

CASE STUDY

DIERBERGS

Century-Old Brand Brings In-Store Shopping Experience to the Digital World



Summary

Dierbergs is the dominant, upscale supermarket in the metro area of St. Louis, Missouri—featuring more than twenty stores, a thriving nationwide floral department, a lauded cooking school and even a popular TV show. Using Sitecore CMS, Dierbergs has created and launched an all-new online presence that complements and supports its renowned, in-store retail experience that is beloved by legions of loyal customers. Designed and developed by Sitecore partner Aware Web Solutions of Minneapolis, the grocer’s site features a large, comprehensive recipe database with advanced recipe “finder,” hundreds of cooking videos; social media integration; an advanced store directory and locator; and a full ecommerce product catalog of prepared foods, complete meals, cakes, flowers and gifts, with more to come. Email newsletter campaigns are also composed and managed using Sitecore.

In addition, Dierbergs has extended its Sitecore platform to concurrently power a network of touch-screen kiosks used by in-store customers to conveniently place future orders while shopping. Also, a new “behind-the-counter” store system with multiple touch-screens is used by employees to create, lookup, manage and fulfill all food orders by accessing product and order data stored in Sitecore.

Visit Site > www.dierbergs.com

Challenge

Challenge

Family owned and in business since 1854, Dierbergs occupies a unique position in the St. Louis market by offering high-quality products, heightened attention to detail and exceptional customer service. The company wanted to create an online presence that was distinctive and different—like its stores—and sought an online experience that mirrored the experience enjoyed by customers when in the store.

Previously, Dierbergs’ website consisted mostly of static pages that were occasionally updated using an inflexible, home-grown process that did not allow easy maintenance or posting of advanced types of content. As a result, navigation was fixed and dated, content changes were limited mostly to straight text on-page, and customer usability was low.



CATEGORY WINNER – NORTH AMERICA
Best Ecommerce Site

“The Dierbergs branding elements, site structure, user navigation – everything on the site – was all assembled with their customer in mind. With their collaborative partnership, we’ve moved a 150-year-old, family-run business and its traditional, high-quality values into a high-touch shopping experience.”

Jeremy Ziegler
Chairman/CEO
Aware Web Solutions

Dierbergs needed a retail marketing-oriented CMS platform that flexibly accepted big and small content updates of all text and media types. The site needed to be guided and maintained by the retailer’s existing marketing team with no requirement for new or advanced technical expertise.

In addition, Dierbergs wanted to migrate its popular catalog of prepared foods, cakes and more into a state-of-the-art online space without mystifying frequent customers who had placed orders in-store for generations. The catalog and resulting flow of orders needed to be instantly accessible by line-level employees both in-store and at back-office production centers for order management and fulfillment.

“Operationally, we needed the site to be strong, stable and able to accommodate future growth and additional features,” said Greg Dierberg, president and CEO of Dierbergs Markets, Inc. “More importantly, as a retailer, we knew we needed to create a site that loyal and new customers would want to use on a frequent basis. Therefore, our platform requirements were driven not only by business-related technology needs, but also by strong retail marketing needs for a site that is always on-brand, appealing, fresh and inspiring.” He added, “This directive ensured that our familiar branding extended throughout the site and into every interaction a customer could have.”

Solution

With Aware Web Solutions, Dierbergs selected Sitecore CMS to power its new site. Aware remains involved in every aspect of the grocer’s digital initiatives—from strategy and design to electronic marketing campaigns and backend e-commerce order fulfillment.

With a technical structure designed to leverage the extensibility and flexibility of the CMS platform, Dierbergs.com uses Sitecore integration to run or access most features of the site—both frontend and backend. Specifically:

- Thousands of item descriptions and photos for the product catalog are stored in Sitecore; pricing info and other data pulled from various store resources displaying templated, customer-friendly formats that encourage sales. Products in the catalog contain a varying array of options based on product category and type, and customers can select options (e.g. size of cake, flavor of cake, flavor of cake filling, frosting type and customized message) on-the-fly as they create an online order. Many of these options impact pricing, so a customer’s order is dynamically updated throughout the shopping process.

Aware Web Solutions At a Glance

Our greatest strength at Aware is translating complex business needs into well-organized Web sites. Leveraging our strategic, creative and marketing insights, Aware implements robust content management solutions that are uniquely tailored to meet the needs of mid- to large-sized organizations.

- Founded in 1998
- A mid-sized firm
- Over 100 CMS Implementations
- Our teams include: Strategists, Designers, Developers, Marketers, and Project Managers
- Consistently ranked among the top 15 Web firms in the region

- Portions of the Sitecore product catalog are extended to in-store touch-screens for customers to use when ordering while shopping. A single instance of Sitecore controls product pricing, product descriptions and option details for the entire catalog in all environments—at home, at kiosks for customer use in-store, and at production facilities for employee use for fulfillment.
- Multiple, ongoing e-mail newsletter campaigns are templated within Sitecore for easy authoring by the Dierbergs marketing staff, which use the same promotional elements created in-house for their conventional advertising needs. Integration with the email software tool will allow for a single point of access for sending emails, maintaining lists and reporting results.
- Intuitive Sitecore templates allow Dierbergs to easily upload text, images, videos, recipes, store directory info, blog entries, ad circulars and more. Brand control is built into the templates—color palette and background graphics can be instantly changed by marketing staff to match store promotions.

Dierbergs.com is a constantly evolving and growing Web portal for customers. Currently, the site offers more than 5,000 pages—including more than 1,500 products, 2,000 recipes and 250 videos. Technically, on the backend, Sitecore features are used for:

- A recipe import wizard, taxonomy-based configuration and faceted navigation
- Real-time pricing data feeds from internal store operations and POS systems
- Microsoft Active Directory and PeopleSoft integration for authentication
- Integration with enterprise-level search and a Web-based email tool
- Store directory content rendered as a map via the Google Maps API
- Single-sign-on with pharmacy and medical information services
- Custom-built Sitecore “wizards” to minimize administrative support needed for very basic content entry tasks

Result

Site analytics and ecommerce purchases point to a successful site offering impressive sales returns, a growing newsletter subscription list and an ever-expanding database of qualified online customers who are ready to accept future marketing campaigns. And, inside Dierbergs, the existing marketing team is managing the entire site using the company-wide marketing plan and calendar as a Web content guide for re-purposing their messaging (and not having to “reinvent the wheel”).

“We needed to make sure the Dierbergs unique retail culture was properly translated onto the Web, and the flexible features of Sitecore clearly covered the required marketing orientation for today as well as tomorrow,” said Jeremy Ziegler, chairman and CEO of Aware Web Solutions.

“The Dierbergs branding elements, site structure, user navigation—everything on the site—was all assembled with their customer in mind,” said Ziegler. “With their collaborative partnership, we’ve moved a 150-year-old, family-run business and its traditional, high-quality values into a high-touch shopping experience. This will strengthen their position and increase their sales by setting them apart from the low-service chain grocers in their market...and anywhere else their online customers happen to be.”