The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Cuts the Time to Build Website IT Components from One Day to One Hour with Progress Sitefinity

CASE STUDY

2022 Website of the Year
CATEGORY WINNER
Public Sector

INDUSTRY
Government (United Nations)

PRODUCT
Progress Sitefinity

SUMMARY
The FAO has hundreds of websites across six languages under management and needed a modern and sustainable solution to improve useability, security, and support. It tapped Sitefinity, the Sitefinity Cloud and Progress Professional Services. It can now configure the IT components of websites in an hour versus a day, enabling the website owners to manage the content and the information architecture. Technology is no longer an obstacle.

> "Sitefinity gives the content owner the ability to build and disseminate content and the freedom to build websites as they like with predefined corporate templates, almost with no knowledge of IT. The best part is that it takes just an hour to configure the IT components of the website."
>
> **Giorgio Lanzarone**
> Information Technology Officer, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Challenge

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations is based in Rome with regional offices around the world. To achieve global food security and ensure that all people have access to high-quality food, it reports on the status of food and agriculture–defining rules from pesticides to fishery zones and delivering its knowledge to countries around the world. As a result of its global audience, its websites have millions of visitors each month from government and government partners around the world, 700 websites in total under management (25 new ones just in the last six months) and tens of thousands of news articles in its newsroom. Almost all the sites FAO builds, from the home page to its newsroom, are in at least six languages.

Its IT team of 10 had been leveraging an open-source content management system for a decade. In addition to the hidden costs that come with this, it lacked support and clear roadmap, and required IT resources to manage the platform. Additionally, it was almost impossible to follow the many new versions of the WCMS released, which made it incompatible with previous versions.

When the FAO set out to transition to a commercial content management system that allowed it to improve site usability, customize content based on personnas and disseminate updated content daily in a dynamic and interactive way, it turned to Progress® Sitefinity®, the Sitefinity Cloud and Sitefinity's Professional Services. This provided a powerful, secure and sustainable CMS that anyone in the organization could use to manage the content of websites without IT skills.

Solution

The FAO integrated the latest version of Sitefinity, leveraged the Sitefinity Cloud to host its websites and its CDN (Content Delivery Network) ensuring quick content delivery to its website users regardless of their location. It also used Multisite Management to configure different languages for different sites, translating key site pages across its websites. As it reorganized its content into Sitefinity, it provided an opportunity to organize the content to improve usability. Sitefinity has a great set of embedded features that can be expanded, and it doesn't need to be done from scratch. While other solutions require the need to customize and start from scratch, Sitefinity allows FAO to build on top of existing infrastructure and modules.

To ensure proper content governance, only one member of the FAO IT team has access to production, and FAO leverages the Content Pipeline in the Sitefinity Cloud. Content editors work on staging content and then go through the sync process, one of the most important features of Sitefinity. The central web team sets the rules and guidelines in the platform to ensure content consistency, integrity and to reduce the risk of something being published inadvertently.

Giorgio Lanzarone, Information Technology Officer, The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, explains how FAO worked with Sitefinity Professional Services to create a process to build websites quickly, "We worked with Progress Professional Services to build customized components that could be aggregated to build a website. The components followed rules and best practices, but were specifically build for us, and the team has been trained on how to maintain and further enhance them. The success of this methodology has caused it to serve as a blueprint that Progress uses with other clients."

FAO also used this opportunity to make its websites more secure through a migration to HTTPS for all traffic. Lanzarone explains the significance of this, "being in control of a full CDN, our team was able to ensure high levels of security to the end users, but also to maintain flexibility when accessing legacy systems that are not capable of supporting HTTPS."

Additionally, FAO integrated Sitefinity with the Google search engine, Google Tag Manager, Google Analytics and it is in the process of adopting a tool for document management system, which will integrate with Sitefinity to disseminate documents.

Results

The FAO currently has 50 content editors working in Sitefinity and plans to have 250 in the next year. Lanzarone explains what Sitefinity allows content owners to do, "Sitefinity gives the content owner the ability to build and disseminate content and the freedom to build websites as they like with predefined corporate templates, almost with no knowledge of IT. The best part is that it takes just an hour to configure the IT components of the website. The technology is no longer an obstacle and the feedback from our content owners is very positive."

The next steps for FAO are to build platforms like blogs and chatbots and to create more interactive components to its website with Sitefinity.

About Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that leads international efforts to defeat hunger. Its goal is to achieve food security for all and to ensure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. With over 194 member states, FAO works in over 130 countries worldwide. Learn more at www.fao.org/about

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Learn how to build websites in record time by aggregating custom components with Progress Sitefinity.

f /progresssw
🐦 /progresssw
▶ /progresssw
in /progress-software