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Website Portals

It's All About Communication

By: Kerry Johnson

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Website Portals

It's All About Communication

Your company's website is only as successful as the content it contains, but what about all of the documents, videos and other content that contain sensitive information that you don't want everyone to see? A website portal allows you to make this content available to your management, sales force, dealers and customers based on their permissions.

What Is A Website Portal?

A website portal is a permissions based section of your website that allows content to be available only to those users that have the proper username and password. The content is not available through search engines, by direct address access or through forwarded links in email.

A Website Portal Can:

- **Save time** by always having the most up to date content in one place.
- **Reduce cost** because it is a paperless environment
- **Increase communication** by allowing contributions from users

With a website portal, users can contribute content, if allowed by their specific permissions, to the content of the portal. This can include:

- Adding event information to a calendar
- Contributing content to a forum
- Comment on page content
- Posting photos to galleries
- Submitting current news
- Providing information about competitors
- Ability to view price lists

Custom Portals Versus Online Service Portals

There are two ways to create a portal for your website. You can use an online service, which can limit your control over the portal, or you can create a custom portal with endless options. Here are the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Custom Portals

Advantages:

- Integrate your company website design into your portal
- Add custom features (almost anything is possible)
- Target users with messages specific to them
- Once it is complete, you own it
- Communicate directly with the developer

Disadvantages:

- Takes 2-3 months to implement
- Costs more upfront

Online Service Portals

Advantages:

- Packed with many features
- Incremental monthly payments
- Instantly available

Disadvantages:

- Unnecessary features that cannot easily be hidden
- Overwhelming
- You do not own it (A monthly fee of \$50 or more is required. Once you decide to stop paying, your information is removed from their servers.)

Whichever option you choose, a website portal can be a valuable asset to your company and a very effective way to communicate sensitive information. Many businesses are still using an intranet containing files randomly placed on their network without any order to the chaos. A website portal can clean up the mess and is readily available.