



Transplace Leverages SharePoint 2010 to Position Company as Industry Thought Leader

New CEO blog enables Transplace to effectively reach and communicate with customers

Transplace is a third party logistics (3PL) provider of logistics technology and transportation management services to manufacturers and retailers. The company's solutions include complete logistics management outsourcing, intelligent transportation management systems (TMS), and supply chain network planning and design to high-quality brokerage services. Transplace is recognized among the elite 3PLs in North America by a customer base that includes many of the largest shippers in the world such as Walmart and Del Monte.

Transplace CEO Tom Sanderson has long been regarded as an industry thought leader in the logistics and supply chain space. For many years he has shared his industry expertise and market research within the company. However, Transplace and Sanderson lacked an effective way to communicate this same information to a public audience, especially customers.

Quarterly face-to-face customer meetings, industry conferences, and other speaking engagements enabled Sanderson to share some of this thought leadership externally. However, none of these communication channels gave him the ability to interact with a broad audience on a frequent basis.

Transplace eliminated this gap by launching a blog. "Since Tom came on board approximately six years ago, thought leadership at Transplace has increased dramatically," said Kecia Gray, director of corporate communications. "The blog has been an excellent way to share information from Tom with customers and the public. It's also given other internal thought leaders exposure outside the company."

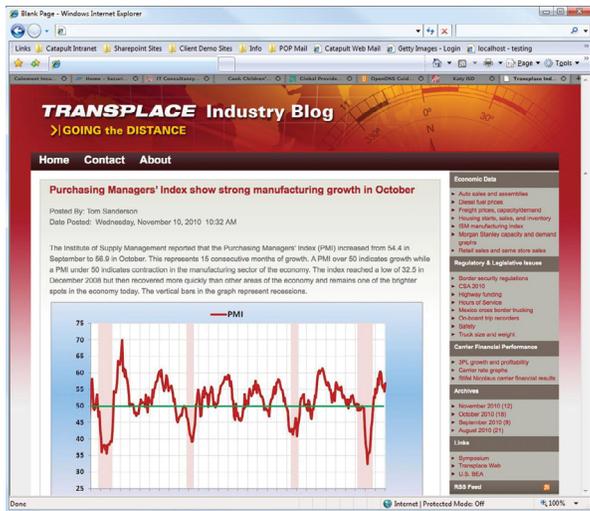
After successfully implementing a company-wide intranet and customer extranet with Catapult Systems, Transplace again turned to Catapult for the blog initiative. "Catapult was a true partner during the Transplace intranet and extranet projects," said Vincent Biddlecombe, Transplace chief technology officer and senior vice president. "They really understood our business goals and recommended technology solutions to best meet those needs. We knew we could trust Catapult to deliver the same expertise with our CEO Blog."

How Catapult Systems Helped

Transplace and Catapult began by evaluating multiple technologies to determine the best tool to use for the blog. As SharePoint was already being successfully implemented for Transplace's intranet and extranet sites, it was a logical choice for the blog. SharePoint 2010 was specifically chosen for its improved blogging functionality and ability to integrate seamlessly with other applications.

"SharePoint 2010 was a natural fit for the Transplace blog because it integrated well with

their existing applications,” said Soma Madhhipatla, Catapult senior lead consultant. “It also gave Transplace the ability to continue expanding their presence as a thought leader with capabilities to integrate with future applications and other products such as Twitter.”



Beyond integration, Transplace needed a solution that delivered ease of use to Sanderson, Marketing, and readers. SharePoint 2010 offered all that through:

Streamlined content management

SharePoint’s familiar interface, which is similar to Microsoft Office, meant Sanderson didn’t have to learn a new tool. And because SharePoint 2010 delivers a seamless authoring and publishing experience, Sanderson could quickly create and post new blog entries to keep up with constantly changing information. SharePoint 2010 additionally gave Transplace the ability to easily manage reader comments.

Support for all internet browsers

By supporting all internet browsers, SharePoint laid the foundation for a broad readership. With a variety of tools and technical competence across the industry, the ability to access the blog using any browser was critical to the blog’s momentum.

Improved web analytics

SharePoint 2010’s robust web analytics functionality made it easy for Transplace to understand which blog entries were shared most often and drew the most

visitors. Statistics including page views, referrers and unique visitors enabled Transplace to better understand how to use the blog to expand its industry presence as a thought leader.

During the implementation Catapult recognized several blog requirements that SharePoint 2010 didn’t meet “out-of-the-box” but could be easily expanded upon to meet Transplace’s needs. For example, using the Enhanced Blog Edition (EBE) Kit, Catapult enabled Transplace to categorize blog entries by topic so readers could easily find what they wanted based on different interests such as “diesel fuel prices” or “Mexico cross-border trucking.”

In addition to making information easy to find on the blog site, category tags help public users easily find the blog. This search engine optimization enables Transplace to effectively reach a large audience.

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*Soma Madhhipatla
Catapult Senior Lead Consultant*

Results

The CEO Blog has not only branded Sanderson a thought leader, but the company as well. “The blog has been a perfect fit for our audience – serious people who don’t have time to muddle through excess information,” said Gray. “They can cut to the chase and go right to our blog which effectively shows what Transplace delivers every day.”

In addition to the general public, Sanderson has successfully reached Transplace customers on a frequent basis with constantly changing information. "Sales often shares the blog link with customers and they have responded with very positive feedback," added Gray.

Transplace plans to expand its thought leadership positioning by integrating a Twitter feed with the blog to reach an even larger audience. It also plans to strengthen its connection with readers by publishing subscriber-only articles that will give only authorized users such as customers and prospects access to additional thought leadership.

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