



Innovating the Technology of

Information

Overview

IWLA (The Association for Logistics Outsourcing) has been dedicated to becoming the world's leading outsourced logistics association. Its mission is to ensure the growth and success of 3PL companies by providing its members with resources, education, marketing assistance and professional programs that are designed to advance members' businesses. In order to accomplish these goals IWLA identified the need to update the Association's existing technology and Internet presence. The Association wanted to create a phased technology program with a partner that understood their objectives, vision and position: to be a web-based, market driven association.

Together with Apogee Strategies LLC, IWLA established priorities that enabled Apogee to create a phased technology strategy that would help the Association and its members reach their objectives. Apogee assessed IWLA, both internally and externally, to customize a program that would supply technology applications to reach their needs and objectives.

Web Strategy

Apogee identified the task of re-orienting the website from a strategic point of view as the first priority for IWLA. The mission of the site was to create a more robust resource for membership by providing tools that could be used in 'real time' through the Internet. As a first step, the most visible component was a total redesign. The redesign was custom-built to provide the employees of IWLA easy-to-use, updatable content for its members' benefits. The second step included an integrated 'buyer-seller' database that would allow Association members and logistics customers to search and send requests to targeted suppliers. By creating a unique, integrated portal, Apogee was able to provide IWLA members with a meeting place and marketplace combined.

The specific objectives of the portal include:

- Define our member's position in the logistics industry
- Generate additional revenue for the Association
- Build online presence through marketing and education
- Demonstrate the capabilities of members
- Graphically reinforce the Association's identity
- Deliver real-time member services
- Generate leads for members
- Gather market intelligence
- Create an online community
- Primary point of member contact

The heart of the IWLA site is the LSL (Logistics Service Locator). This allows member-customers to search the database for target suppliers. It then gives those suppliers the ability to manage their 'leads' and reply to inquiries through the system, thereby providing market intelligence and accountability. The LSL drives member-customer traffic to the site as a resource for leads and new sales.

This type of Internet-enabled service gives the Association the ability to closely monitor trends in the industry. Additionally, it is expected that the site itself will become a good source of new member generation because of its unique tools, available exclusively to Association members.

Future objectives defined by Apogee for IWLA's Internet-enabled differentiation include:

1. E-communities – Chat rooms, online forums, committee shared space and a file manager to facilitate the exchange of information among members and between members and the Association.
2. Web-based training – Offer the IWLA courses online as well as enabling an online certification process
3. Member self-services – Members will be able to update company information, pay dues and register for courses and conventions online

A Web Strategy is an excellent mechanism for enabling change within an organization, both from a service and a marketing standpoint. Apogee Strategies LLC has a variety of approaches that revolve around the same decision-making mechanism for conducting Web Strategies that enable us to apply our expertise across a wide range of client-industries.

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