

How Atlassian gave its marketing team more agility

Multibillion-dollar software company Atlassian used Magnolia to redesign, restructure and rebrand its entire site into an ever-evolving global marketing and sales channel for its growing business



Industry
Technology

Country
United States

Site
www.atlassian.com

Making a leading software company even more agile

Atlassian is a software company based in Sydney, Australia. Its most popular products are the issue tracker JIRA and the collaboration tool Confluence. Today, it has annual sales of \$160 million, over 40,000 customers and more than 1,100 employees in Amsterdam, Austin, Gdańsk, Ho Chi Minh, Manila, San Francisco, Sydney and Tokyo.

Atlassian's mission critical website was aging and becoming unmanageable, and it decided to start looking for a content management system. With Magnolia, Atlassian is able to utilize its website as an ever-evolving global marketing and sales channel for its growing business. Magnolia has increased the interactive marketing team's agility significantly—just like Atlassian's tools make developers more agile.



“As a developer-focused company, we’re constantly preaching to developers that they need to be more agile. So we were looking for something that brought that agility to the content management of the website. Magnolia was recommended by a colleague and I found it really straightforward to get installed. Once it was on my laptop, I just knew that this was it. It was so easy and made sense to all our content editors and translators.”

— Mark Halvorson, Head of Creative Strategy and Video, Atlassian

The challenge

Enable more efficient content creation, management and site development

Atlassian's interactive marketing team is responsible for the company's only sales channel—Atlassian.com. The team creates content and videos and is responsible for all marketing activities. Since there is no traditional sales team at Atlassian, these activities are mission-critical.

Atlassian.com was over seven years old and had no content management system. Instead, the 1,200 web pages were generated by 2,000 JavaServer Pages (JSP) files, a technology that allows developers to put dynamic functionality into HTML.

Content, layout and functionality were mixed up in the JSP files. As a consequence, the division of labor between developers, authors and designers was difficult, susceptible to errors and costly. Just to correct a spelling error, a copywriter had to go through a developer every time. A product release campaign would typically take two weeks to publish to the web.

The solution

An agile and easy-to-use CMS

The issues with the corporate website led Atlassian to start evaluating content management systems. Because Atlassian has profound technology know-how inhouse, the marketing department didn't go through a long process of reviewing different vendors.

The fact that Atlassian is a Java shop facilitated the decision on a more technical level. Magnolia fit into the existing architecture perfectly and also enabled integration with the following third-party products:

- Optimizely (A/B testing)
- Google Analytics
- Clickdensity (analytics)
- Google Custom Search Engine
- Google Website Optimizer

Battle-testing Magnolia

Although Magnolia seemed like a natural choice to Atlassian, the company wanted to make sure that it met its expectations. Magnolia was therefore evaluated in two pilots. As Atlassian was expanding into Europe, the first pilot project used Magnolia to set up multilingual web pages.

The CMS requirements were clear:

- Support for internationalization and localization
- Delegated authoring

- Staging and QA
- Rollback
- Must fit into existing architecture
- Separation between layout and content

Two pilots: internationalization and Angry Nerds

Within three months, Atlassian had delivered an internationalized version of Atlassian.com. By taking advantage of Magnolia features like built-in translation and templating, Atlassian created 41 pages, encompassing 33 countries and 10 languages. You can still see the result of this pilot by visiting www.atlassian.com/local. However, even after the successful pilot, Atlassian's IT staff were still worried about how Magnolia would scale.

Atlassian decided to use Magnolia for a humorous "Angry Nerds" microsite, which went viral the same day it was released and attracted one million page views. Atlassian.com usually receives one million page views per month.

The Magnolia server (where the microsite was running) was able to deal with the traffic, while the main website on the old JSP needed emergency attention from sysadmins to keep running, due to the sudden spike in traffic.

The result

A rebranded international website and boosted marketing agility

Moving to Magnolia was a fresh start for Atlassian. The company used this opportunity to redesign, restructure and rebrand the entire Atlassian.com site.

Thanks to decoupling content from functionality and layout with Magnolia CMS, content editors can create quick, fantastic looking campaigns, publish content and notify translators via the workflow when there's content to be translated, without any need for a developer.

Editors are not the only group at Atlassian whose work was made easier by Magnolia. Developers appreciate Magnolia for its versatility and for how it allows them to pool resources. Magnolia helped Atlassian get things up and running very quickly and has nurtured efficient collaboration.

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