

BK City Offers Burger King a One-Stop Communication Shop



A national quick service restaurant giant discovers that a single solution to meet all their internal communication needs really isn't too much to ask.

Customer Overview

Burger King New Zealand (TPF Restaurants Ltd) is a national, 3,000-employee chain of 66 burger-based, quick-service restaurants, stretching from Whangarei to Invercargill, whose customer catchphrase is 'Have it your way!' The company prides itself on being a fun, exciting place to work, where customers receive a consistent experience across all locations.

The Challenge

Consistency in such a geographically dispersed organisation requires crystal clear organisational communication. Unfortunately, while such communication might have occurred via the existing offsite-hosted, corporate-styled intranet, widely varying IT comfort levels meant staff seldom used it.

"Crucial product, promotion and procedure information existed only in costly packs that had to be couriered out," recalls Burger King's MIS Project Manager, Justin Davidson. Meanwhile, critical operational information (e.g. IT helpdesk calls, staff whereabouts, etc.), could only be tracked through time-intensive manual processes that allowed issues to be missed or misinterpreted. And collaborating on projects and problem solving was nigh impossible, leading to constant 'reinventing the wheel' for commonplace issues.

While an intranet might appear to be the obvious answer, few intranet solutions could address all these issues. Costly past experience had also taught Burger King Management that traditional, information-heavy-but-bland intranet sites wouldn't work – they needed something staff would want to use. And, after falling prey previously to expensive ongoing hosting charges, they knew they wanted to host and maintain any solution independently.

The Solution

"As part of our solution selection process, we approached strategic partner, Olympic, to get their take," says Davidson. "We know they listen to our needs, and address any issues quickly and effectively."

And after ensuring he understood Burger King's exact requirements, Olympic's Strategic Consultant, Tom Donaldson recommended i-builder – Olympic's web application suite. i-builder offered Burger King all the functionality they needed, while letting them totally manage site content internally. "I was happy to recommend Olympic's solution to Management," Davidson adds, "and I haven't regretted it."

The site's appearance and ease-of-use were critical, so Tom brought in Olympic's award-winning designer, Warner Davies. Warner created the concepts for the "BK City" site, and ensured that layouts were fun, friendly and captured Burger King's company culture to a "T".

Implementation

Despite minor challenges (e.g. cross-platform issues), the i-builder implementation ran smoothly. "Mainly due to the Burger King team," says Olympic's Solution Architect, Steve Turley, who managed the company-wide implementation.

"Burger King ensured team members had all the company knowledge we needed to get it right first time." And that resourcing, adds Steve, made all the difference.

Still wary from their prior intranet experience, Burger King initially tested the site with 8 restaurants. Results, says Davidson, were spectacular. "Within days, the trial restaurants had worked the site out and become fully competent in its use." And word spread quickly – even with a staged 10-site-per-week launch plan, Davidson kept receiving requests for immediate access.

The Results

Only two months after project kickoff, Burger King's new intranet site addressed all their communication and information needs. "It was the fastest ROI we've experienced from any IT project," enthuses Davidson.

i-builder's forms and tracking functions made a huge difference in company operations. "Being able to track every IT support call has been a real eye-opener." The ability to track staff movements has also increased customer service levels – as has providing a central repository for company documentation.

It was i-builder's ease-of-use, however, that sealed the project's success. "After just four hours' training, we built BK City almost entirely in-house, saving us tens of thousands of dollars in ongoing development costs." And the forums are creating even greater cost savings, Davidson adds. "I've learned more about restaurant operations in a few months through the forums than I had in the last two years – which then helps me avoid wasting resources on poor technology choices."

Highlights

- Burger King's existing corporate-styled intranet was inadequate for its internal communication needs
- They required an internally-managed solution that would enable them to share information and ideas, plus provide various tracking functions
- Olympic designed and implemented "BK City" – an intranet site addressing all these issues in a friendly, non-intimidating format
- The site has saved Burger King "tens of thousands of dollars" and has been described as "the fastest ROI experienced from an IT project"
- Other benefits have included better understanding of operational statistics, productivity gains, and more consistent customer experience

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