

# Pioneer of the Home Spa experience implements innovative Portal solution to better service customers and dealers.



## OVERVIEW

### Business Needs

- Increase brand awareness with their resellers and clients/prospects.
- Give their dealers access to product information and key differentiating factors.
- Online education so that partners and employees can increase their product knowledge.
- Centralize information while decentralizing administration of the site.

### Solution

- IBM Portal-Lotus Workplace Collaboration Services (WCS) with collaborative e-learning and team collaboration modules.
- IBM Workplace Web Content Management (WWCM).

### Key Benefits

- Improved service to dealers by giving them access to important and organized information.
- Higher brand awareness in the marketplace.
- Enhanced collaboration and faster access to key information.
- Improved productivity by simplified management of website's information and content.

BainUltra doesn't just sell baths; they sell a concept. The concept is the ultimate in bathing experiences, where relaxation and health promote physical and emotional well-being. Founded in 1977, BainUltra has established itself as the leader in the air-jet bath industry. Using the effervescence of air, water and heat to provide an exceptional all-encompassing massage, they were the first manufacturer to develop and market the air-jet bath technology.

In their pursuit to master the science of hydro-thermo massage, they also pioneered chromatherapy into their baths, where an integrated LED system uses different light colors as an energy source. Completing the whole experience is their line of essential oils and other care products.

With the ability to combine six different therapies; hydro-thermo massage, chromatherapy, light therapy, thermotherapy, aromatherapy and sound therapy these high-end baths are resold through 1000 authorized dealers across North America. BainUltra attributes their success to their innovation and also the customer service they provide to their retailers.

### Challenge: Sharing information about the luxury of ebullience

With the large amount of dealers dispersed all throughout North America, their challenge was being able to communicate necessary information quickly and effectively to their dealers. Due to the unique features of their baths and their continuous focus on service as their competitive advantage, they were in search of a solution to enable and simplify collaboration.

Spreading the word about the BainUltra product line was crucial in driving revenue and therefore improving the bottom line. For Mr. Nicolas Beaumont-Frenette, Supervisor of IT Services at BainUltra, utilizing technology to meet this business need was the challenge he was faced with.

"BainUltra's baths are not your run of the mill tubs, they are the very best product you can get and we needed to make sure our dealers understood their key differentiating factors. We needed to give our dealers access to the latest product information, brochures, spec sheets, installation manuals, etc. and with them located in a very dispersed geography, our challenge was how we would spread the word in the most streamlined and cost efficient way."



## WCS does the job

BainUltra looked at the various collaboration tools in the marketplace before choosing the IBM and Present solution. The proposed solution was IBM's Workplace Collaborative Services (WCS) with IBM Workplace Web Content Management (WWCM). This solution combines the tools and functionalities needed to meet BainUltra's goal of centralizing information and of having an online education tool for their dealers. **WCS incorporates WebSphere portal, which allows users, whether that be employees of the company, partners or dealers, to collaborate and exchange information and functionalities.** They used WWCM to revamp the look of their website, allowing them to **simplify the updating and management of the site's content.**

A key selling point about WCS for BainUltra is that it contains **modular collaborative components** that can be integrated into customized portals with business applications. The two components they utilize are collaborative e-learning and team collaboration. "We evaluated several solutions but the IBM and Present solution gave us greater flexibility with componentized tools and an open, integrated environment that we can build on," says Mr. Beaumont-Frenette.

The project would happen in several phases. **The first phase was to set up an e-learning section for agents.** Using the collaborative e-learning component, resellers are able to access the tool for various education and sales modules anytime from either their office or from home to learn more about the BainUltra products.

**The second phase was the development and launch of a new website.** Present worked in conjunction with BainUltra's marketing and IT teams, as well as a 3rd party design team to architect a new look and feel for their website. One of the key benefits of WWCM is it allows BainUltra's marketing team to take control and manage the content of the site, removing this task from IT. A new online tool was also implemented called SALLE DE SPA®, which allows users to design and customize their personal spas. In order to be able to handle the specifications of this unique space, a new functionality needed to be developed by Present using WCM Application Programming Interface (API).

**The next step will be the launch of an intranet, which will allow employees to manage internal processes and give them access to new information and applications from the company.** Utilizing the team collaboration component of WCS, they will have access to integrated presence awareness, instant messaging, Web conferencing and customizable team spaces that will allow BainUltra employees to be more responsive.

**The final step is to introduce an extranet, which will be a site for information and applications exclusive to partners and sales representatives concerning the sale and distribution of the BainUltra products.**

## Present is up to the task

Present was brought into the project right from beginning. They began by analyzing BainUltra's business needs and evaluating the technological context. Once seeing Present's demo of the solution, BainUltra was sold that it was the solution that would meet their needs. Present then worked closely with BainUltra's team to develop the look and feel of the portal site and deployed it within 3 months time.

BainUltra was impressed by Present's professionalism and experience. "When IBM first introduced Present to us, we weren't sure what extra value they would bring to the table. But I can explain it like this: **one plus one equals three,**" says Mr. Beaumont-Frenette. "What impressed me is they first sat down with us to discuss our business and what our goals are. Then they presented us with options, stating the pros and cons of each before giving us their recommendation. **They were interested in building a relationship with us.** Also, given this was a brand new IBM product, their perseverance and dedication helped us work through some initial bugs."

## Energizing results

The dealers' reaction to the e-learning was extremely positive. Within the first few weeks of the site being launched, there were several thousand hits **and a total of 1800 users signed up for the online education.**

"To introduce the solution, we developed a communication plan and campaign to promote the e-learning among our dealers but we did not anticipate the response we got. The new e-learning solution was very popular and the feedback we received was that the tool was efficient and that the information they received will help them sell more baths, which is exactly what we wanted to accomplish," says Mr. Beaumont-Frenette.

Mr. Beaumont Frenette concludes, "Not only are we now more responsive to our dealers and have improved the quality of service we provide but we have given our employees a tool to accelerate collaboration and simplify the management of our website, allowing them to be more productive and effective."

**To see BainUltra's new Portal and find out more information about BainUltra, please visit their website at <http://www.bainultra.com>**



**For additional information on how Present can contribute to your success, contact us at 1-866-IBM-BP4U, or visit our website at [www.present.ca](http://www.present.ca).**