated practicalities, such as the new style guidelines. Each section would have its own login procedure and access codes and be translated into multiple languages.

Using SDL Tridion's BluePrint technology, the Web team were able to ensure that regardless of the page content, the same brand would be represented in all four sectors, despite the fact that the Web site included more than one hundred pages of content over multiple layers. If there is a change in one section, this is instantly cascaded across to all other relevant sections of the site

The new logo officially went live on 1 June 2004. The first of Unilever's advertisements were available just a few days later, using the new logo guidelines. In the first three months alone of the site going live, it had 40,000 unique visitors.

Katherine says, "The switch to the new logo has been extremely smooth. This is no mean feat considering the number of employees and agencies globally that are involved in the process."

"This is not the end of the relationship with SDL Tridion either. We intend to use it for other applications. The next project is to interface with the corporate portal, for which we shall also use SDL Tridion," Katherine concludes.

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