



## Sloan Valve Creates Dynamic Web Site with Wide Appeal

Open Text Web content management system provides the backbone for transformation

### Industry

Commercial plumbing products

### Customer

**SLOAN®**

### Business Challenges

- Underutilized content management system
- Public site not reflecting company image
- Expanded Web site with wider audience appeal needed

### Business Solution

Open Text Web Site Management

### Business Benefits

- An effective and easy-to-use content management system
- Expanded use and improved processes for Web content updates
- Effective Web site with a broader appeal
- Increase in Web traffic

Sloan Valve, (<http://www.sloanvalve.com/>), is a major producer of toilet flush valves, fixtures, and faucets. Headquartered in Franklin Park, Illinois, USA, the organization also has production facilities in China and Mexico.

Sloan Valve had a number of goals when they set out to launch a new Web site in 2009. They included widening their appeal to a larger audience, refreshing stale content, and creating a better looking site. "Our previous Web site wasn't projecting the caliber of the company that we are. We knew our audience wasn't just plumbers—we have architects and all sorts of different people that we wanted to reach. We wanted to improve the overall appearance of our site to better reflect our company, and deliver information to an audience of all ages and experience. We have older customers who want to get the information in one way and newer customers who enjoy RSS feeds, search boxes, and other features. Our old site fell short in a number of these areas," says James Kramer, Webmaster/Web Developer for Sloan Valve.

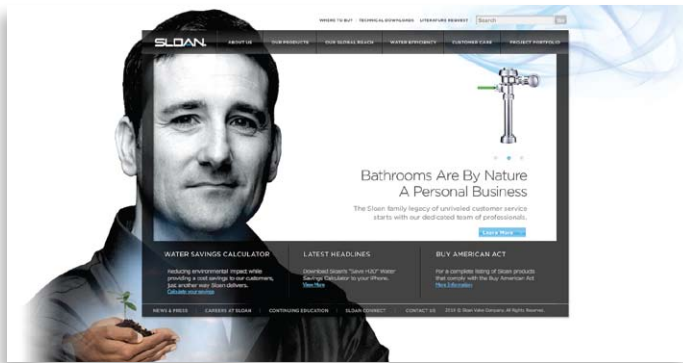
Additionally, Sloan Valve wanted a Web Content Management system that would improve the ease of making content changes and enable more contributors to manage web information. The Web content management system previously in use was restrictive, and there wasn't a clear process in place on how people should be making content updates to the site. "Our users were frustrated and complacency set in," says Kramer. As a result, content editors were relying heavily on the Web team to implement site changes. "This wasn't a good situation because what we really wanted was to have content editors create their own pages from scratch and not rely on me to set anything up for them," Kramer explains.

After a period of evaluating various offerings, Sloan Valve chose to upgrade to Open Text Web Site Management 10.0. This decision also came with a change in the internal strategy on how the company would adopt and implement web content updates moving forward.

### Implementing a new system and improving internal processes

When deciding on the content management system that would manage their Web site upgrade, Sloan Valve went through an extensive evaluation process. "Our evaluation process comes up whenever we are doing a large scale upgrade or if a contractual deadline is approaching. In this case, we looked at other competitors and





examined what analysts had written about CMS vendors. We ultimately decided to stick with Open Text, since we were comfortable with the solution and found it best suited our needs. In the fall of 2009, we upgraded to Open Text's newest Web Site Management offering," says Kramer.

For Sloan Valve to implement the new Web content management system, they first had to plan out their requirements and gather all of the content that would initially need to be migrated into the system. Sloan Valve hosts the solution on servers in their own data center. "Overall, our implementation process went pretty well, although there was a fair amount of content to pull together and we were under the gun to get everything uploaded for our go-live date in November," says Kramer.

Sloan Valve hit a bump in the road when they decided to use the solution's Navigation Manager. Kramer explains: "I wasn't very experienced at programming this tool, so we called in Open Text Global Services for some consulting work. They were excellent! Their estimates were spot on and they actually came in ahead of schedule for us, allowing me to get my projects done even faster than I wanted."

### Improved content management processes

Early results from using the new content management system have been positive. "Overall, our users encounter far fewer problems. The feature that I think our users most enjoy is the Web 2.0-style interface for front end work. The design is more intuitive and saves people a lot of extra clicks," says Kramer.

Administrators can assign various levels of content access to system users. This lets Sloan Valve tailor the system to the needs of those who may need to provide fresh, continual content while protecting assets that change infrequently—such as branding or company history. "Our branding is locked down in the system and

it is only accessible to people who are qualified to change such things. We can lock down the overall look and feel of the site and enable editors to only change certain things," says Kramer.

The new system has also simplified collaboration between content creators. Changes can now be tracked, and updates don't go live to the Web site before being approved by an administrator. An email notification process lets content creators know when their updates have gone live. The IT team created workflow templates to mirror familiar paper processes previously used.

Adoption of the Open Text solution has been quick—users generally feel comfortable with the interface that Sloan Valve implemented after just one tutorial session. Content editors need little technical knowledge to use the system. "It's fairly intuitive, so you have a couple of ways to do the same thing. It works out well because a lot of our people are not technical, and gravitate towards a certain way of using the system," Kramer says. Plus, the overall number of users on the system has increased, and the amount of fresh content on the Web site is on the rise. "At any given time, we have about 10 people that are getting content uploaded onto the site, with regular content updates being uploaded at least once a day," says Kramer.

Employees from multiple departments now make Web site contributions, increasing engagement and reducing Kramer's workload: "Our overall coverage is far better, with more users from a wider array of departments contributing to our Web site. Our graphic development and Marketing group participates more vigorously and leads the charge on a lot of stuff, which they didn't do before. Additionally, our technical support team now contributes to the documentation which is the bulk of our structured data, such as the PDF files we have posted. Previously this work fell heavily on my shoulders and I was constantly pushed into situations where they were asking me to update content," Kramer explains.

### Building an effective online presence

With the new process in place and an effective system to support it, Kramer is confident that Sloan Valve's Web site will expand rapidly over the next year. "There are definitely more daily content uploads now. If our editors remain confident and interested in the system, and effectively collaborate with marketing, it will be interesting to see what the site will look like a year from now. For me, it's enjoyable to see new content on the site, knowing that I had very little or no involvement with putting it up there," says Kramer.

Launched in November 2009, the new Web site has allowed Sloan Valve to make a powerful impression on a wide range of customers. The enthusiasm is reflected in the site statistics, which have seen a steady traffic increase of approximately 6 percent.

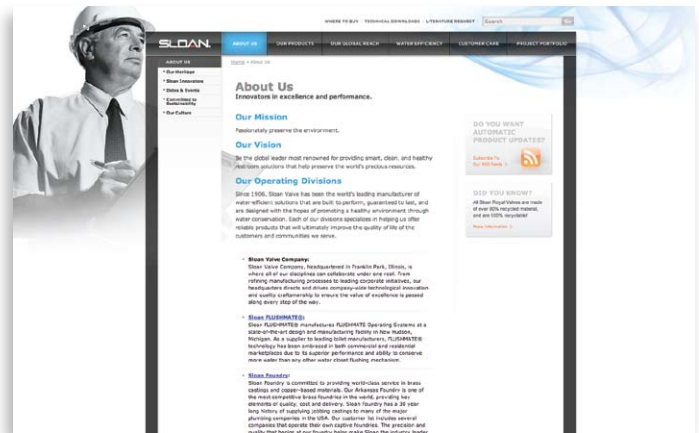


The site launch was well-timed. Interest boomed as the site was promoted during the Green Build Trade show, an online trade showcase for the exhibition of green building. Following the show, the traffic and positive reaction from customers was a great reassurance for the Sloan Valve employees who implemented the new system.

The improved site has meant a lot to the organization's overall ability to communicate both their products and brand. "Our last site didn't project the caliber, or type of company that we are. Along with new marketing campaigns, our Web site helps deliver the appropriate message that we are an organized company that pays attention to our people. A fresh, new, and fully stocked Web site helps deliver the best experience we can to our online audience," says Kramer.

### Lessons learned and future plans

Sloan Valve currently uses Open Text Web Site Management to manage only a few projects, with the public site being the primary focus. Though no specific future projects have been detailed, Kramer feels comfortable that the system can accommodate pretty much anything they'd want to do. "I'm never really stressed about any workflow changes. There is nothing it can't duplicate as far as our business process goes," he says.



The transition to the new Open Text Web Site Management system went smoothly for Sloan Valve and Kramer believes that it was the planning and preparation on the part of his team and Open Text that ensured the successful implementation. "My recommendation for anybody undergoing a project of this scope is to carefully analyze business processes and have a good idea of what your business wants," Kramer concludes.

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