

Case study – AGRAVIS Raiffeisen AG

Efficient multi-site management and customized portals for target groups through integration of FirstSpirit™ and IBM WebSphere

Now we keep visitors to our websites and customer portals informed more quickly and with more up-to-date information – in less time.

Florian Hirtz,
Webmaster Online Communication Team, AGRAVIS



Project highlights

- Delivery of customized information, services, and applications for customers, partners, and employees
- One CMS for 70 web sites and portals
- Drastic time savings due to efficient editing processes on a standard content platform
- Ease of use: content management by specialized departments frees up IT and corporate communication
- Rapid time-to-market: creation of new portals in half the time
- Advantages for employees and partners: evolution from information portals to application and process portals



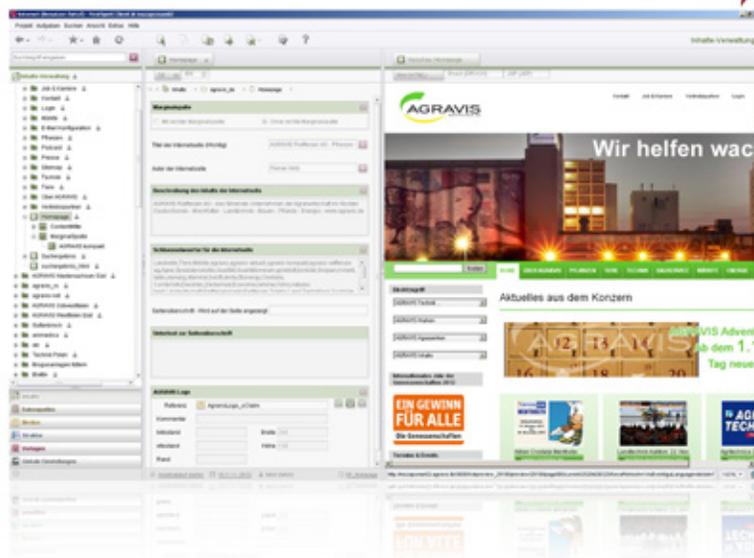
Central hub, local maintenance

Each year some two million users use the websites of AGRAVIS to find information on the product, service, and brand portfolio, which spans the areas plants, animals, machinery, construction, retailing, and energy. In the past there were two employees responsible for reviewing and publishing all content on the various HTML pages originating from the specialist departments. But due to the increasing volume of content, this became more and more difficult and increasingly came at the cost of quick and up-to-date information flow.

The project: Integrated content platform

AGRAVIS Raiffeisen AG is a modern agricultural trade and service company. The company operates some 70 Internet sites and portals for its customers, sales partners, and employees with information specially tailored for each target group, integrated service applications, and order functions. AGRAVIS relies on an integrated platform based on FirstSpirit CMS and the IBM WebSphere Portal to implement Internet and intranet projects quickly and consistently, and to design the maintenance process as simply and efficiently as possible for employees.

To enable it to once again efficiently create, manage, review, and publish content for the different target groups and publishing channels, AGRAVIS implemented a high-performance and user-friendly content management system. FirstSpirit reduces work for the IT and corporate communications divisions of the company and decentralizes the content management process. This is because the centrally supplied layouts and page templates are used by the specialist departments to independently create – in coordination with corporate communication – pages and content and to publish it to the different websites



and portals using defined release workflows. IT support is no longer needed for this. The employees can work confidently with the CMS with just a half day of training. Now there are some 100 authors from a wide range of specialized areas contributing content to the web projects.

Integration in IBM WebSphere Portal

Through a variety of portals, AGRAVIS offers employees, customers, and partners additional customized information, services, and applications, such as price and product data, contract statuses, invoices, or ordering options. These portals are implemented with IBM WebSphere. The editorial content is supplied using FirstSpirit™. For seamless integration, the FirstSpirit module „Content Integrator for IBM WebSphere Portal“ (CIW) from the e-Spirit partner Ethalon GmbH is used. It makes it possible to start content editing in the CMS from right inside the portal. The authors do not require any portal know-how, as they are working with the user-friendly editing interface of FirstSpirit™. The CMS generates pages and navigation structures, but also portlet applications can be integrated and parameterized directly inside the portal. The module works in the background on the portal to ensure automated updating of the content being managed in the CMS. Now employees can focus entirely on content creation. Read and access authorizations can be managed directly within the CMS

“Our portals are evolving from purely informational sites into application and process platforms. The integration of the FirstSpirit CMS with IBM WebSphere has significantly accelerated the process of new portal creation and will be a sustainable foundation for our web strategy and for implementing additional web projects and portals.”

Thorsten Gralla,
Team Leader Business Intelligence/Web Services,
AGRAVIS

and content for the different user groups can be displayed in personalized form. When users log on to a portal, they can access the pages and services that are specifically approved for them. Here the portal compares the group membership that is entered in the CRM system with the log-in data stored in the central user management system.



The result: Capability of acting in the Net

All stakeholders are benefiting from the new system. Corporate communication and specialized departments are now better able to perform online tasks. The IT department can concentrate on providing the technical basis and the format templates. The time expenditure from design to the live launch of new web projects has been cut in half. In addition, the efficient content maintenance functionality enables considerable time savings in the editing process which results in more up-to-date content. The attractive, user-friendly websites have been well received by the customers: Traffic figures are constantly rising, especially for personalized services involving product purchasing, which in turn results in increased growth in online sales.

AGRAVIS Raiffeisen AG

The areas of focus for the trade and service company span from plants, animals, and machinery in the classical agricultural areas to the complementary business areas of construction service, retailing, and energy. AGRAVIS has a total workforce of around 5,200. Main offices are located in Hannover and Münster, Germany.



“By using FirstSpirit we have been able to minimize content maintenance costs for our web sites and portals and to greatly optimize our editing processes.”

Florian Hirtz,
Webmaster Online Communication Team, AGRAVIS

About e-Spirit Quality comes from inspiration

e-Spirit is the manufacturer of FirstSpirit™, the content management system for companies with high expectations of their solutions. e-Spirit is a reputable internationally-oriented product supplier with big-name customers in all sectors.

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