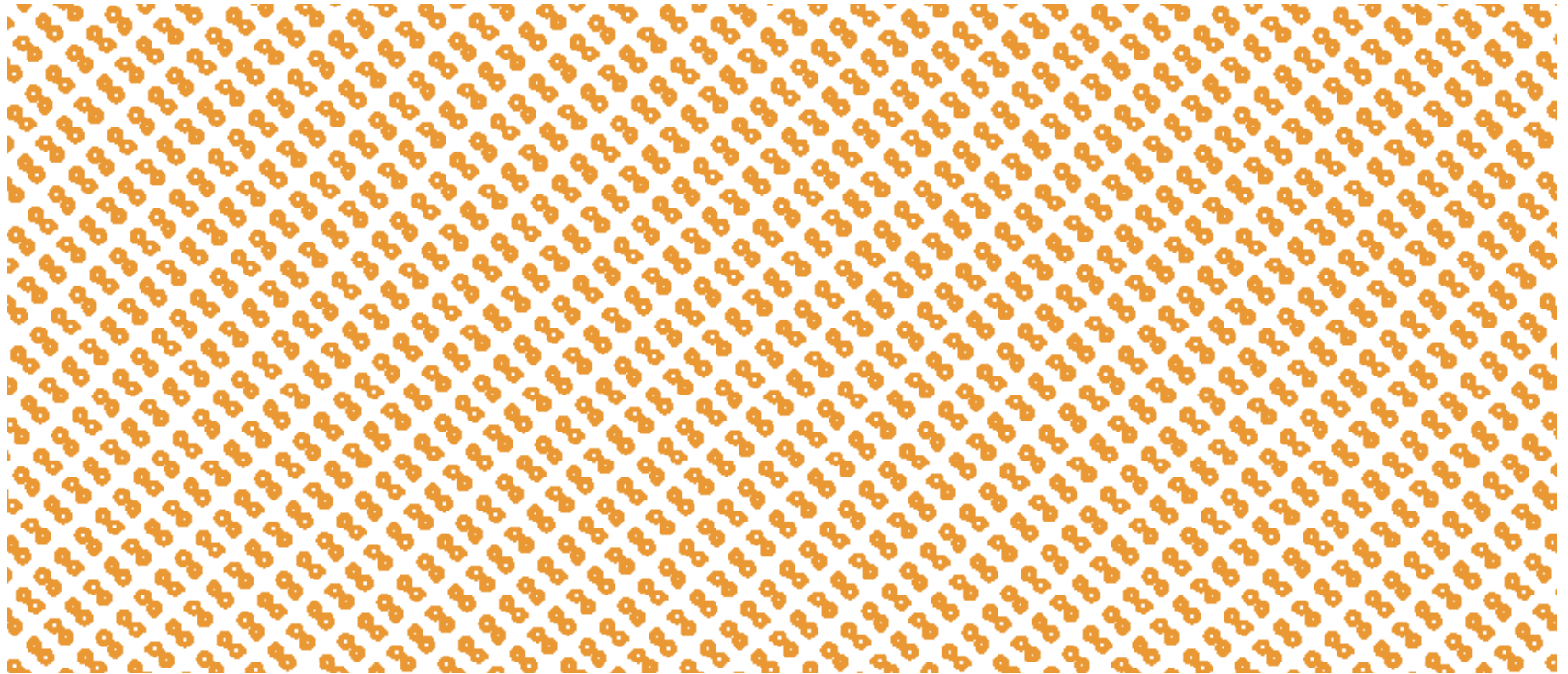




geekIT Group

Ego Pharmaceuticals Case Study 2009



Prepared by geekIT Group
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Case Study

Ego Pharmaceuticals

GeekIT Group and Ego Pharmaceuticals
A complete, whole-of-business digital solution

Solution: the design and implementation of a complete, business wide digital strategy and solution.

Technology: PHP, .NET, NetCat Enterprise CMS.

Commercial Benefits: integrated digital presence and strategy; business flexibility and scalability; enhanced stakeholder relationships; improved control.



Ego Pharmaceuticals is Australia's largest specialist skin care pharmaceuticals company, producing over one hundred skin and health care products across twelve brands and exporting to over thirty nations – from the United Arab Emirates to the UK, Mauritius and Taiwan.

When Ego Pharmaceuticals decided to establish a new online presence, they turned to GeekIT Group for help. In addition to a revised network of corporate and brand web sites, the result has been an integrated, web-based sales, distribution and product system – a whole-of-business revolution in the way Ego presents, markets and distributes its products.

The Situation

With an Adobe Flash heavy website that was not consumer friendly nor search engine optimised, Ego Pharmaceuticals needed a fresh online strategy.

On the one hand, the company's central portal and twelve individual brand sites (including Sunsense, QV Body, and SOOV) lacked a consistent brand image. On the other, Ego wanted to harness the potential of new digital tools for use across their marketing, sales and distribution activities.

With a large on-the-road sales team, as well as a network of twenty-six distributors in over thirty countries, Ego believed that integrated intranet and extranet platforms could bring new levels of efficiency to their business operations.

To pursue its aims, Ego needed an encompassing online strategy that would bring the company into the digital age.

The Solution

Attracted by GeekIT Group's marketing experience and digital know-how, Ego invited GeekIT to undertake the project by closed tender. After an initial assessments and planning stages aimed at ensuring the project would be strategically aligned with Ego's business needs, work commenced in four distinct phases, building Ego's brand websites, sales intranet, distributors extranet and corporate web presence to create an integrated platform.

Brand sites

To create a network of individual sites for each of Ego's twelve brands, GeekIT began by undertaking a cognitive workshop with Ego's brand managers,

a process aimed at understanding each brand's customers, image and vision.

After the creation of a detailed set of requirements, each site took two weeks to complete. Design agency Admark was briefed to assist in the development of a consistent 'look and feel', while GeekIT adapted NetCat's Enterprise Content Management System (CMS) to build a flexible, highly scalable platform that Ego's brand team would be able to edit and update on-demand, without advanced technical knowledge or training.

Sales intranet

With over sixty sales reps in constant need of information on product presentations, pricing and reports, the second of Ego's digital objectives was the creation of a sales intranet to support its team.

Two key requirements were that the portal provide a fast and intuitive user experience while also being securely accessible from as many places and across as many platforms as possible, without relying on secondary technologies such as Virtual Private Networking (VPN).

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GeekIT recommended a web-based solution based on NetCat's Enterprise CMS, accessible to Ego's team through any web browser. To ensure the portal would boost Ego's sales productivity, GeekIT conducted a cognitive behavioural workshop with key members of Ego's sales force before creating the design and functionality from the ground up.

A key feature of the intranet is its 'thumbnail' interface: an easy to navigate directory of products and databases, offering fast and efficient access to sales information, and specially designed to take advantage of Ego's fleet of touch-screen laptops.

Distributors extranet

To create an online portal that would better facilitate Ego's engagement with its growing network of international distributors, GeekIT undertook a detailed, twelve week analysis of Ego's distribution processes – examining in detail how Ego's manual practices could be best translated into online tools.

Many of these practices proved complex. For both business and cultural reasons (a number of Ego's distributors were located in the Middle East) different rules governing access to content, products, marketing collateral and POS information on a per distributor basis would be required.

To create the extranet, two GeekIT developers worked over 24 weeks to adapt NetCat's CMS, extending it with a variety of PHP-based functions to build a customised application combining user profiles and

information security with automated ordering and eCommerce functionality.

Workflows for common tasks allow Ego to engage efficiently with its distributors while also retaining close control over its product collateral. For example, distributors can request access to high-resolution print advertisements which, subject to brand manager approval, can then be downloaded on a per distributor basis for a limited period.

Corporate website

Before embarking on a redesign of their primary website, Ego Pharmaceuticals engaged search engine optimisation specialists The Found Agency to analyse and advise on key words and phrases used by consumers when searching for skin care information.

To produce a design that would reach out to both consumers and medical professionals alike, GeekIT conducted a web strategy workshop with Ego, The Found Agency and communications company Love Communications. This workshop exploited cognitive behavioural modeling to identify Ego's customer profile, site objectives and goals, producing a site philosophy based on SEO and a clean, uncluttered approach.

GeekIT then developed a series of wire frame models demonstrating the site's layout and functionality. Templates were created to deliver twelve types of required content, from product details and FAQs to photo galleries and information on skin conditions.

GeekIT also created a shopping cart and secure members area.

Backend integration

Lastly, to build a seamless connection between Ego's corporate site, distributors extranet, sales intranet and brand site, GeekIT also created a custom application: a .NET driven, editable catalogue of products across Ego's twelve brands, allowing the company to centrally manage its product portfolio from a single, central directory.

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The Benefits

Now live, Ego's new systems have become central to their marketing, sales and distribution operations – delivering a business-wide digital strategy that has changed the way Ego engages with distributors, customers and medical professionals.

A total solution: on-time, on-budget

By taking advantage of low-cost technologies such as PHP, GeekIT delivered Ego's requirements within budget. GeekIT's ability to liaise with each of Ego's business divisions – from sales to marketing and technical support – helped to ensure that the project ran smoothly and on schedule.

One of the solution's biggest benefits is its comprehensiveness. A unified 'look and feel' across each of Ego's twelve brand sites – as well as its corporate presence – boosts the consumer appeal of Ego's product range, providing a targeted, easily edited online network that can quickly adapt to new products or changing business needs.

At the same time, Ego's new distributor extranet allows for fluent, centrally managed and highly customisable interactions with Ego's international partners: delivering a 24/7 product ordering, information and marketing support service, essential for operating in international markets.

Flexibility and Scalability

Internally, Ego's new sales intranet has delivered new levels and freedom and productivity to the company's

sales team. Whether at home, on the road, in the office or at a client's location, sales representatives can login using only a web browser. The portal's thumbnail design offers fast and effective access to sales tools, ordering systems and up-to-date information, improving the speed at which Ego can do business. With application integration support and highly customisable presentation layers, the solution will also allow Ego to add further functionality as their online strategy expands.

Control

Using GeekIT's custom-built product directory in combination with NetCat's Enterprise CMS, Ego's team can instantly add or modify product information and marketing collateral – as well as page design and imagery – from the one central location. Changes are instantly propagated throughout Ego's systems – saving time and the costs of technical expertise while keeping Ego's business divisions on the same page.

Usability

By taking advantage of GeekIT's unique cognitive behavioural modeling workshop during the project's planning phase, Ego has ensured that each plank in its digital solution possesses the design and functionality required by Ego's audience and their needs.