

Success Story

Compassion® International uses Open Text Digital Media Group to help break the cycle of poverty in developing countries

Open Text system helps to streamline processes for distributing and sharing photos, video, and other content among 38 global offices

Compassion International is a Christian child advocacy ministry that works to help more than one million children in 25 countries. Compassion partners with churches, parents, and communities to teach, train, and mentor children in third-world and developing countries. Sponsorship programs are Christ centered, committed to integrity, and aimed at helping children learn how to create sustainable livelihoods to break the cycle of poverty.

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Centralizing rich media for global access

The Compassion International Web site (www.compassion.com) provides a plethora of information about their programs, including Crisis Updates about regions that are experiencing upheaval, keeping donors attuned with the latest developments in their sponsored child's location; group tours for donors who wish to visit Compassion sites; and Compassion@Work success stories about lives of the children benefiting from Compassion's achievements. Compassion's main goal is to secure sponsorship for children, so sharing and distributing the fundraising collateral between its 38 offices is vital to the organization.

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To manage their marketing assets, Compassion implemented media management software from the Open Text Digital Media Group. By centralizing their content, Compassion partners and employees can efficiently repurpose photos, articles, Web site content, and digital audio and video media to reduce research time and increase productivity. Users can easily find, access, edit, share, reuse, distribute, and archive their digital assets, all within unique workflows and using the desktop applications of their choice.

“Compassion has a one-to-one sponsorship program where, for instance, a person in America will sponsor a child in the Philippines,” said Gina Brasseur, Digital

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Industry

Non-Profit

Customer



Business Challenges

- Limited access to shared rich media assets
- Globally dispersed employee base
- Scattered files across the organization
- Duplication of marketing assets

Business Solution

Media Management Software from the Open Text Digital Media Group

Business Benefits

- Improved collaboration globally with centralized repository
- Increased support and visibility for all rich media content
- Better content management with metadata and workflow tracking
- Enriched search functionality
- Decreased duplication of marketing collateral

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Compassion utilized another digital asset management solution for several years prior to implementing the Open Text system. As the organization grew, and it became evident that its search, control, and usability requirements were not being met, Compassion knew it was time for change. “The previous system just didn’t have the functionality we needed. If someone was looking for specific information and didn’t find it, we just didn’t know if it was in the system or if it existed at all. Out of frustration, people started coming up with their own workarounds: an FTP site, emails, network drives, disks, and so on. All of our material suddenly went in 10 different directions and nobody knew what the other person had. For instance, if a picture was needed, someone would be hired to take it—yet the person in the next cubicle might already have the shot,” explained Brasseur.



Having evaluated a number of solutions, the simplicity of setup made Open Text stand out above the rest for Brasseur. “We could practically pull it out of the box, plug it in, and just use it, whereas with the other solutions everything was modular and had to be built and connected. Open Text was fast, inexpensive, and easy to put together.”

Compassion’s repository is centralized in the United States, where 60 percent of its users reside and where most of the content is derived from; however, users anywhere in the world can access the system by simply logging in. Compassion’s globally dispersed partner offices help to produce a mixture of marketing collateral, including newsletters, flyers, brochures, mailers, and a magazine a couple of times a year, so an integrated, globally sharable solution is essential to managing these and other marketing assets. “We really like how the Open Text system is truly a global tool, not just centric to the United States or Canada. Anybody from anywhere can use it to fulfill what they need to accomplish,” said Brasseur.

Compassion has integrated the core media management solution with Open Text’s Adapter for Telestream,[®] an add-on that takes care of multiple video types, formatting them into the distribution medium of the user’s liking. The feature also creates low-resolution proxies, metadata, and thumbnail representations of full-resolution master assets.

“I have more than a thousand videotapes in the U.S. office that have not been widely distributed. We’re now going to digitize them all, upload them to the Open Text system, and let our global users see what we have. The ability to view and download clips from the system is extremely convenient. I do not have to make a tape dub, package it, and ship it overseas. I can just upload a video from my office—it’s much faster, and we save the mailing expenses,” said Brasseur. With the addition of a multitude of rich media assets, Compassion relies on the subscription features available in the Open Text system to notify staff when new files are uploaded to the repository.

Compassion also plans to roll out Open Text DMG’s Creative Desktop.[™] This application provides a natural extension to the desktop experience, including a folder-based interface to the digital media repository, and desktop plug-ins that add digital asset management-specific functions within desktop applications. In essence, Creative Desktop will give Compassion the ability to easily access, share, distribute, reuse, and archive all types of digital content from their desktop without the hassle of launching applications manually.

Supporting implementation

Before Compassion went live with Open Text in July of 2008, Brasseur did a lot of homework on metadata, taxonomies, and databases to secure a smooth setup for her 600 global users. “Full implementation took about four months, starting at the initial visit from Open Text’s professional services team. The Open Text support team was very helpful; they obviously knew the tool and the information they required to get it up and running. By doing my research beforehand, I was able to communicate my needs to the team, and as a result, we worked together rather quickly to meet my goals and get the system in place,” explained Brasseur.

Compassion has three groups of users: the marketing teams, from the designers to the planners; workflow users, including editorial people and the creators of raw material; and their “Joe User group,” as Brasseur describes them—the regular, everyday person who needs the random picture or video clip for a Microsoft[®] Word[®] document, PowerPoint[®] presentation, or an email.

“Everyone is finding what they need, and that works for me,” said Brasseur, adding, “If you know how to use a computer, you can easily figure out the Open Text solution. I have users at all different skill levels, and we offered training classes that cover the basic search and download functions. People were able to pick it up and saw the value of it immediately.”

As for best practices, Brasseur stresses how important it is to thoroughly examine the requirements of an organization in the context of the right solution. “You should be able to fully recognize how and if a certain product will fulfill all of your requirements and how the solution is going to work for you and be a good experience.”

Everything in its right place

For Compassion, the greatest benefits in Open Text come from the centralization of all rich media files and the subsequent search functionality in the repository. “I think what users like most is the ability to find what they are looking for,” said Brasseur. “The category search and the taxonomy make it very easy. By clicking on a few links, our users are taken to exactly where they want to go, and then they can just browse everything within that category.”



With all of the capabilities, Compassion is realizing a progression in productivity. “Just the fact that people no longer call me and say, ‘I can’t find something,’ says that they are finding files and understand the system. And it’s a lot quicker than the old system. It was estimated that a person would spend up to 50 percent of their time just searching for assets, but with the Open Text system, that time has been cut way down,” said Brasseur.

Fulfillment in affecting change

Compassion works on approximately 1,000 projects a year, so setting up a workflow area for managing this process is becoming the central focus for Brasseur and her organization.

“Each month representatives in 25 of our field countries are sent on story-writing assignments that have to be managed and returned by specific dates. To keep track of a story, the writer and the requester have to manage a series of documents including emails, spreadsheets, FTP sites, and blogs, so the details are spread out all over the place. Through Open Text’s workflow function, we are going to start managing every step of the process. Everything will be available in the system—the topic of the story, when the assignment needs to be performed, the due date, the photos and documents that must be submitted, and so on,” said Brasseur. “As we develop these processes, the solution is really going to open up communication between all parties and help us keep track of all projects.”

Brasseur’s efforts to secure a solution that fits Compassion’s needs, both now and in the future, have made a lasting impression. “Now that we have the Open Text system, it has proven to be exactly what we wanted. It perfectly fulfills everything we want it to do, so I’m just thrilled with it.”

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Sales

www.opentext.com • sales@opentext.com

North America Sales
1 800 499 6544

International Sales
1 800 4996 5440

Corporate Headquarters

275 Frank Tompa Drive
Waterloo, ON
N2L 0A1 Canada

Phone: +1 519 888 7111
Fax: +1 519 888 0677

European Headquarters

Technopark 2
Werner-von-Siemens-Ring 20
D-85630 Grasbrunn, Germany

Phone: +49 89 4629 0
Fax: +49 89 4629 1199

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