

case study

Institute of Direct Marketing partner with Nelson Croom to develop their own online materials

The Institute of Direct Marketing is Europe's leading professional development body for direct, data and digital marketing. It has trained more than 60,000 marketing practitioners, 5,000 hold the coveted IDM Diploma. The IDM has a worldwide reputation for the quality of its professional development and education programmes.

In line with its goal of promoting high standards of direct marketing practice, the IDM has established The IDM Education Programme. Their aim is to help universities and colleges to deliver the best direct marketing teaching and applied research and thereby create a stream of bright, talented, knowledgeable students, from all disciplines, choosing to work in the interactive and direct marketing profession.

The problem

With sponsorship from the Royal Mail, IDM had produced four substantial ring binders containing detailed teaching slides and notes. These had been successful both in encouraging academics to establish new programmes and in enriching existing courses.

The problem lay in the format. The ring binders were very bulky to store, costly to send out and almost impossible to update effectively. More and more of the materials needed to be provided in electronic format – from professionally produced powerpoint slides to video clips for use in lectures to bring the topics to life.

Furthermore, although IDM had sponsorship from the Royal Mail for the programme, the funds for creating materials were limited and so the prospect of paying a developer to convert all the content was not attractive.

The solution

The obvious solution was to take the content in the ring binders, update it and provide it as an online service. The question was how to do that cost-effectively.

Nelson Croom's learning technology, Imago, is a completely web-based application. Users access learning materials online, the administration tools are online and even the creation of the programmes has a web interface. So there was no reason why the team at IDM could not create the materials and manage their use themselves.

What's more, the hosted service that Nelson Croom provide

“*Nelson Croom focused clearly on what we were trying to achieve. We didn't want simply to pay them to do everything, but wanted them to teach us how to create and manage the resources for ourselves, using their technology. The result has been excellent feedback from early users – and Nelson Croom have helped us learn along the way*”

Neil Morris, Deputy Managing Director, IDM

removes the need to pay upfront to purchase the software. Instead the IDM were able to pay a license fee as they went along. This approach enables clients to get started with very little upfront investment.

IDM decided to pay for ten days of Nelson Croom time. The first step was to scope the project, identifying the objectives and agreeing an approach to achieving them. The Nelson Croom team then created some prototype material complete with reusable templates.

The remainder of the budgeted days were used to train the IDM team – in no time they were creating their own modules for the users to work through. Finally, Nelson Croom added some visual spice and interactivity to the modules.

The results

The feedback from early users has been excellent. The relationship has developed well, with IDM able to hand work backwards and forwards to Nelson Croom, using the in-house competence they have developed to contain costs and asking for help from Nelson Croom's development experts when it was clear that their greater experience and specialist skills could add value.

Perhaps the biggest win for the IDM was the opportunity to learn first hand how to create materials online. With Nelson Croom's trained and experienced team providing a safety net should it be needed, they were always confident of success.



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