

## Negotiating Collective Agreements with a Strategic Advantage

### Situation

Collective bargaining is the process through which a teacher association negotiates with a school board to establish a new contract of employment for its members. One provincial teacher association that represents almost 30 local teacher associations of a province's public school system wanted to provide a strategic advantage to its negotiators and the local collective bargaining teams. It wanted to provide them with the means to better analyze past and current collective agreements. This would allow the local bargaining teams to build stronger cases for positions on issues under negotiation, resulting in more effective negotiations and better agreements for their members.

Newbook was engaged by this association to deliver a **Collective Bargaining System**.

### Challenge

Users distributed across the province needed to access the Collective Bargaining System. The system also needed to be able to store all of the information related to the collective bargaining process, including current and previous collective agreements for all of the local teacher associations.

In addition, the system had to allow the collective agreements to be developed in such a way that the history of each bargaining session could be captured for future reference and analysis. The system had to be easy to use and require minimal training, since the collective bargaining teams are made up of volunteers who often change each year.

Finally, the solution needed to be cost-effective, to meet the budget requirements of a non-profit organization.

### Solution

Newbook implemented the **Collective Bargaining System**, a collaborative authoring and knowledge sharing application that supports the collective bargaining process.

Features of the system include:

- a **Collective Agreements Library**, that provides powerful topic-based and full-text searching of all current and historical collective agreements,
- a **Virtual Bargaining Book**, that structures the negotiation process of collective bargaining, including the ability to generate proposals that are tabled for discussion and the ability to generate reports on negotiations, useful for internal review or distribution to the general membership
- a **Reference Library**, that provides a searchable repository for storing reference and supporting material related to collective bargaining and negotiations
- a **User Management Module**, that provides a secure environment for sensitive collective bargaining information and role-based permissions that allow for fine control over who may do what in the system

The system is server-based, providing a central location for all information and a central management point. It has a web-based end user interface that is accessible from any PC connected to the Internet.

### Benefits

With the Collective Bargaining System, a bargaining team of one local association can access all current and historical agreements for all of the other local associations. This allows the team to see what other local associations have achieved in previous negotiations and to find effective wording for clauses they wish to include in their agreements.

A local association can compare how it negotiates with how other local associations do it in order to identify successful techniques. They can also review negotiations from past years, to identify trends or areas where they may be able to achieve gains.

For all the public school teachers of the province, there is the benefit of improved access to their collective agreements since the current agreements are available on-line for the general public to view.

The Collective Bargaining System can help teachers achieve improved working conditions guaranteed in their collective agreements through improved access to information and through the sharing of information among local associations.