

“The developers at [Michaels & Associates] helped us sort out what the client wanted. It made my job virtually pain free.”
~ Creative Director

CHALLENGES

Distribute important information to dealerships in a timely manner

Offer a sense of community among the dealerships

Portray a united front for all departments in the corporate office

APPROACH

Analyze the existing process to determine current business issues and dealership needs

Identify, compose, edit and organize a variety of articles and topics specifically designed for the target audience

Field questions to the website users for input and article content

RESULTS

An informative and engaging website that reflects the Brand and promotes a sense of community among the dealerships

A template system and content manager to facilitate production and reduce development time by 20% on the ongoing project

A single source for communicating daily messages

“ We use this project as a benchmark for everything we do, and it provides us with an opportunity to show our experience to prospective clients. ”

~ Creative Director



AUTO MANUFACTURER NEEDS A SINGLE COMMUNICATION SOURCE

An industry-leading automotive training company looked to expand their offerings by partnering with Michaels & Associates to provide web development services to their client, the U.S. corporate headquarters for a Fortune 100 automotive manufacturer.

The manufacturer's corporate headquarters was comprised of several departments: product, sales, aftersales, marketing and training departments, just to name a few. Each of these departments shared important information with U.S. dealerships on a daily basis. The dealerships received these corporate messages in several ways: by e-mails, bulletins and information posted to the company's vast Intranet and multiple external websites.

The manufacturer wanted a single communication source with the following traits:

- A one-stop shop for accessing all departments' information
- Timely delivery of the information
- A sense of community among the dealerships
- A united front for all departments in the corporate office

The manufacturer took the lead to initiate a streamlined approach to communicate with their dealerships online. Michaels & Associates was asked to help design a website for distributing this information in an easy, unified and engaging way.

"I have been working with Michaels & Associates for so long now, so I know what to expect (great customer service, friendly voices, technical knowledge, etc.). But I love working with them because they have a 'can-do' attitude and are always happy to offer the best solution they can think of. They always try to break the mold and offer new and unique solutions for each new project."

~ Creative Director



COLLABORATION BRINGS BUSINESS NEEDS TO LIGHT

In working together on the initial phase of the project, the teams identified the following business needs:

- Improve communications between all departments within the corporate office so that each department is aware of what information is being sent to dealers.
- Develop a consistency in format and delivery method of information from each department.
- Provide interactive and engaging information to motivate the dealers in order to enhance two-way communications between the corporate office and dealerships.
- Create a knowledge base of company bulletins, videos, stats and resources so important information does not get lost in the shuffle.

The manufacturer wanted communications to the geographically dispersed dealerships to improve by using the proposed website to:

- Develop a strong presence for the training department including a course calendar and short articles with best practices and tips for skills such as product presentations and customer relationship management.
- Inspire dealers with motivational articles about top employees, best customers and dealership events.
- Reach out to the dealers with a blog, car contests, polling questions and surveys, as well as direct e-mail access to each manufacturer department using an "Ask the Expert" feature.
- Provide secure access and reporting features to help corporate officers keep an eye on who was accessing information on the site.

“We are so lucky to have such a wonderful resource at our fingertips. WebTrain is a superb motivational tool! THANK YOU to all those wonderful folks who make WebTrain a reality!”

~ Dealership Sales Manager

USER EXPERIENCE

“The more we surf around WebTrain’s nooks and crannies, the better we understand our product and our customers, and the better able we are to serve them. The site unifies the entire sales and service teams across the USA, by giving us unique stories and articles just for us. We get the most up to the minute information about the product, information distribution, planning and strategy reports with a grin, product and selling courses, reference materials, the latest and greatest tools of the trade, hot tips for selling more, product knowledge, and many, many ways to maximize our time with the customer.”

~ Dealership Sales Associate



THE WEBSITE IS THE HEART OF CORPORATE INFORMATION

Consultants at Michaels & Associates delivered a site that was both informative and educational, offering links to other e-learning, a training blog, sales and service tips and comparisons between the manufacturer’s product and competitive models.

A backend template system and content manager was also developed to facilitate production and reduce development time by 20% during the weekly update process. This system was created to provide ongoing savings to the auto manufacturer for the life of the project.

Today, more than five years later, the automotive training company is pleased to extend their partnership with Michaels & Associates for development and maintenance of the website. This site continues to provide streamlined communications to dealership employees across America on a daily basis. The main structure of the site, a product of close collaboration, careful planning and creative thinking, is still the same—and remains flexible enough to incorporate the latest technologies and meet the client’s changing needs.