

Creating an Online Continuing Education Portal

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins | A Case Study

impelsys

Continuing medical education (CME) refers to a specific form of continuing education (CE) that helps those in the medical field maintain competence and learn about new and developing areas in their field. These activities may take place as live events, written publications, online programs, audio, video or other electronic media. Content for these programs is developed, reviewed, and delivered by faculty who are experts in their individual clinical areas. In the United States, many states require CME for medical professionals to maintain their licenses.

Lippincott CME Institute (LCMEI) is a subsidiary of Wolters Kluwer Health and provider of medicine and pharmacy continuing education. LCMEI wanted to take their continuing education program online and approached Impelsys to help them with a suitable solution. Impelsys analyzed their processes and requirements and launched an online portal, leveraging Impelsys' iPlatform technology, that allowed users to comfortably take the CE quiz online and print certificates without any manual intervention from LCMEI. This also helped LCMEI to increase its subscriber base without having to incur additional cost.

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins (LWW), a division of Wolter Kluwers Health, is a leading international publisher of professional health information for physicians, nurses, specialized clinicians and students. LWW provides essential information for healthcare professionals in print and electronic formats, including textbooks, journals, CD-ROM, and via Intranets and the Internet.

Lippincott CME Institute develops and offers the highest quality medical, pharmacy and nursing continuing education programs that are optimally positioned to support healthcare professionals in learning and change. LCMEI is one of the few publishing companies in the world accredited to provide both medicine and pharmacy continuing education. LCMEI is

approved by both the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) to provide certified continuing education. LCMEI accredits CE activities for all Wolters Kluwer Health brand name products, including Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Adis International, Facts & Comparisons, and others.

Challenge

LCMEI used to offer CE programs offline by allowing professionals to subscribe to their newsletters which comprised of articles and journals on the latest information in medicine and pharmacy. An essential component of this newsletter was the quiz that the user had to take. The print copies of these newsletters along with the quiz were mailed to the subscribers. The quiz sheet was sent back to LCMEI for evaluation. LCMEI used to process results and mail the certificates to those who cleared the test. This was a very tedious process which consumed a lot of time and resources. LCMEI wanted to eliminate this paper-based approach and take the entire CME process online. However limited budget and resources to implement and manage a digital system posed a big challenge.

APPROACH

LWW has been working with Impelsys since 2003 leveraging Impelsys complete set of resources which include epublishing and technology services and its suite of products: iPlatform, VirtualPages, iDAMS and SmartCD. LWW approached Impelsys for a suitable solution to take their CME system online. Impelsys worked closely with LCMEI to understand their requirements, business processes and priorities and used its iPlatform technology to provide an online system to manage their users, content and subscription. Impelsys also hosted, managed and maintained this portal on day-to-day basis.

SOLUTION

Impelsys empowered LCMEI with an online platform (www.cmenewsletters.com) to distribute their content to professionals around the world who could subscribe to the relevant newsletters and take the quiz online and print certificates. This robust platform was built on Impelsys' iPlatform technology. Impelsys was actively involved through out the project implementation process and worked directly with the editorial team which reduced much of the burden on LWW.

Impelsys' Solution:

- The backend system converted content (newsletter) from PDF to XML format which Impelsys uploaded to the review site for LCMEI to review
- Provided separate admin privileges to LCMEI to review the recent and past files with an option to approve or change - 'Approve' option instantly pushed the content to the live site and 'Change' option sent the content back to Impelsys for rework
- Powered an automated emailing system notifying the designated officials at LCMEI to review the quiz
- Allowed users to view the list of CME newsletters hosted by LCMEI
- Empowered user to access the newsletter content subscribed by the user
- Enabled user to either go through the content of the newsletter before taking the quiz or directly take the quiz online
- Facilitated the user to browse through the newsletters and view the content before deciding to subscribe
- Displayed only those newsletters that fall under the subscriber's subscription period
- Provided a feedback form to users to fill-up before getting the results
- Enabled users to view results and print certificates
- Provided users "manage external CME" section that allowed them to manage quizzes planned for other organizations, which are not a part of LCMEI
- CME manager allowed users to plan their quizzes by adding it to their planner and listed all active issues that the user had subscribed to, completed, planned and in-progress.
- Option to re-print certificates
- Set reminders for planned quiz dates

BENEFITS

Impelsys created a cost effective, scalable online solution and effectively managed the full CME workflow process. The following are some of the key benefits:

- Reduced cost through enhanced efficiency by taking the entire process online
- Save time and resources engaged in traditional process
- Diminished cost involved in manual processing
- Empowered LCMEI to create multiple language offerings for different global markets through a scalable platform
- Instant feedback from subscribers and usage reports provided deep insights into user behavior
- Impelsys provided a complete solution such that LCMEI editorial team could initiate, develop, and maintain an online system without involving their internal IT team

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