

Case Study

Trade & Invest BC

www.britishcolumbia.ca



Industry

International marketing

Partner

Number 41 Media

101- 3045 Douglas Street

Victoria, BC

V8T 4N2

Canada

www.number41media.com

Charles Haigh

charles.haigh@number41media.com

Goals

Trade & Invest BC came to us, recognizing that their existing website was not adequately meeting the needs of the target audiences. In the short-term, the goal for this re-design project was to streamline the existing content and build a website that had both visual appeal and audience-appropriate structure and content. In the long-term, our client was looking for a website that could be easily maintained and updated to continue generating international investments as the focus of the government's marketing efforts evolve. They were also looking for an information architecture and graphic design that could be extended to localized, in-language sites in China, Japan and Korea.

Challenges

A major challenge in creating this website was to identify and satisfy the information needs and preferences of three distinct audiences from a variety of international locations. Our traditional approach to user experience research had to be modified in order to gain a deeper understanding of international audiences without actually speaking to these audiences themselves. This challenge also required us to modify our information architecture approach to adopt an audience-based navigation structure rather than a typical topic-based navigation structure.

From a technical standpoint, this project also presented several challenges. We were charged with the task of integrating legacy tools, such as a community profiles database and an investment opportunities search application, into the new site. Furthermore, we were challenged by the need for long-term technical supportability of the site, a challenge we addressed by utilizing the Portal Engine for development.

Solution

To get this project underway for Trade & Invest BC, we performed a thorough scan of their existing website to understand where our clients were coming from and how we could improve upon their existing resources. We also conducted a comparative analysis of five similar sites around the world. Comparative analyses give us the opportunity to see what other organizations are doing well and, just as importantly, what they are not doing well. We combined these findings with the results of our requirements gathering sessions with five different groups of Trade and Invest BC stakeholders to present the complete picture of what direction this project needed to take.



Case Study

Once this research was complete, our next task was to create an information architecture, or sitemap, that reflected and supported our recommendations and was optimized for ease of use. Our research indicated the importance of focusing on three distinct audience groups: international investors, international buyers, and local exporters. This became our guiding principle in developing an information architecture that catered to each of these audiences individually. From here, we leaned heavily on the results of our field research to determine the high-level information and service needs of these audiences. The final deliverable for this stage was the “beta schema” – the final information architecture for the new website – complete with recommended content that was both pulled from the existing website and written by our team.

Guided by our field research and the information architecture, the interaction design process determined how the end-user would interact with each page. This process involved designing each page to best represent the priority and supplemental content (from the beta schema), and ensuring that the user experience was positive and consistent throughout the website. The end result of this process was a series of black and white, clickable HTML wireframes that demonstrated the website’s interactive design.

Our graphic designer took a lot into consideration when he created Trade & Invest BC’s graphic design system. In fact, all of the work that had taken place from the research stage up to the interaction design was used to inform the graphic design. For this project, we produced 11 design comps including the splash page, three home pages (one each for the Invest, Export and Buy sections), and several internal pages. All of these pages incorporate a common look and feel while employing a three-tone colour scheme that supports the breakdown of content into audience groups.

This is the part of our process where the vision became reality. Leveraging Portal Engine, our team, which includes 3 certified Kentico developers, took the information architecture, wireframes and graphic design comps and spent countless hours collaborating to build the website. Now a reality, millions of international investors, buyers and local exporters will visit the new Trade & Invest BC website to learn more about the business opportunities that exist for them in British Columbia.

Key criteria for selecting Kentico CMS

- Ease of use for end-users
- Compatibility with ASP.NET
- Exhaustive set of ready-built, easy-to-use controls

