



## *Web Assessment Services*

**Client: YMCA of Greater Richmond**

### **Client Situation**

Two challenges faced the YMCA of Greater Richmond, VA. The first was the need to define a strategy for integrating the Internet into the everyday activities of the organization. This strategy needed to address the initial need to create a more comprehensive Website, as well as map out a plan for expanding functionality and online services through an online platform. The second major challenge was to develop a method of allowing the YMCA of Greater Richmond, VA to have complete control over how content was added to the Website and to ensure that the publishing power was in the hands of subject matter experts distributed throughout the organization.

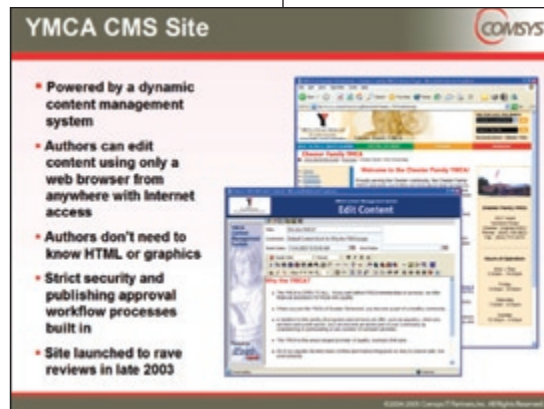
The objectives for this project included:

- Develop a comprehensive Internet strategy
- Develop an intuitive and engaging online Website that meets the needs of a diverse audience of users
- Select a tool that will allow non-technical users to manage content on the Website
- Enforce workflow processes that ensure control over the content publishing cycle
- Provide a foundation for expanding the Website to integrate additional elements of the Internet strategy

### **COMSYS Solution**

COMSYS began the process of addressing these challenges by creating an all-encompassing Internet strategy. COMSYS met with senior managers, branch managers, and other appropriate personnel throughout the YMCA of Greater Richmond to identify and document the requirements for the new Website. After understanding the culture and philosophy of the organization, COMSYS was able to craft a three year Internet Strategic Plan that called for the initial development of a foundational Website that incorporated a content management system. COMSYS conducted research and selected an appropriate content management tool that met the unique requirements of the YMCA of Greater Richmond. Subsequent years of the strategy called for the implementation of a more highly-personalized user experience, the introduction of email as a communications channel, and, eventually, the integration of the Website's functionality with legacy systems that drive the most essential business processes within the YMCA of Greater Richmond.





After crafting the strategy, COMSYS began work on the initial Website. Previous to this engagement, the YMCA had created a number of branch-specific Websites, but they did not share a common user interface or navigational structure. COMSYS began the design process by meeting with the YMCA Marketing department and creating a sitemap that illustrated the essential navigational structure of the new Website. The new Website would speak to multiple audiences and, as such, included a tier that was focused at the Association level, while also including individual branch Websites. The result was a consistent user experience that translated across all tiers of the YMCA.

Next, the COMSYS team developed a series of user interface comps that presented the Website's appearance in a Web browser. This set of user comps was revised based on feedback from the YMCA of Greater Richmond and finalized into a set of HTML templates. These templates were next incorporated by COMSYS into the selected content management system. Once the tools were in place, COMSYS then focused on developing a YMCA Author Guide that was used to train the local representatives of the branches. The result was a one-day training class that informed the authors of everything they needed to know in order to produce content on the site. In fact, the training class only spent three hours actually training on the tool, with the remainder of the time spent on actually developing their pages.

The Website launched officially to the public on December 5, 2003, to widespread acclaim from YMCA members and employees alike. The reaction can be best summed up with a direct client quote, from John Rudin, the CIO of the YMCA of Greater Richmond:

*"COMSYS really has wonderful resources...they are some of the best technical types that I have worked with. They have done a great job working with us to manage the YMCA account."*

### Benefits to our Clients

The impressive results of the solution include:

- Implementation cost of less than 50 percent of the cost proposed by the nearest competitor
- Production of over 600 pages of content
- A full-featured content management engine that manages all aspects of the Website, from content creation to staging, approval, and final production
- Widespread positive comments from both YMCA members and employees

Key system features the new YMCA of Greater Richmond include:

- A WYSIWYG Content Editing Tool
- Workflow approval process that allows authors to create content and have it moved to the production environment once approved
- An integrated search engine that continually updated with the current content
- A YMCA-branded CMS experience
- Completely browser based system - no additional software required for managing content
- Ability to add images, hyperlinks, and files

### For More Information:

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