



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY



MISSOURI
BOTANICAL
GARDEN

SUMMARY



CUSTOMER	Missouri Botanical Garden
WEBSITE	missouribotanicalgarden.org
COUNTRY	United States
INDUSTRY	Non-profit

CUSTOMER PROFILE

The Missouri Botanical Garden is one of the world's leading horticultural institutions. It is located on 79 acres in St. Louis, Missouri.

PRODUCT IMPLEMENTED



Missouri Botanical Garden Plants Vibrant New Website Using DNN

The Missouri Botanical Garden's aging website needed some serious pruning and redesign to make it easier to manage and navigate. Using DNN, and with help from Web solution provider SteadyRain, the Garden totally overhauled its site. The result is improved control over content, easier navigation for users, and a streamlined look and feel that helps bolster the brand image for one of the world-leading institutions of its kind.

Business Needs

In the early 19th Century an Englishman named Henry Shaw settled on a piece of land west of a small community called St. Louis. He prospered, and after 40 years opened up a wonderfully cultivated garden as a way of giving back to the citizens of the expanding town.

Generations later, that land became the 79-acre Missouri Botanical Garden, a world-renowned institution and National Historic Landmark known for its displays, architecture, and research. The institution launched its first website in the mid-1990s. Over the years, the site served a variety of audiences,

including general visitors as well as scientists from around the world the Garden’s large and ever-growing research databases. Over time, though, the site outgrew the technology supporting it. The result was a messy collection of web pages and databases.

“The site grew organically, with pages added as needed for researchers and for the general public,” says Liz Fathman, Publications Manager. “We wound up with thousands of web pages, with one editor who was responsible for managing most of the site. It was not very well coordinated and we ended up with a site that looked pretty jumbled.”

It was also time-consuming to perform basic maintenance and updates. Changing a single word or the amount of an admission price could force

entire pages offline for a period of time—and force content providers to wait while the web editor was busy making changes.

Top managers decided the site needed an overhaul to make it easier for internal employees to manage and add content and for both visitors and scientists to use.

Solution

The Missouri Botanical Garden worked with SteadyRain, a St. Louis-based web design firm and certified DNN Partner, a St. Louis-based web design and development firm, to deploy a new site built on Evoq Content.

“They already had a Microsoft environment, so DNN made a lot of sense for integrating with their existing systems,” says Eric Baggett, Senior Internet Strategist and Director of Online Marketing at SteadyRain. “Plus, there is an enormous amount of functionality that you get with the affordable Evoq Content¹ platform. It made a lot of sense for the Missouri Botanical Garden in multiple ways.”

The site redesign project took about 16 months, a timeline dictated by the complexity of the task. The project was divided into phases, including a complete review of thousands of pages of content that helped eliminate overlapping and outdated information. Staff members at the Missouri Botanical Garden helped reorganize content and the structure of the site to provide



more streamlined navigation. A collection of more than 70 databases was consolidated, and the user interface for the institution's primary gardening help site, PlantFinder, was redesigned to make searches easier. Staff members and SteadyRain also went through thousands of images to delete redundant files and reduce the size of the remaining images.

"We also worked with our off-site locations, the Butterfly House and Shaw Nature Preserve, to bring them into the fold" says Fathman. "So there were a lot of key stakeholders and moving parts that needed to be involved."

SteadyRain provided custom development work on the site, including a rotating banner on the home page, a customized events module, and the "PlantFinder" search tool. Much of the design work, however, involved easily available DNN modules. These included DigArticle for news and article listings; the Lightbox Image module for displaying photos; the SiteMap module; and an FAQ module that is used in the Gardening Help section.

Benefits

By using Evoq Content, the Missouri Botanical Garden was able to launch a dramatically improved new site with just a few months' effort. Evoq Content empowers employees to review and upload consistently branded content. Making edits to site pages is simple, saving time and frustration, and the availability of modules opens up the possibility of easy feature enhancements based

on user input. The new site is helping the Missouri Botanical Garden maintain its leadership role with a polished web presence.

Offers Vastly Improved Content Management

Evoq Content has helped reduce redundant content and the random, cluttered appearance of pages and information. The organization implemented what Fathman calls a "clear and enforceable workflow" that includes contributors, section editors, and site editors. "The content not only looks better due to a uniform design, we also have much better control over what content gets posted and the way it's presented in language and format," Fathman says.

Provides Flexibility to Quickly Edit Pages, Add Features

The straightforward user environment and wide availability of modules makes it easy for users to do quick edits and add features to the site. "One of the things I love about DNN is how dynamic it is," says Fathman. "The pages are so easy to edit that you can work on a simple fix when you have a moment to spare, really dive in when you need to, and enlist others to help out without a lot of complex training. And the big selection of modules means that if someone has a good idea for a feature, we can probably find a module that will make it work."

Enhances Organization's Brand

The streamlined content flow, the new look, and the easier access for users are all part of a major effort that will help the Missouri Botanical Garden maintain its leadership role. "Evoq Content has been instrumental in helping us let go of past practices and institute new processes," says Bill Dale, Director of Planning and Systems. "It is

helping the Missouri Botanical Garden provide a more consistent look and feel and a stronger, more consistent brand image for the institution."

¹ Evoq Content was previously known as DNN Professional and Enterprise Editions.

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