E-COMMERCE WEBSITE FOR INVICTA TELECARE

THE CLIENT

Invicta Telecare, one of the UK’s leading service providers, delivers peace of mind and reassurance to over 50,000 people across the UK. The business uses sophisticated IT and telephony technology to remotely provide individuals and organisations with a range of tailor-made and affordable solutions, such as alarms and other monitored sensors. With some 140 staff, Invicta Telecare provides a 24 hour a day service, every day of the year. Staff on the ground also provide housing-related support services to help sustain some 2,000 people to remain living independently at home.

Invicta Telecare is committed to quality service provision and has achieved very public recognition in the form of Charter Mark, Investors in People and audited compliance with the Telecare Services Association’s (TSA) code of practice. Invicta Telecare is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Russet Homes, a non-profit distributing Registered Social Landlord.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

In 2004 Invicta Telecare conducted a strategic review into the potential of developing e-Commerce and electronic communications. The result was a decision to implement web-based services to reach customers and potential customers spread across a large geographical distance. “We provide services right across the south of England although we only have one office, in Sevenoaks in Kent,” said Steve Davies, Managing Director of Invicta Telecare. “A website was the natural alternative to having regional offices.

OVERVIEW

The need
Following a strategic review into the potential of developing e-Commerce and electronic communication services, Invicta Telecare commissioned Transputec with the design of a new website.

The solution
- Web site design;
- Hosting and e-Commerce;
- Supply of ActiveWeb CMSTM content management system.

The benefit
- Range of e-Commerce applications
- Powerful marketing tool
- Strategic communications approach
- Easy-to-use interface
- Secure website
- Improved information dissemination
- Bespoke application meets complex business needs
- Cost effective alternative to regional offices
Previously we had promoted ourselves mainly by word of mouth but the review highlighted the need for a more strategic approach to marketing and communications.”

The organisation already had a first generation website delivering basic information, but the new site would be far more interactive and offer transactional services, enabling customers to pay for services online. “As we are also an important resource to our 100 or so corporate customers, housing associations and local authorities, a secure website would be an essential way to communicate with those partners and disseminate information efficiently,” said Steve.

Part of the challenge of developing the right kind of web presence was the unique nature of Invicta Telecare’s services. “We are very different from commercial businesses such as retail, for example,” explained Steve.

“There are relatively few other alternative providers for the services we supply, both in the market place and in terms of our structure, in that we operate so far from our administrative centre.” Telecare and social alarm is a complex area of service provision to translate to an e-Commerce environment. “Most e-Commerce sites require name, address and credit card information but we need a huge amount of confidential personal information, such as detailed medical data, next of kin or contacts such as carers and other support providers.”

THE SOLUTION

Steve and his colleagues spoke to a number of potential technology partners providing web design, hosting and e-Commerce facilities. “We came across Transputec Computers plc after a literature search and a look at their standard offerings.” This was followed up with some meetings. “We quickly felt comfortable about working with Transputec and their ability to appreciate our special requirements – it was important that they fully understood all the details of business and why we needed a bespoke application.”

Transputec were contracted to help Invicta Telecare implement a web strategy. This included the website design and hosting, marketing the

Customer feedback

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Steve Davies, Managing Director, Invicta Telecare
site through optimisation techniques and supply of the content management system, ActiveWeb CMS.TM.

THE BENEFITS

The first stage of the project is now completed. “We are very pleased with Transputec’s work to date: the main design, content, structure, layout and general look and feel” said Steve. With the basic information aspects of the site in place, Transputec is now working on the interactive and transactional services.

“Working with Transputec is an ongoing relationship and we are enjoying the process. The staff are easy to work with, very responsive and quick to get things done.” Transputec’s flexibility is another attribute appreciated by Steve and his team. “They are always very patient with us, even when we change our minds as we have on occasions – they recognise the importance of the iterative process in website design.”

For Steve, part of the success stems from the unique nature of the project. “We particularly like Transputec’s partnership approach to project working,” said Steve. “The work has posed some challenging development issues and both teams appreciate that we are breaking new ground in bespoke e-Commerce applications.”

Once fully operational, the site will provide the full range of information required to provide emergency services to customers. “That means having a transactional site capable of evaluating an individual’s needs and then matching those needs precisely to the most appropriate products,” said Steve. “We’re dealing with an application that has to manage complex interactive procurement, so it’s important to get it right. We’re very confident in Transputec’s ability to meet the needs of our business.”

Invicta Telecare is using Transputec’s content management system, ActiveWeb CMS.TM “We like ActiveWeb because it is just about fool-proof. It has a familiar Windows-style interface that’s easy to use with only basic training,” said Steve.
“It’s important to be able to sanction new literature for the site on a regular basis and ActiveWeb lets managers do that extremely quickly. It’s a practical and very effective way of communicating information and keeping the site completely up-to-date.”

The new site is an integral part of Invicta Telecare’s plans for service delivery. “It provides tremendous scope for reaching new customers and marketing our services more strategically,” said Steve. “A strong web presence is a cost-effective and practical alternative to regional offices and also reflects the innovation of the business.”

Steve concluded: “We’re seeing the development of an e-Commerce website that provides the foundation for coherent and dynamic marketing and communication initiatives.”
THE PEDIGREE

Since our inception in the mid-1980s, Transputec has had the trust of Britain’s foremost IT users, including the Ministry of Justice, Samsung, Danone, Camelot, Chubb Insurance and DP-DHL/ Williams Lea to name but a few. Vertical sector experience covering banking & finance, media, third sector, technology, retail, SMEs and health care adds further value to IT users in the form of industry-specific knowledge.

The human component
The pace of change in ICT is so fast that what was cutting edge technology just a few years ago we now need to refer to as traditional IT in order to differentiate it from what we’re doing today and tomorrow.

A business like Transputec is as much about its people - their experience, customer-focus and expertise - as anything else. From initial assessment to delivery of turnkey solutions and day-to-day customer care, these professionals take solutions from Transputec’s hardware, software and professional services business units and ensure they’re a perfect fit.

Throughout our supply chain we have exceptional relationships with the world’s premier hardware and software brands, giving us a competitive edge to make everything from economies of scale to mission-critical architecture judgment calls.
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