



**DOW**

*DIALOGUE*

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Global Chlorinated Organics

“I would bank my whole reputation on the fundamental basic idea that wherever possible- keep people in as close contact with their jobs as possible.”

**Herbert Henry Dow**, shortly after the birth of The Dow Chemical Company

# Website Development Guide

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# PROJECT SCOPE

GCO launched its website in June of 1999. The launch of GCO's second-edition site is planned for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2000. To maximize the effectiveness of its site beyond its second redesign, GCO directed its intern to research the site's Functionality, Design, Content, Measurement, Promotion, and Search Engine Optimization and make recommendations of how best to allocate GCO's resources to accomplish its business objectives and meet Dow Corporate E-business goals. This guide was developed to illuminate best practices and provide a guideline for GCO's future E-business efforts, as well as serve as a model for any Dow business faced with similar issues.

# THE HISTORY OF GCO WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

In 1999, GCO had the following Global Objectives-

## **Business Objective**

- Preserve demand and build market share in a declining industrial market
- Continuously reduce exposure/risk and maximize return on product

## **Marketing and Communications Objectives**

- Reinforce commitment to the business and marketplace
- Get closer to the end user customers in the marketplace
- Change perceptions on the use of chlorinated solvents
  - Educate that solvents are environmentally viable products
  - Educate that solvents are not dead
- Continue to build recognition and loyalty for Dow chlorinated solvents.
- Differentiate Dow offering through product mix, stewardship, technical expertise, and reliability of supply and conversion assistance

The site was created by a website team comprised of Marketing Communications Management, TS & D, and Global Marketing Management personnel. Direct responsibility for implementation and agency contact resided with the Marketing Communications Manager and TS&D representative.

GCO's website went online in June of 1999, to accomplish the following-

Grow the GCO business by discovering new customers, markets, and applications using Internet Broadcasting to provide product information anytime and anywhere while reducing literature distribution costs and-

- Provide a greater understanding of customer base
- Identify and address customer needs and issues
- Support GCO mission / vision
- Increase awareness of the product stewardship program

# INTERNSHIP DESCRIPTION DETAIL

To assist in accomplishing its objectives, GCO contracted with an intern for a 12-week period, requesting the following deliverables-

From GCO's description of the project—

In June of 1999, the Global Chlorinated Organics business of Dow Chemical launched its first website. Since then, there have been minimal updates to the site. Additionally, reporting /measurement capabilities have been extremely limited. An enhancement plan to grow the site with better functionality and more detailed technical information is underway, however, a mechanism of measuring satisfaction from visitors/end-users of our site is needed. This data will drive the direction of future enhancements, developments of the site and e-commerce activities. In addition, we have had little luck with our metatag submission and lack of information regarding competitor's site development and delivery. GCO has done limited activities to promote our website. This partly due to the uncertainty of the accuracy of our global information systems and language barriers around the world.

The Intern was to deliver the following-

Develop a channel of interface with users of our website to determine success/satisfaction of visits. Report and develop a recommended schedule of enhancements and a continued mechanism for measuring trends of use/requests. Search and give a report and recommendation on search strategies with main search engines and to evaluate competitor sites.

To have end-users utilize the GCO website as the preferred channel to collect general business and technical information, while giving Dow market and lead opportunities to help the company's businesses build customer loyalty.

Validation from end-users of our GCO website regarding content and deliverables. Determine a promotional program, globally, to increase use of the GCO website.

# DOW CORPORATE E-BUSINESS POLICY

The overarching guidelines for each business are-

- All websites hosted under Dow.com
- All registration information submitted back to Dow.com
- Each site must contain the Dow standard Navigation Bar and Disclaimers
- All site development must be performed by Woller, Cook, and Misamore

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## **Dow Corporate E-business Roadmap** (off E-commerce Intranet)

**Dow's e-commerce will evolve through four phases of implementation:**

- **Broadcast** of information through the company's Web site, such as reading or downloading product literature, technical data sheets, material safety data sheets, etc.
- **Dialogue** between Dow and its customers, such as exchange of electronic mail between customers and Dow experts, on-line discussion rooms, and/or expert systems for answering frequently asked questions.
- **Transactions**, such as on-line product selection, checking availability and pricing, ordering, determining shipping parameters, selecting payment method, receiving electronic certificates of analysis, and electronic bill payment, as well as viewing open orders, paid and unpaid invoices or order history.
- **Collaboration**, which could include real-time troubleshooting or part design for customers through videoconferencing via the Web, as well as integration between Dow's operations and the customers' facilities that would allow Dow to manage its customers' inventory.

### **Inquiry Response/Data Capture**

- Collecting data and fulfilling literature off the Web is of critical importance. As such, ALL Internet inquiries are captured in ECATS. **(E-commerce site info not updated yet. Now captured in Siebel)**

### **Lead Generation and PDF Files**

In order to download a pdf file, a user must be registered as a Dow user and logged in before they can download the pdf file.

Because they are providing personal information such as name, company or organization, address, phone number, etc., this information is captured and entered into the ECATS database for each file that is downloaded.

Each month a report is generated based on the business or function and sent to the content owners electronically. That information gives a detailed list of the people and their personal/company information along with what was downloaded. Knowing the interests, based

on the type of information that was requested along with the name, company and phone number can provide solid lead generations and also help to calculate ROI.

### **(Dow Corporate E-business Policy Cont'd)**

(off E-commerce Intranet Cont'd)

Dow's capabilities and tools are already in place to measure customer communications for any Dow business on its Web page. We can measure the following aspects:

1. Volume of traffic around the clock by time of day
2. Geography of each registered visitor
3. Average length of stay of a visitor
4. Information each visitor viewed or downloaded
5. Total visitors who came to a page that day, week, month, year

Tracking information helps us understand our customer's interests and needs. It also quickly tells how effectively we're reaching the visitors to our site. No need to wait weeks and months for customer phone or written survey results and potentially miss an opportunity or a problem needing quick positive action.

What customers or prospective customers tell us about themselves is the best information we can get. It's accurate, timely and straight from the source. When someone downloads product information from our site, we know his or her interest in that material. This is potential business knocking at our electronic front door.

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Due to a number of issues including the transition from ECATS to Siebel, the data capture from business websites is less than optimal. The technical limitations of Siebel, the Dow.com site architecture, and the lower priority of business level data capture/measurement relative to the intranet and Dow.com, currently limit the availability of complete web-user registration and site traffic information.

Dow's current site measurement software (IPRO) provides analysis only for top-level directories of Dow.com, with no specific focus given to the business directories. Getting at measurement results at the business level other than general site usage is not possible within the current system. IPRO is capable of providing business level site measurement, and would cost each business approximately \$500.00 per month with a \$1000.00 setup fee.

E-commerce is examining an enterprise wide website measurement software solution called Webtrends. This software would extend Dow's measurement capabilities beyond that of the current tool.

At present, most Dow businesses have not allocated resources or downloaded the measurement software to perform the measurement steps critical to fostering a dialogue with customers. It is important to note that measurement is of little to no value if there is no employee designated to analyze the data and use the findings to make continuous adjustments and additions to site design, content, and marketing efforts.

# INITIAL ISSUES / BENCHMARKS

## Site Development

Woller, Cook, and Misamore face many challenges working with each Dow business due to the sheer size of the account and the varying levels of resources committed by each business to establish and develop their sites. Woller, Cook, and Misamore maintains that, in general, Dow's business level websites are challenging to develop in that most business websites are dealt with as occasional projects versus being maintained on a continual basis.

## Search Engine Optimization

- Same keywords on each page. Non-strategic descriptions and titles.

## Promotion

- General Press Releases
- Site address included in:
  - Newsletters
  - Correspondence
  - Advertisements
  - Product Labeling

## Measurement / Data Collection

- Information collection strategies and database issues unclear.
- Little knowledge of current user demographics.



## **(Measurement / Data Collection cont'd)**

The following GCO specific data was extracted from the Dow.com IPRO tool measurements after a period of analysis that included cross-referencing PDF file numbers against Documentum storage numbers, etc. This type of manual cross referencing, compiling, and analysis is often required at the business level given the current level of functionality of Dow's website reporting tools.

### 1935 PDF Downloads March through August 2000

322 Average per month

13.5 Average per day

### Downloads by Month- 2000

March- 386 total / @13 per day

April- 235 total / @10 per day

May- 393 total / @16 per day

June- 241 total / @12 per day

July - 388 total / @17 per day

August - 292 total / @13 per day

### Download Popularity

Most Popular-Jan-2000 thru July-2000

Product Stewardship Pieces

Protecting Yourself

Vapor Degreasing Brochure Pieces

U.S. Regulatory Data Sheet

MAXI-STAB Brochure

### Path Tracking – (Where they went)

By Subdirectory - 2000

NA - @40% (They went to: products, resources, applications, stewardship, services)

EUR- @20% (They went to: products, applications, resources, services, stewardship)

PAC- @20% (They went to: products, resources, applications, stewardship, services)

LA- @20% (They went to: products, stewardship, resources, services, applications)

### GCO -CIG Fulfillment Costs

CIG Internet Request / Email Request Cost

Q1 2000- \$6,402.00

Q2 2000- \$2,253.00

# COMPETITIVE WEBSITE-SERVICE ANALYSIS

In terms of web response time to technical questions or general inquiries, GCO ranked fifth out of ten similar sites, with a CIG internet inquiry response time of just over 38 hours.

E-mailed Question:

Can you please send me your most current dry-cleaning and metal cleaning product literature as well as information and your company's position regarding these products environmental impact?

Site Questioned	Sent E-mail	Received Response	Turnaround Time
Dow GCO	11:50 a.m. August 3rd	10:21 a.m. August 7th	38 Hours
Vulcan	3:00 p.m. August 7 <sup>th</sup>	NO RESPONSE	NO RESPONSE
ICI	3:00 p.m. August 7th	8:00 a.m. August 9 <sup>th</sup>	29 Hours
PPG	3:00 p.m. August 7th	NO RESPONSE	NO RESPONSE
Solvay	3:00 p.m. August 7th	10:14 a.m. August 8th	19 hours
Elf Atochem	3:00 p.m. August 7th	NO RESPONSE	NO RESPONSE
Rynex	3:00 p.m. August 7th	Call 3:46 p.m. August 7 <sup>th</sup>	1Hour
Greenearth Cleaning	3:00 p.m. August 7th	11:38 a.m. August 8 <sup>th</sup>	21 Hours
Aqueous Technologies	3:00 p.m. August 7th	In-Mail August 12 <sup>th</sup>	100 Hours
DuPont	3:00 p.m. August 7th	In-Mail August 28th	Over two weeks

Response time aside, the quality of each response also varied considerably. Dow's responses, while helpful and adequate, lagged behind the competition in terms of comprehensiveness, professionalism, and exuding a sense of relationship with the inquirer.

Dow commissioned the eLoyalty company to assist in the development of Dow's Enterprise Customer Relationship Management Strategy. In the white paper titled- The Customer Relationship Revolution- A Methodology for Creating Golden Customers, Kelly D. Conway, the President of eLoyalty made the following points:

"If you want to keep your customers, you must know what they want, and give them good service. Giving the customer what he/she wants means building individual relationships with each customer. Not recognizing the individuality of each customer is frequently the root of customer defection."

"For most organizations, the cost of acquiring a new customer is significantly more expensive than the cost of retaining a current customer. Sub-standard customer service carries a very high opportunity cost, therefore, emphasis should be placed on strengthening the relationship dynamic between the business and its customers, which through increased purchases and referrals can make significant contributions to total profitability."

"Relationship building transcends traditional customer service, which is primarily a reactive process."

# BEST PRACTICES / SOLUTIONS

## Site Design

### FAQ Sections

- GCO could add a FAQ section for each major product / application category. Could help to eliminate relatively expensive, common technical questions and requests.

### Related Links Pages

- GCO could utilize Dow.com resources by linking to Dow.com Product Stewardship, Sustainable Development, and Environmental Health and Safety information to further the business's objectives.
- GCO could increase its linkages with related sites- Not only helps search engine rankings at popular sites like Google, but makes logical sense- the web is about concentration and cooperation. Some good examples are located here-

<http://www.fedichem.be/EN/SIT/siten.htm>

<http://www.chemalliance.org/RegTools/links/index.asp>

### Dialogue

- Using Siebel reporting, GCO could establish an outbound e-mail program that takes advantage of data collected and maintains a dialogue with all users in the form of emails informing users of upcoming events, the latest site developments, etc.
- In order to prevent user migration to other sites, GCO could respond differently to inquiries, as it is not advisable to leave customers with no indication of response time.
- There are many ways GCO could build relationships through its website. Xerox has made customer-learning programs a focus. A Xerox business Webmaster Bill MacLain, for example, has created a "Webmaster's knowledge base" from all the queries he's received-

From Fortune magazine 5/10/1999-

... Since 1996, he's been developing a "customer-connections tool" that gathers verbatim responses from customer-satisfaction surveys, write-ups of site visits to and from customers, and other meetings. Among other benefits, the process has produced documented improvements in customer satisfaction and loyalty. Says Dan Holtshouse, director of corporate business strategy: "Capturing the verbatims, the exact words, the 'voice of the customer,' carries a lot of weight. It makes the customer's experience real, personal, and more actionable. Hearing the voice helps remove distance between us. Closeness is what customer learning is all about, because you can't be close to someone who is not close to you. That's how, in an e-commerce environment, a customer-learning process can move you up the click stream; how, online or off, it builds a valuable shared asset comprising comfort, trust, and meshed social as well as technical systems."

- GCO could also consider sponsoring and moderating technical discussion lists.

## Search Engine Optimization

There are many different opinions about optimizing a website in order to be found by potential customers, and there is no question that the optimization of Meta tags is an important way of obtaining favorable search engine rankings. This process is as much an art as it is a science. Some widely agreed upon principles for a optimizing a site to be indexed by a search engine and ultimately be found by a user are-

Page Title: Maximum of 7 words

What your site stands for. Important as even if you manage to get good ranking, you will not get click-through unless the title makes the searcher click on it.

Page Description: Maximum of 20 to 25 words

Not all search engines support Descriptions, but many do. The rule of thumb is to try and create a sentence that will make users want to click through to your site, and it also helps them select the right link to click on amongst several hits from your site for the same keyword.

Page Keywords: 5 to 25 words

Words or phrases that correlate between your title, description, keywords and the first few kilobytes of page text "content" gain more weight with search engines.

Dow's E-commerce department offers assistance with search engine optimization in the following ways-

- Keyword submission services to major search engines.
- Web Position Gold software reports detailing search engine rankings by keyword.

However, to expect favorable placement with search engines is a never-ending process because the search engines are constantly changing the parameters of how and what they search for. Since this technology is always evolving, the business must make itself continually aware of search engine strategies.

Among all of the theories on link and search engine strategies it is important to remember that none of them are wrong, but in and of themselves, they are limited. Everyone with a web site goes after top search engine ranks. If you expect success in Web marketing, the key is to go with what works beyond standard limits, not with what everyone wants to see work.

## Website Promotion

To promote GCO's second generation site externally, a global incentive program to reward customers /distributors for using the website was devised. Once to the site, they must register with us to receive the free phone card incentive and downloads. Also planned are several activities to enhance the visibility of GCO site internally. GCO has releases planned for all GCO employees, traditional press release channels, Dow Newslines, Dow.com, and The e-commerce newsletter E-view.

The promotion has the following goals, measurable by-

- **New "Registrations"**  
**4000 users by 12/2000** (Registered users- as of 5/2000 = 1064)
- **PDF Downloads**  
**8000 PDF's downloaded by 12/2001** = 533 a month Oct-00 thru Dec-01

To stimulate further dialogue, a Brand Window feature was devised to provide new content to the site on a monthly basis.

### Overall Brand Window Guidelines

Solution Focused  
Globally Acceptable  
Encourages Dialogue- Humanizes the business  
Highlights Contents  
Rotates Monthly  
Coordinated with Promotional Efforts

### Brand Window Categories and Topics

#### **Products and Services**

Closed Loop Delivery Systems  
Product spotlight- Perc  
Product spotlight- Tric  
Product spotlight- M2  
Product spotlight- Intermediates  
Product spotlight- MAXI-STAB  
Product spotlight- MAXI-CHECK  
Dosimeter  
SAFE-CHEM  
SAFE-TAINER

#### **People and Places**

Global Marketing staff  
Global TS&D staff  
Manufacturing Facilities  
Merger News  
Trade Shows/ Conferences

#### **Applications and Results**

Case Studies  
F1 Car Story  
Vitrinox

#### **Health and Safety**

Stewardship Manual  
Association Links  
Govt Links  
Dow.com EH&S

#### **Literature and Support**

Distributor Support  
Degreasing Brochure  
Trouble Shooting Guide

## Measurement / Data Capture

Web based interaction with visitors yields an unprecedented opportunity to collect and analyze patterns of behavior in a way that is impossible in the brick and mortar world. As was pointed out earlier in this report- nearly every move a visitor makes on a web site can be tracked- how long they linger on a page, how deeply they investigate a product or topic, where they came from, etc.

Using historical customer behavior to predict future behavior and create intimate, personal, one-on-one relationships with individuals is the golden opportunity. Merging web visitor data with other mission-critical data provides a more comprehensive view of the customer.

This behavioral data provides unparalleled insight that marketers need. It is the best tool for providing the accountability needed to ensure your E-business objectives are being met.

Beyond the initial Broadcast phase, the ability of each site to capture data and support a dialogue between itself and the customer becomes a tactical necessity, and any benefit derived from web-based efforts depend on measurement, analysis, and a clear understanding of the customer and their actions while on the site.

To enable attainment of GCO's business objectives, the business level data capture and measurement capabilities on Dow.com were extensively researched and several challenges were identified within Dow's current Customer Relationship Management System. GCO approached Customer Interface Leader Mack Murell with these issues. Mack assembled a core team to generate potential solutions to Dow's data capture and measurement challenges.

- E-commerce: Tim Taylor
- Information Systems: Melanie Diment-Kalmar
- End User Development: Jim Nesbitt
- GCO: Scott Abel, Jim Mertens, Matt Brady

GCO submitted its objectives and desired outcomes in the following form-

# GCO Web Measurement / Data Capture Goals

- Making the transition from Broadcast to Dialogue on GCO's Website, per Dow's E-commerce plan; and supporting GCO's business objectives and Dow's customer interface initiatives in the process.
- Determine a standard process for measuring usage of our site that can be reported and utilized by the GCO marketing department.
- Determine a standard process for requesting, collecting, and responding to user feedback on the GCO site.
- Deliver to the GCO business a productivity gain for investment into development and maintenance of the website by measurable usage and business visibility. Beyond measurement benefit, flexible, agile reporting capability is needed to deliver detailed customer information and lists to utilize as sales leads and utilize in marketing communications programs.

## The GCO business needs the ability to independently extract the following information-

- All User Information captured during Registrations, Feedback forms, Surveys and Questionnaires
- Check the status of a customer inquiry or technical request
- General Site Statistics
  - Hits
  - Page Views
  - Visitor Sessions
  - Unique Visitors
- PDF's Downloaded
- Where Visitors are coming from (Referring Site)
- Most Requested Content Groups
- Top Entry Pages
- Top Path Pages
- Top Search Phrases with Search Engine Detail

## **With this information GCO can-**

- Generate global leads. Which potential customers are visiting, what do they look at, and what do they ask for? Helps understand customers interests and needs.
- Deduce enhanced service offerings by observing customer behavior.
- Track all upcoming direct mail-to-web promotion response.
- Establish benchmarks to gauge future promotional programs.
- Construct Visitor Profiles- demographic profiles by organization and geographic location.
- Review site entry and exit points and where visitors came from.
- Quantify qualitative information by asking respondents to rate and rank concepts, competitor web sites, and our current efforts.
- Change meta tags and registrations to make sure customers are getting to the right page.
- Find out which keywords and search engines are being used to find us.
- Expand marketing efforts and build relationships with end users, distributors and customers
- Enable customer self-sufficiency by changing the site according to feedback.
- Generate competitive information. Which competitors' visit- where do they go?

# MEASUREMENT TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE TO EVERY BUSINESS

The following measurements are possible with Webtrends software if business level reporting functionality is requested by E—commerce, or paid for directly by the business. Again, the value derived from this reporting is found only in its application back to the business.

- **General Statistics**

- Visitor Sessions Graph
- General Statistics

- **Resources Accessed**

- Most Requested Pages
- Least Requested Pages
- Top Entry Pages
- Least Requested Entry Pages
- Top Entry Requests
- Least Requested Entry Requests
- Top Exit Pages
- Single Access Pages
- Most Accessed Directories
- Paths through Site
- Most Download Files
- Downloaded File Types
- Most Uploaded Files
- Dynamic Pages and Forms

- **Visitors and Demographics**

- Visitors by Number of Visits
- New vs. Returning Visitors
- Authenticated Visitors
- Top Visitors
- Top Geographic Regions
- Most Active Countries
- North American States and Provinces
- Most Active Cities
- Most Active Organizations
- Organization Breakdown

- **Activity Statistics**

- Summary of Activity for Report Period
- Summary of Activity by Time Increment
- Activity Level by Day of Week
- Activity Level by Hour
- Bandwidth
- Activity Level by Length of Visit
- Number of Views per Visitor
- Visitor Session Statistics

- **Technical Statistics**

- Web Server/Technical Information
- Forms Submitted by Users
- Browser/Client Errors
- Page Not Found (404) Errors
- Server Errors

- **Referrers and Keywords**

- Referring Sites
- Referring URLs
- Search Engines
- Search Phrases
- Search Phrases by Engine
- Search Keywords



# EXTERNAL WISDOM

The following are excerpts from David Siegel's book "Creating Killer Web Sites" (Hayden Books, 1996), now in its second edition, and translated into 15 languages. In 1995, he founded a San Francisco-based Web-design firm, Studio Verso (<http://www.verso.com>), which he sold to KPMG, the worldwide consulting giant. He's advised such companies as Cisco Systems, Sony, Lucent Technologies, and Office Depot on their Web strategies.

E-commerce is a false god. Focusing on e-commerce is one way to deny the new reality of business -- the reality of a more interconnected group of customers, a group of customers with more choices than ever before. E-commerce is about nothing more than automating sales. It doesn't change a company fundamentally, and that's the real problem.

E-customers aren't loyal to a brand, or to a product category, or to a supply chain. They're loyal to other customers and to company employees with whom they've established relationships. The role of a Web site is to serve as a magnet for customers. And you can't create a magnet without the pull of open, honest conversation among customers.

You can't just automate your old-world sales process: You have to differentiate your customers, their needs, and their experience levels. Every customer group includes beginners who need support, intermediates who like to help one another, and experts who want your site to function their way.

Don't treat the Web as this super serious, super sober, "mission-critical" technology that gets controlled by a small group called the "Web team". Treat it as an everyday tool that's useful, fun, and a great way to connect people. If it takes seven days to make a change to your Web site, then you're in trouble. So many companies use the Web to put their product catalogs and marketing collateral on their customers' desktops. Instead, they should be putting their employees on their customers' desktops.

The Web is a killer tool for generating brand loyalty. The key is to leverage the medium for what it does best -- interacting with the customer. That means using e-mail for quick-time customer service, discussion groups for building a sense of community, and tracking of habits for customizing content.

If you're not asking for some kind of response -- a sale, information about the customer's preferences, product feedback -- you're wasting the medium.

# NEW PARADIGM

GCO's customer relationship strategies are of particular importance and value given that its competitors products in many cases are relatively difficult to differentiate from its own. Because GCO's customer relationship strategy is long term in nature, and manifests itself as a process, it must be continually monitored and managed.

This includes:

- Identifying unique characteristics of each customer in a given segment.
- Modeling the current and potential value of each segment.
- Creating proactive strategies and operational plans to reach customers, starting with the highest value segment.
- Redesigning the organization, process, and technologies to implement the relationship strategies.

Any serious web-based effort beyond the recommendations made here that fulfills the mission and vision of the GCO business, follows the Dow E-commerce roadmap, provides Return On Investment measurement, and leverages past experience will unquestionably require a revolutionary change in GCO's current website management and control paradigm.

The general recommendation made to GCO to support the Dialogue phase of its internet plan is to adopt a more externally focused, proactive approach that more effectively and efficiently leverages resources and provides feedback to GCO team members in order to retain current customers and reach new ones.

Given that-

- Dialogue is an exchange of ideas that takes two parties communicating clearly.
- Even the best possible business level Data capture / traffic measurement system requires significant analysis and focus to translate the analytical effort into valuable feedback to the business leaders.
- Web technology changes more rapidly than traditional marketing tools and will most likely continue to do so into the foreseeable future.
- Project oriented website management creates difficulty for our Development firm, costing us money.
- The competition is faster at web-based fulfillment.

It was recommended GCO consider appointing an E-business Analyst/Champion to serve its online customers.

A suggested format for the job description-

Develops, drives, executes, and manages Internet commerce to meet a company unit's short and long term business objectives. Conceptualizes and directs design, news and feature stories, and product information. Leads the division toward enabling customer communications, transactions, and electronic content delivery. Builds business plans to orchestrate people and resources -- developing productive teams that can deliver results, working with strategic partners and outside vendors, and communicating the strategy inside and outside of the business. He/she is the team leader responsible for interfacing with net-based communications, back-end technologies, and business management.

This level of focus is the most effective and efficient way for GCO to serve its customers, accomplish its goals, measure its progress, and maximize its online investment. By fostering dialogue and a customer-learning process, both the business and its customers sense their relationship is an important asset. Creating relationships that make your customers feel that nobody does it better than you do, can, and does, go a long way towards overcoming obstacles and growing the business.

# CODA

At age 29, Herbert Henry Dow was for all practical purposes forced to quit the Midland Chemical Company; the company which his persistence and innovative thinking had helped build. His sense of humor and unconquerable spirit is demonstrated in his journal entry recalling the incident that sealed his fate ...

*...We therefore built an electrolytic plant for making electrolytic chlorine in the summer of 1895. When finally completed the current was turned on in the forenoon and at twelve o'clock when everybody was out of the building, about an hour after the current had first been turned on, it blew up with a tremendous explosion, entirely destroying the apparatus in the building and even injuring the adjoining building, but fortunately no person was hurt.*

*A meeting of the board of directors was called and it was decided that they did not care to do any more expanding ...*

We chuckle at Mr. Dow's wry commentary, and hindsight being 20/20, we are offered a supreme glimpse at what made Herbert Dow the pioneer that he was. What set him apart from others was that he was not afraid to experiment, and he learned from his "experiments". He explains to us that the plant he built in 1895 blew up when the current was turned on and "Everybody was out of the building". Today, many Dow businesses have "turned on the current" to their websites, only to leave them unattended for long periods of time. Of course, they haven't blown up, but they also haven't delivered what they are capable of delivering- not chlorine in this case, but *CUSTOMERS*.

In 1897, Herbert Dow founded the Dow Chemical Company. Shortly thereafter, in a letter to a friend, we understand through this statement that he had truly learned from his "explosive experiment".

*"I would bank my whole reputation on the fundamental basic idea that wherever possible keep people in as close contact with their jobs as possible."*

What Mr. Dow learned at the dawn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century we are seeing today at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, production technology needed a close watch, for the 20<sup>th</sup>, information technology needs the mindful eye. It's the same but different.

In the general sense, for a mature, pioneer organization like Dow Chemical, the old saying rings true--

**The more things change, the more they stay the same.**

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Matt Brady, a commerce mechanic with experience in resource development, customer service and organizational transformation, began his interdisciplinary studies at the age of three when he discovered he could simultaneously enhance knowledge and eliminate waste through multi-tasking.

He has held a variety of positions including a cashier at Meijers, a retail employee of a luggage store, a bookstore clerk, a landscape crew supervisor, a rental property demolition technician, sold study guides door-to-door in St. Louis, Missouri, began development of a waterproof sock and a scented fishing lure with a retired Dow plastics engineer, was the office manager for an entertainment company specializing in dancers, DJ's, staging and lighting for Bar and Bat mitzvahs, a paperboy, a copy-maker, a truck driver, a fork-lift operator, a little league umpire, an intramural sports center attendant, a database designer, a sports store clerk, a pizza delivery man, a vegetable picker, a manager of a Lemon Chill and Hot pretzel concession service for the Arizona tour stops of the 1996 PGA tour, a customer service representative for Texaco, and for a brief but rewarding period, Brady drilled holes in small rocks and sold them as "nice little candle or flower holders" at a fruit stand.

His professional studies include a B.A. in Social Science from Michigan State University in 1996.

Prior to working with Dow and since graduation from MSU, he worked as a product marketing manager for a manufacturer's representative firm specializing in computer peripherals, and as a sales manager for an industrial construction supply firm.