

Aalborg Portland enlists IBM to help extend market reach with new Web sites.

Overview

■ Challenge

Increase market share of white cement by broadening the brand recognition

■ Solution

Internet and intranet sites with easy, on demand content publishing

■ Why IBM?

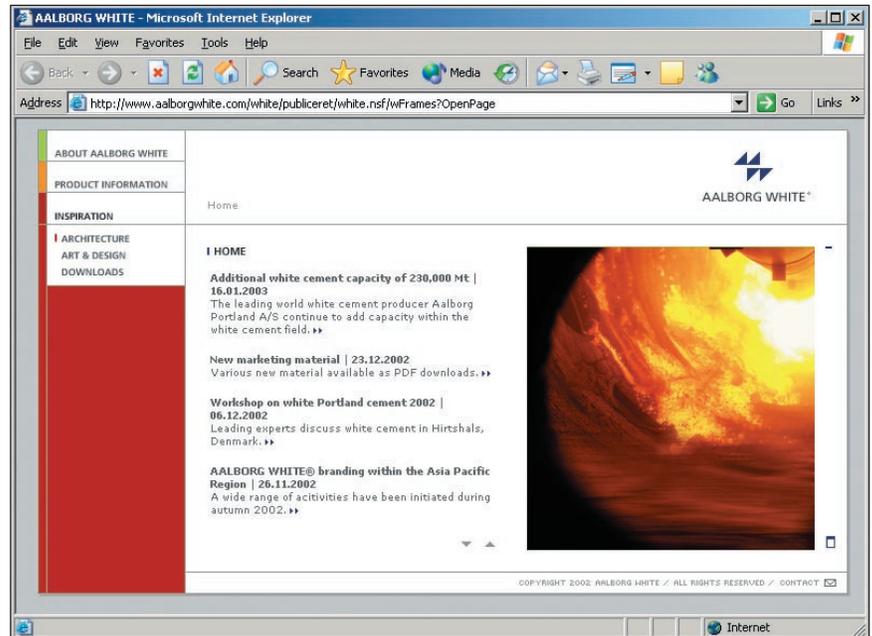
Aalborg Portland viewed IBM as a strategic partner based on a long-standing outsourcing relationship; confidence in IBM's expertise in e-business and strategic marketing communications and branding; IBM and IBM Business Partner Coextant Systems International offered an easy-to-use Web content publishing solution

■ Key Business Benefits

Enhanced global branding and marketing capabilities for white cement; faster, on demand employee access to corporate information

■ Business Partner

Coextant Systems International



Aalborg Portland produces 2.8 million tons of cement annually, exporting more than half to other countries. The company plans to increase its production of white cement to 840,000 tons in the near future.

As Denmark's only cement manufacturer, Aalborg Portland Group (www.aalborg-portland.dk) knows that not all cement is alike. Headquartered in Aalborg, the 1,200-employee company recognized that the finer grades offer artistic qualities that can bring distinction to any building or bench.

Grey cement is Aalborg Portland's core business. Relatively inexpensive, grey cement is commonly used in large construction projects. But white cement is what gives the company pride as a quality producer. Developed by the company's Aalborg

“To broaden the use of white cement worldwide, we plan to leverage the branding capabilities of the Web and enable our sales and marketing units to publish content online themselves.”

*—Morten Frederiksen, IT Manager,
Aalborg Portland Group*

e-business—accelerating the pace of business and the pace of change

Key Components

Software

- IBM Lotus® Domino™
- IBM Lotus Domino.doc®
- IBM Lotus QuickPlace™

Servers

- IBM @server xSeries™ 330

Services

- IBM Global Services – Worldwide Strategic Outsourcing
- IBM Business Consulting Services
- IBM e-business Hosting™
- Nordic Center for IBM e-business Innovation

“By having IBM e-business Hosting manage and host our Internet and intranet sites, we benefit from a high level of security as well as the availability and resiliency of our xSeries servers.”

*–Paul Dahl, Project Manager,
Aalborg Portland*

White division, white cement consists of pure limestone mined in the company's hometown. This strong, resilient niche product is used, in its pure white form or colored, in premier projects like airports, churches and sculptures.

Globally, Aalborg Portland is the largest producer and exporter of white cement, marketing to 80 countries. “We want to broaden the use of white cement worldwide, so we can continue to grow our business,” says Morten Frederiksen, IT manager, Aalborg Portland. “To do this, we plan to leverage the branding capabilities of the Web, so architects and other construction project decision-makers will consider using our white cement. Given the small size of our IT staff, the most efficient way to maintain an information-rich Web site is to enable our sales and marketing units to publish content online themselves.”

Since 1993, Aalborg Portland has outsourced most of its IT activities to IBM Global Services – Worldwide Strategic Outsourcing. Building on this partnership, as well as its confidence in IBM's e-business expertise and strategic marketing communications, the company once again turned to IBM for help. IBM responded with *www.aalborgwhite.com*, an informational Web site developed using Lotus software and a content automation solution from German IBM Business Partner Coextant Systems International. IBM designed the new Web site to market the company's white cement products to other businesses, including architectural firms and construction companies.

“Our sales and marketing professionals can now create Web content using such familiar tools as Microsoft Office software,” says Frederiksen. “Then, with the combination of IBM Lotus Domino.doc and Hyper.net, they are just a few simple steps away from publishing the information online. They don't have to worry about the technical details of Web publishing, and we can maintain our current IT staffing level.”

Teaming with IBM to meet marketing needs

The Aalborg White business-to-business (B2B) Web site has been live for several months and supports a cost-efficient, global marketing presence. The company's IT staff teamed with IBM Business Consulting Services (BCS), the Nordic Center for IBM e-business Innovation, IBM e-business Hosting and IBM Global Services – Worldwide Strategic Outsourcing to manage the Web site development project. The Nordic Center for IBM e-business Innovation oversaw

the project, and drew on its expertise in strategic communication and interactive branding to help design the Web site. IBM professionals from BCS handled the business analysis, design, development and project management, while IBM Global Services and IBM e-business Hosting implemented the Web solution and provide ongoing operations and maintenance support.

"Before the project began, we formulated our e-business strategy—aligning it with our business strategies—so that we would have common goals to follow," says Paul Dahl, project manager, Aalborg Portland. "We're very pleased with IBM's efforts in meeting our three-month deadline for making our Web site available as a new marketing channel for our employees."

Lotus software delivers e-business foundation

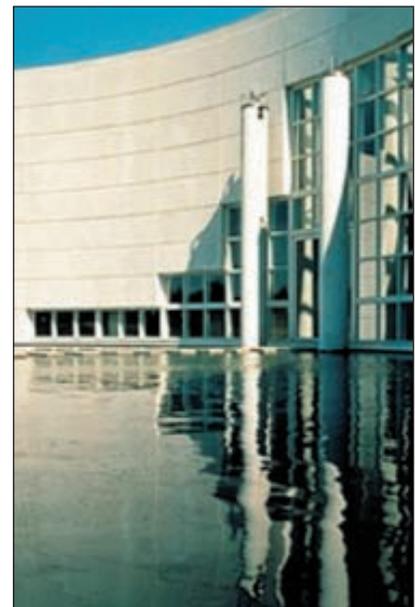
Aalborgwhite.com was developed with IBM Lotus Domino and is hosted by IBM e-business Hosting on two IBM @server xSeries 330 systems at its Copenhagen facility. In addition to providing the e-business infrastructure and Web application server to support the Web site, Lotus Domino delivers security and access control functions.

Business professionals create content using software such as Microsoft Word or Microsoft Excel. Then, they simply save their documents in Lotus Domino.doc, which functions as the document management system that passes the content to Hyper.net. A back-office Web service, Hyper.net rapidly converts the information into HTML and delivers it to the Web site, with the look-and-feel of dynamic online content rather than a plain, posted document. Meta data is stored in Lotus Domino.doc and used by Hyper.net to automatically control content structure, access rights and the actual placement of topics in the end-user navigation and table-of-contents hierarchies.

"Using Hyper.net, we don't have to deal with usability issues that can come up with manually posted documents or content developed by proprietary authoring tools," notes Dahl. "Our business users can get their finished content posted to the Web in about 15 minutes, which helps us control costs and be highly responsive to our customers' needs for product information and news."

"IBM has been the consummate professional—a strategic partner we know we can trust with our most critical IT systems, freeing us to focus on our core business of developing high-quality cement products."

—Morten Frederiksen



Aalborg Portland's white cement—with its high reflection and strength levels, and low alkali content—brings beauty to virtually any structure.

When content authors want to route drafts to colleagues for review or to check work in-progress, they log on to Lotus Domino.doc through a corporate intranet. Lotus Domino.doc generates a full audit trail. Lotus QuickPlace provides on demand virtual team rooms in which Aalborg Portland employees can collaborate on content.

"Lotus software provided just the functionality we needed," notes Dahl. "And by having IBM e-business Hosting manage and host our Internet and intranet sites—and handle everything from server administration to system monitoring—we benefit from a high level of security as well as the availability and resiliency of our xSeries servers."

IBM developed the company's intranet using the same Lotus software-based e-business platform. Besides its role in the content publishing process, the intranet provides an efficient, responsive and cost-saving means for 350 office employees to share corporate news, policies and other information. Previously, employees either had to distribute paper reports or circulate information through e-mail. The intranet resides on six xSeries 330 servers, four for production and two for application development.

Primed for future integration

While Frederiksen notes that it is too soon for Aalborgwhite.com to have generated a measurable impact on the company's bottom line, the potential is certainly there. Explains Frederiksen, "We have many ideas about incorporating value-added online tools that will help customers choose the right cement products. For example, we could include a cement strength calculator or a tool that enables customers to obtain visual images of different patterns on concrete. We also foresee integrating our Web site with backend business applications. These are all concepts that we will have IBM help us implement."

Dahl notes that IBM has proven its value to Aalborg Portland since it began managing the company's IT systems. Frederiksen adds, "IBM has been the consummate professional—a strategic partner we know we can trust with our most critical IT systems, freeing us to focus on our core business of developing high-quality cement products."

For more information

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