

Berwick Academy Case Study

Berwick Academy keeps Web site fresh and costs in line with Savvy Content Manager

Art portfolios, sports schedules, and an article about a class trip to Guatemala are just a taste of the information found on Berwick (Me.) Academy's Web (www.berwickacademy.org) site on any given day. The 580-student, K-12 day school is a hive of academic, athletic, artistic and social activity, most of which finds its way onto the school Web site as articles, photos and listings. Students, faculty, staff and



parents contribute a steady stream of fresh content to the site daily, making it an important pillar of the academy's community life. The Web site also serves as a marketing and recruiting tool for prospective students and their parents.

With so many users contributing content, the cost and administrative overhead of updating the Web site rose quickly. When the academy's administration decided the Web site needed a fresher new graphical look, Technology Director Wendy Harrington decided to overhaul the technical back end as well to head off the cost spiral. She searched for content management applications that would

enable users to update Web site content on their own, whenever they wanted, but without breaking the budget.

Harrington found plenty of software packages to choose from, but some were too expensive, others were too complicated for the average user, and others didn't combine features that supported the Web site's academic and marketing roles. She chose Portsmouth, N.H.-based Savvy Software's content management application as the Berwick Academy Web site's foundation. Savvy offered the flexibility and feature set the academy needed in an economical Web-based package.

"Savvy was affordable, easy to use and enabled us to design a great-looking site."

-Technology Director Wendy Harrington

"Our goal was for everyone to be able to use the Web site, but we couldn't spend tens of thousands of dollars on the tools," Harrington said. "The product we chose also had to be easy to use. There were lots



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of products for designing a great site, but very few people could use them. Savvy was affordable, easy to use and enabled us to design a great-looking site. Keeping the content fresh is easy. We just give contributors Savvy log-ins, and then they have access to all the tools they need for updating and posting new content—anything from calendar listings to reading lists to photos to game summaries.”

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Savvy CM also has user privilege controls that enable the academy to ensure content is appropriate before it’s published to the Web. When a user does their update, they click a “publish” key that displays a list of e-mail addresses for people who can approve the update. The user mails the content to the reviewer, who can approve and publish it with one click—no additional coding or keystrokes. That prevents bottlenecks from developing as the academy encourages contributions but maintains control over the site’s content.

The academy Web site has pages for student groups, sports teams, the parent association, alumni, teachers, arts and humanities groups, the libraries and gallery. Savvy CM enables the academy to give the pages a consistent graphical identity, with standard tool bars, logo and color scheme, but without restricting what individual users can do.

“We didn’t have to conform to Savvy’s way of doing graphics. We could adapt our existing look and feel to the Savvy environment,” Harrington said. “Savvy helped us get started with plenty of useful templates, then lessons on making and modifying our own. The templates Savvy made as part of the startup package were essential in getting the site up and running in a timely manner. We had hundreds of pages on our old website, and using the Savvy templates, we were able to move the entire site in a weekend. We can give the staff and faculty as much or as little structure as they need. And if they want to use other authoring tools for their pages, we can put non-Savvy content on our site—Savvy gives us that flexibility. It’s letting us do everything we want with our Web site.”



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