



Case Study

An online social network + radio station

Our client, a leading radio station in India, wanted to revamp their existing website so as to provide new and more interactive features to users. The new website was to serve as an online social network + radio station. Since a large portion of the requirements were such that could be met by customizing an open source package, we made use of Dolphin, a social networking software to develop the solution.

Customer Profile

Our client operates one of the leading radio stations in India, with a presence in almost every major city and town.

Business Requirements

Our client had an existing website that they were using as a platform to promote their various radio stations and programs. With the objective of providing new and more interactive features such as a social networking, podcasts etc, they wanted to revamp their website. Various social networking tools and features allowing users to socialize and communicate with each other and also the station RJs were required to be built into the solution. Features such as member profile creation, internal messaging system, chat, discussion forums, communities, blogs, podcasts etc were required. The client was to be provided with complete control of website.

An online solution to operate and manage an online radio station & social network

Dolphin (an open source social networking/community software offered by BoonEx) has been used as a base to build the website. Several enhancements (i.e. new modules to be integrated with Dolphin) and customizations (i.e. modifications to existing modules) have been made to cater to the requirements, both design and functional.

The basic objective of the website is to provide our client with a fun and interactive platform to promote their shows and radio stations which in turn would lead to a growth in their listener base.

Through the solution website administrators can upload content pertaining to their various radio stations. Users can browse through the uploaded content and can register to contribute content to the website. As registered users, members can upload blogs, videos, photos, podcasts and also share them with others. Users can communicate with each other and the radio station RJs through an internal messaging system.

Custom Modules

Some of the new modules that we've built and integrated with Dolphin include:

- **Podcast Directory:** The section contains a library of podcasts (uploaded both by the administrator as well as members) that users can browse through. Registered members have the option to create their podcast and add episodes to it. Options to record podcast episodes online have been provided to registered users.
- **RJs:** A showcase for all radio station RJs, this section contains profiles of all RJs, their blogs, communities, podcasts and playlists. Options to search for RJs on the basis of various criteria have been provided. Registered members can communicate with the RJs via means of a messaging system.
- **Radio Station:** Individual radio stations are available for each city that our client's network. Each radio station will contain information about the city it caters to, local program schedules, streaming of local videos/podcasts, profiles of RJs etc. A flash based music player has also been integrated in this section allowing users to play the showcased station playlists.
- **News:** This section displays the news uploaded by the administrators. The Dolphin back-end module was also customized to cater to this feature.
- **Careers Section:** Displays all job openings posted by the administrator. Users can apply for the jobs online. The Dolphin back-end module was customized to allow the administrator to post job vacancies.

The Dolphin admin module was also customized to cater to the above mentioned functionalities.

In addition to the new modules, we have customized several existing modules. Some of the major customizations involved:

- Customization of all the sections to allow for segregation of content according to categories and cities. Sections have been cross linked to allow content from one section to be displayed in another e.g. videos being displayed on the music section etc. Allowing for the admin to highlight featured content items for each section.
- Enabling the administrator to control the content that is to be displayed on the various sections pages.
- Providing detailed statistics for each content item such as number of times favorited, shared, rated, commented etc.
- Customizing the communities section to provide discussion forum, photos, videos and events within a community. Provided for the community owner to manage the settings of the community, such as set the members who can make updates to the community, select a moderator etc
- Customizing the search to allow users to specify the areas within which a keyword search is to be performed. All user searches are also tracked to determine the popular search keywords.

- Allowing members to provide additional profile information (such as education, interests etc) and also control the display of this information to others. Members can also choose to only show specific sections within their profiles to others. E.g. members can select to show their podcasts and photos but not other sections. Members can also choose to receive notifications for various activities.
- Providing options for registered users to add content items to their favorite lists.

Technologies used in developing this application are:

