



STREAMLINED B2B COLLATERAL DISTRIBUTION & SALES ENABLEMENT

CHALLENGE

The Large Business division at BellSouth was wasting a significant amount of money printing sales collateral/brochures for field sales personnel. Collateral was printed and warehoused and then posted online for ordering. Very few sales reps ordered printed collateral online due to the cost, time required to receive the printed material and inability to customize an individual brochure for a specific customer. This meant that many pallets of material were not being used and were discarded as product enhancements were made yielding old collateral irrelevant.

PDF files of collateral developed by the Marketing Communications team were provided to various departments (product marketing, management, etc.) and posted in various locations on internal and external websites making it impossible to track usage of collateral across many different intranet/internet web sites.

HTML emails were gaining popularity among field sales as the method of communication with customers, but the process to import HTML emails into Microsoft Outlook were cumbersome. Additionally, sales teams were using many logos and icons in their Outlook emails that did not meet BellSouth's branding guidelines.

ACTIONS

- Conducted qualitative and quantitative research among field sales to determine current usage levels for printed collateral and assess interest accessing collateral electronically, while also providing the ability to email it to customers.
- Engaged an external technology company to develop an application to enable the electronic distribution of collateral material to field sales teams.
- Developed a marketing strategy brief to review the current business challenges, target audience, objectives and budget parameters.
- Led technology provider in the development of a web application that would allow field sales to:
 - Search for, customize and download PDF documents
 - Send HTML emails to customers with embedded links to PDF documents
 - Add branded, animated banner files to their outgoing Microsoft Outlook emails
- Worked with sales operations group to conduct user acceptance testing with sales representatives and gain qualitative feedback prior to launch.
- Developed and executed internal communications plan that informed field sales of the features and benefits of CDS (Collateral Distribution System).
- Produced sales training presentation about how to use CDS and personally instructed sales reps on its features and benefits.

RESULTS

- Positive feedback from sales was overwhelming and included comments such as "The most important sales tool launched in the last five years because of its ability to save sales time in hunting for sales material and sending branded communications to customers." Ultimately, two other BellSouth divisions adopted the system.
- The site became the centralized platform to launch customer-facing materials for all new product launches.
- Large Business Services saved over \$250,000 in collateral printing and storage fees annually and the other two divisions who adopted the system were in a position to achieve similar savings.