



## Case study

# Webtrends: Smooth integration of web analytics, customer relationship and content management



## Summary

Sitecore enabled WebTrends to quickly rebuild its website and smoothly integrate content management with WebTrends' own web analytics solution. Sitecore also offers a rock-solid development platform that has enabled WebTrends to seamlessly integrate its web marketing and leads routing systems with its CRM provider, salesforce.com.

## Challenge

In the spring of 2005 WebTrends was sold by NetIQ, a systems management software vendor. As an independent, privately held company, the sale gave WebTrends an opportunity to rework its entire IT infrastructure, including its web presence. Although this change presented an exciting opportunity to start over with a "clean slate" of IT systems, WebTrends only had a few months for system selection, development and deployment.

Knowing that the company's IT applications landscape would be rapidly reworked, a key functional requirement for WebTrends was to enable seamless integration between the website, the CRM system, and other core systems yet to be selected. WebTrends anticipated that some of these systems would be delivered online via the software as a service (SaaS) model, so the goal was to select a CMS platform that would facilitate SaaS integration using XML web services and SOAP technologies.

A final set of CMS requirements involved suitability for web analytics and search engine optimization. Ideally, the CMS should enable WebTrends to easily "tag the site" for analysis using WebTrends *On Demand*. In addition, the CMS must produce search engine-friendly URLs that could easily be indexed across the Internet.

## Solution

Although Sitecore was little known in the U.S. at the time, the WebTrends IT team discovered that Sitecore had the ingredients they were looking for. It was clear that Sitecore could provide the following:

- A proven CMS offering all the core features. To start, WebTrends had basic content management needs. Sitecore's solid track record in Europe and its list of reference sites made it clear that Sitecore delivered the fundamental CMS features WebTrends required.
- A mature, robust technical infrastructure built on .NET. Sitecore emerged as the most mature choice among .NET-based CMS systems, and its open API would clearly facilitate WebTrends' integration requirements with internal and external systems.
- Additional features and add-ons - such as friendly URLs, aliases, and the MetaTag module - to streamline WebTrends *On Demand* tagging and offer inherent search engine optimization advantages.
- Total control over site design and presentation. WebTrends could not be restricted by a CMS that imposed limits on layout and design. On the contrary, it became clear that Sitecore's presentation engine can accommodate any layout approach that renders HTML and CSS.

## The WebTrends site

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*"Sitecore provides an ideal architecture for both content management and integration with our own web analytics solutions and the Salesforce.com CRM platform"*

*David Montgomery, Senior IT Software Developer, WebTrends*

## Result

After a 10-12 week design and development process, WebTrends went live with its new website on-schedule. The transfer from NetIQ was seamless, and thousands of content items were migrated into a set of new Sitecore templates in less than a week. As anticipated, Sitecore's approach to templates and renderings enabled total design flexibility, so the design stage moved quicker than expected. Sitecore's HTML Tidy integration and the media library vastly improved the quality and organization of old content. New content is added every week and the process of content management is distributed among multiple users in the company, each with different business roles.

At go-live, the WebTrends team could immediately analyze lead conversion, visual path analysis, and scenario analysis using WebTrends *On Demand*. In addition, marketing success is continually measured as new campaigns are deployed. For example, using Sitecore aliases and sidebar promos – coupled with web forms that feed visitor responses into salesforce.com – WebTrends streamlined campaign deployment and improved interaction with visitors and customers.

## Technical description

WebTrends implemented the Microsoft SQL Server Edition of Sitecore Content Manager. A marketing content team of writers and designers regularly login to the CMS server and use all of the core features and a few add-on modules, such as the MetaTag module. Content is published daily to a load-balanced web farm via the Staging Module. WebTrends leverages publishing groups, controlled publishing, and versioning to stage and schedule content deployments.

In addition to content, WebTrends has deployed over 125 Sitecore layouts/sub-layouts/renderings that leverage over 50 content templates. Sitecore's .NET-based API has proved invaluable for custom application integration, as WebTrends has integrated almost 40 ASP.NET user controls with Sitecore, each performing a discrete task (e.g., web forms, RSS feeds) or as part of a broader application (e.g., Partner Locator).

One set of these user controls drives a key component of the WebTrends leads process and downstream CRM integration with salesforce.com. Selected areas of the website are integrated with salesforce.com using its web services-based API, while other custom web forms write data directly into the WebTrends message-based EAI framework.

Sitecore's ability to produce friendly URLs is a key ingredient for search engine optimization. This includes optimization for the site's own search engine, which runs the Verity Ultraseek engine. Verity simply indexes the full text of each friendly URL on the website, just as many Internet search engines do.

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## About WebTrends

WebTrends Inc. is the acknowledged global web analytics market leader for more than ten years. With an uncompromising focus on accurate and actionable insight, WebTrends enables thousands of web-smart organizations to quickly and easily improve campaign performance and web site conversion as well as build relationships with their customers. With WebTrends Marketing Lab, the company uniquely offers both comprehensive web analytics reporting and sophisticated, on-the-fly data exploration and customer targeting solutions for relationship marketing. Companies such as Ticketmaster, IKEA, Reuters, General Mills, US Bank and more than half of the Fortune and Global 500 rely on WebTrends as their trusted standard, not only for award-winning technology, but also for a full range of consulting services and unmatched industry expertise across the broadest data collection methods, WebTrends stands alone in its ability to meet any analysis objective and privacy or security practice. For more information, visit [www.WebTrends.com](http://www.WebTrends.com).

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