

Case Study: Westinghouse Lighting Turns to content26 for Multi-Tier Content Creation

Enhanced Product Content Increases Sales and Brand Awareness for Iconic Brand



Customer Profile:

Westinghouse Lighting has been a leader in its field for more than 65 years, pioneering monumental technologies throughout the decades. Today the privately owned company continues to direct innovation within its industry, providing high-quality ceiling fans, indoor and outdoor lighting fixtures, light bulbs, hardware accessories, and more.

Headquarters:
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Founded:
1946

To Learn More:
www.westinghouselighting.com



An Iconic Brick-and-Mortar Brand Goes Digital

Westinghouse Lighting is an iconic brand and a leading provider of fans and lighting products. The company was losing market share as newer modes of information, distribution, and sales became widely adopted in the industry. As a result, the company saw the need to reach a growing Internet market, improve its B2B sales materials, and to capitalize on more efficient modes of distribution. Furthermore, Westinghouse Lighting saw an opportunity to streamline internal sales and marketing processes by building a centralized database of high-quality standardized product-detail content.

The overhaul marked a major business shift, according to Kathleen Katz, Westinghouse Lighting's Senior Director of Marketing:

"Prior to this shift in strategy, our consumer sales were dominant at The Home Depot, Menards, True Value, Ace, and other hardware accounts," she said. "We did not have a specific online sales strategy. While we were selling into that channel, our sales were fragmented among many retailers."

Westinghouse Lighting had previously hired content26 to build enhanced product pages for its major online account, a process that gave the company direct insight into the strong correlation between thorough product-detail content and sales.

"Enhanced, well-written content combined with a good product and the Westinghouse brand translated into increased sales," noted Katz. "With the Internet it was easy to track

Challenges:

The company saw the need to greatly expand and enhance its online presence to reach consumers who increasingly shop and research products online, improve the content and information on its new Web site for its business-to-business partners, and build a centralized database of product-detail content to improve internal sales and marketing efficiencies.

Solution:

Realizing that "content is king," Westinghouse Lighting entrusted content26 to produce accurate and thorough product descriptions for its vast catalog of ceiling fans, lighting fixtures, and other product lines. Working directly with the Westinghouse Lighting marketing teams, content26 created multiple versions of copy tailored to Westinghouse Lighting's marketing needs, its new Web site, and its most important e-commerce channels.

Results:

Consistent, concise, and reliable content boosted online consumer confidence and resulted in increased B2C conversion rates and more efficient B2B information sharing. The company also realized increased marketing efficiencies from its newly created centralized database of consistent product-detail content.

the correlation between enhanced content and increased sales. Once we discovered this, it became a strategic initiative to grow our content to support two major customers, The Home Depot and Amazon.”

Selling Online where Content is King

“Through our relationship with Amazon, we learned the shopping needs of consumers are different when they buy on the Internet versus buying at brick-and-mortar retail,” said Katz.

Strong content is essential for online sales. When consumers cannot talk directly with a sales person or physically hold the product, they must rely on content. The Westinghouse Lighting marketing team understood this and turned to content26 to build out its online content.

“Our first step in working with Westinghouse Lighting was to understand which online accounts were the most important and what the primary purpose of the Web site was,” says Devon Gualtieri, content26’s managing editor. “This gave us what we needed to work directly with the Westinghouse team to build out a style guide they could rely on for both legacy products and new products across all platforms.”

Using expertise gained from seven years of product-detail content, content26 developed a “multi-tiered” approach that ultimately gave Westinghouse Lighting the content it needed to address its online content needs.

The first step, according to Gualtieri, was to build enhanced content for the 20 percent of products that drove 80 percent of the revenue on Westinghouse Lighting’s two most important online accounts, Amazon and Home Depot.

entire catalog of legacy products for the company’s targeted online accounts and new Web site. The multi-tiered approach to content ensured that each of the accounts would benefit from unique, custom content, and that Westinghouse Lighting (and its customers) would benefit from consistent messaging across platforms.

“We know whether or not customers ultimately buy online, they are more likely to purchase a product if their online research leads to consistent, accurate content,” says Gualtieri. “While each account had unique content customized for the target audience, we worked with Westinghouse Lighting marketing and product managers to make certain every description and specification was accurate and consistent across the platforms.”

Westinghouselighting.com: Building B2B Relationships with Content

While content26 worked with Katz’s team to build out the content, Westinghouse Lighting was concurrently developing a new Web site that was designed to be a more thorough and centralized resource for its B2B partners.

“We want to make Westinghouselighting.com a destination for our B2B customers when they need to know the latest on our product or industry trends,” said Katz. “We believe this service will help us understand our consumers better and allow us to provide the products they ultimately want and need.”

In addition to detailed product descriptions for the Westinghouse catalog, the new site will ultimately include a full array of user guides, product manuals, and information on the company’s latest technologies and products.



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Kathleen Katz | Westinghouse Senior Director of Marketing

“This approach gave us a good foundation of content that we could rely on for the remaining online needs. At the same time, it provided Westinghouse Lighting with an immediate lift in sales,” says Gualtieri. In fact, according to Katz, within weeks of publishing the new product descriptions, online sales “exceeded all expectations.”

Over the course of the next several weeks, content26 and Westinghouse Lighting worked closely together to revise the product-detail content of its

Increased Sales Efficiencies Thanks to a Centralized Database

Westinghouse Lighting’s legacy content, like that of many manufacturers, existed in several different versions across several different repositories. By creating consistent versioning of product-detail content, and by storing that content in a centralized database, Katz says her teams have profited from “enormous efficiencies internally and externally.” “Once we databased the new content, we were

able to produce catalogs, price lists, Web sites, and a variety of marketing tools by going to a single location," she says. "Our production time was reduced by 50 percent. We can now do twice as much work with a fraction of the resources."

E-Content Initiative: Owned by Marketing

One of the most important changes, and perhaps the most unheralded, involved the decision to place full control of the new content build into the hands of Katz and her marketing team. Having a single team

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Tony Martinelli | content26 Managing Director

According to content26 Managing Director Tony Martinelli, companies can save up to 30 percent in content creation costs and efficiencies by following the Westinghouse Lighting model.

"Most of the manufacturers we work with still manage each of their e-commerce channels as completely separate entities," he says, "with one person being in charge of Amazon, another in charge of Walmart, or Home Depot, or other important online channels, and yet another group responsible for their own Web content."

responsible for content creation and budgeting helped ensure that the final output would keep the company branding and messaging consistent, and it significantly improved workflow efficiencies with content26.

"Now that manufacturers across all product lines are seeing the importance of building out strong content for their online channels," says Martinelli, "we are finally starting to see companies follow the Westinghouse Lighting model by bringing the content initiatives under a single budgeting and workflow umbrella."



ROPO Effect and Growth for the Future

As studies continue to show the increasing use of the Internet as the primary source of consumer research, manufacturers must consider the "ROPO" effect (Research Online, Purchase Offline) as they build out their online content strategies, something Katz was well aware of.

"An effective content strategy should include content development for major channels, content syndication, and the manufacturer's Web site," said Martinelli.

"When manufacturers select this multichannel approach to content development, they experience significant costs savings when compared to the costs of managing each channel separately."

"Another big opportunity is the fact that providing enhanced and credible content is a great marketing tool," she says. "We expect these initiatives to lead to significant and steady positive results that will grow our bottom line," said Katz.

He continued, "This strategy also helps improve brand and product content consistency across the Web, minimizes the negative impact of redundant content, and ultimately improves traffic, conversion, and sales."

The revamped Westinghouse Lighting site is expected to become a destination for information and boosted B2B sales. And with standardized content distributed to Amazon, Home Depot, and other e-commerce giants, Westinghouse Lighting intends to remain iconic in its field well into the next 100 years.

About content26

content26 provides comprehensive content merchandising services for some of the world's most recognized brands. We have helped more than 450 manufacturers across a dozen product lines build customized content for their online channels, helping them increase their online conversion rates and improve their brand awareness. To learn more about how we can increase your online sales, visit us at www.content26.com, or contact Tony Martinelli at tony@content26.com / 206.706.3339 x1.