

SUCCESS STORY

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“activePDF has made positivewords.com’s success possible.”

activePDF Solutions Enable PositiveWords.com to Deliver Important Information and Support to Individuals Living with HIV

Company: PositiveWords.com

Industry: Non-Profit

Product(s) Used: activePDF Portfolio

Solution Spotlight

PositiveWords.com uses activePDF solutions to deliver credible, timely, and relevant health management information and support to individuals living with HIV.

Company Overview

PositiveWords.com is an award winning, free online service designed to assist educators and service providers in delivering informative, health-related newsletters and fact sheets to people living with HIV. Employing a current database of bilingual articles containing relevant medical information, PositiveWords.com helps providers distribute balanced and timely information to their supported communities, including AIDS service organizations, corrections facilities, churches, substance use treatment centers and housing programs. To ensure the relevancy and accuracy of provided information, content is reviewed by the Editorial Advisory Board, a committee that is comprised of HIV+ people, doctors and patient educators from across the country. All articles are reviewed by three members of the Editorial Advisory Board and the managing editor before being posted to the site.

PositiveWords.com is conceived and published by Dallabrida & Associates, developed and maintained by Jel Productions, and supported by an unrestricted educational grant from Agouron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a Pfizer company.

Business Challenge

The team at PositiveWords.com wanted to provide their users with the ability to interactively create custom newsletters that could be downloaded, printed, and stored, all from a central location. Supporting a nationwide user base of HIV educators and service providers with varying degrees of technical skills, it was extremely important that the end solution was easy to use, flexible in implementation, and accessible over the web.

In order to simplify the newsletter creation process, the team decided to create multiple newsletter templates that end users could choose from. The users needed to be able to customize the newsletters to be specific to their individual organizations, inserting their own headers, titles, logos, images and articles into the templates.

Each month, new articles covering a range of topics including side effect management, principles of HIV treatment, emotional and social support, and health management tools and tips, would be developed and uploaded to the site. Users required the ability to perform ad-hoc searches of this ever-growing library of articles, inserting them into the newsletter as appropriate. The web-based application needed to be easy to use, ensuring that end users always knew which part of the newsletter they were working on. They also needed the ability to preview the newsletter, and to save work-in-process so they could return to work on it another time.

The PositiveWords.com team selected PDF as the format of choice for the newsletters. The ubiquity of PDF readers combined with the viewing and printing fidelity of PDF output made it the ideal format for developing high-quality documents for both print and web distribution. Desiring a web-based solution and armed with a long list of criteria, the team realized they would need a server-side PDF tool, one that enabled programmatic access to a wide range of PDF creation and manipulation functionality.

activePDF Solution

After extensively researching available server-side PDF development products, the PositiveWords.com team selected activePDF Portfolio, a comprehensive suite of PDF generation and manipulation tools designed specifically with developers in mind. Portfolio's robust API enables server-side PDF generation operations including converting over 280 file formats directly to PDF, adding "print to PDF" functionality to virtually any application, and performing text to PDF conversion. In addition, Portfolio comprises activePDF Toolkit, a multi-function PDF manipulation tool that enables tasks such as merging, appending, securing, stitching, securing, linearizing, and form-filling PDFs. "The technology we chose for this project needed to be cutting-edge. We spent a lot of time researching available tools to find one that would do all that we required with the PDFs" stated lead programmer Erol Layiktez. "We tried a lot of products, writing example code, testing them and so on. Ultimately, Portfolio had the most features when compared with the other products we evaluated."

Using activePDF Portfolio, the team was able to quickly develop a flexible solution that afforded end users a variety of methods to prepare content for distribution. From an intuitive interface, clients could opt to create a newsletter from scratch by selecting the number of desired pages, choosing a design template, and then inserting predefined articles and graphics from the PositiveWords.com resource database. activePDF Toolkit's PDF stitching capabilities enabled the developers to import content from existing PDF articles into the templates with precision placement and control. Toolkit also allowed the placement of dynamic elements, enabling users to personalize content by adding their organization's logo, contact information, custom titles, headers, staff information, and so on. Once the newsletter was complete, it could be downloaded and printed for distribution.

For those wanting an even simpler approach, PositiveWords developed a predefined 4-page newsletter each month, comprised of publisher's choice articles and graphics. In addition to utilizing the service for newsletter creation, users could also tap into the exhaustive PositiveWords.com article repository to create PDF fact sheets which could be printed for distribution or added to the organization's website. These print-ready PDFs could be also customized by adding logo and contact information, again using Toolkit to perform these PDF manipulation functions.

On the back end, the team utilized activePDF DocConverter and activePDF Server, two other tools in the Portfolio suite, to assist in converting newly published articles, content and graphics into PDF prior to uploading to the PositiveWords.com library of resources. Authors could create documents in their chosen native authoring application, then upload to the server where the files could be converted to PDF and added to the ever-growing database of content. Using DocConverter enabled PositiveWords.com to produce PDFs using a single profile of conversion settings, ensuring consistency across all documents in the repository and eliminating the need for individual authors to install and configure desktop PDF software.

Results

With activePDF Portfolio at its foundation, PositiveWords.com is able to provide high-quality, relevant content that translates complex medical and health concepts into easy to understand terms. The site has gone on to receive numerous accolades, including the prestigious International Health and Medical Media Award (2003), the Freddie Award (2002), and the Dottie Award (2001). Layiktez has this to say about the award-winning solution: "activePDF has made www.positivewords.com's success possible."