



Sitecore
Case Study:



Urban Land Institute – Global association revitalizes its members’ online user experience and access to valued information

Summary

The Urban Land Institute is a 40,000 member association with chapters worldwide. Working with a Sitecore partner, The Revere Group, they have integrated Sitecore and Endeca to improve their online presence and meet the growing information needs of their members.

Challenge

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a nonprofit education and research institute supported by its members. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in sustaining and creating thriving communities worldwide. Founded in 1936, the Institute now has more than 40,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines, working in private enterprise and public service.

The main purpose of the ULI site is to act as a portal for its members a place for them to communicate, find information, and search for other members. Previously, the ULI site content was managed with a commercial ColdFusion CMS, and some challenges ULI were facing included:

- The organization’s members weren’t happy that the site wasn’t keeping up with technology
- Members weren’t able to have personal profiles
- The site was not easily navigated
- The search engine was not functional

ULI wanted to improve their site in order to:

- Increase affinity of new members toward Urban Land Institute
- Offer members best-in-class access to information
- Maintain and strengthen the close-knit community of its members
- Eventually replace its membership system without disrupting system functionality

Solution

ULI sent out an RFP to find a CMS solution, and at the same time, they looked at engaging a large global strategy firm. They identified and chose The Revere Group to design, architect and deliver the system.

Working with The Revere Group, ULI chose Sitecore. According to Scott Powell, Principal, The Revere Group, “Sitecore was chosen because it has demonstrated the ability to work successfully. It’s flexible enough that as ULI is upgrading other systems, the Sitecore platform will easily adapt. In fact, The Revere Group has been able to build several add-ons to Sitecore, because the platform is so flexible.”

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Urban Land Institute Site



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**—Scott Powell,
Principal,
The Revere Group**



The project included:

- **Site integration with their membership database:** Members wanted to be able to find other members and maintain their personal information. Using Sitecore’s support for web parts, members have direct access to the membership system. Revere also integrated Endeca with Sitecore and ULI’s membership management system to build out the membership search.
- **Custom member landing pages:** Members have personal landing pages that they can customize using Sitecore’s support for web parts. Widgets include integrations to ULI’s book store, event management system, member database and content repository. The new feature allows each member to get the user experience they want.
- **Enhanced search:** The ULI solution has approximately 20,000 content items and about 1,000 taxonomy terms. It also runs over 20 regional websites. All content is tagged by the editors and available to visitors using Endeca’s guided navigation features; members-only content requires visitors to login before reading. Revere also used Sitecore’s included Lucene engine to automatically find “related content” for site pages.
- **Content import tool:** The Revere Group built a content import tool to move the content into the new site quickly and easily. The tool has full support for cross-article linking and media integration.
- **Site design:** ULI worked with The Revere Group’s design team to give their members a refreshed, modern design for the new site.

Result

The design of the new site is much more elegant and sophisticated than before, and feedback has been phenomenal. Members are now able to customize portal pages, and they have a single sign on. In addition, the user experience has been dramatically improved. Members can now:

1. **Update preferences:** In the members-only area members can manage their profile, upload different projects, and update their contact preferences.
2. **Search for other members:** Endeca allows members to search the member directory for other members that meet a certain criteria.
3. **Publish content:** Members can publish a series of reports on the web and also in member newsletters.
4. **Purchase Books:** Integration with ecommerce on the site allows members to purchase books directly on the site.
5. **Sign up for events:** With event registration online, members can easily attend events and download all presentations and associated collateral.

The content on the site has grown considerably as a result – previously there were approximately 11,000 assets on the site, and today there are 15,000 assets and the number continues to grow. Says Powell, “Editors are able to successfully interact and update content on the site without help. And members can manage their own profiles and preferences. The total user engagement has been highly successful.” In addition, ULI has 20 regional offices around the world that are also using Sitecore to manage content.

Technology Description

Site special ingredients

Endeca for Search

Sitecore web parts support

*Legacy systems for membership management,
online sales and event sign up.*



Sitecore’s Web Content Management System (CMS) and portal software solutions enable companies to deliver compelling web experiences. Sitecore’s award-winning CMS software makes it easy for businesses to create and update dynamic, full-featured websites of all types. Sitecore’s industry leading flexibility and scalability allows companies to better leverage their content, improve customer experience and drive business growth.

Thousands of public and private organizations, including national governments and Fortune 500 companies utilize Sitecore solutions for their websites. These organizations have created and now manage more than 20,000 dynamic websites with Sitecore including Microsoft, Sara Lee, Siemens, Toshiba, Omni Hotels, Computer Associates, ISS and Atlanta Falcons. Sitecore has offices and representatives in more than 50 countries around the world.

Sitecore
www.sitecore.net

Urban Land Institute
www.uli.org

The Revere Group
www.reveregroup.com