

## Newbook Publisher - A Simple Solution to CD-ROM and Web Publishing

### Situation

A publisher with a large archive of silverware catalogues wanted to publish them on CD-ROM. The catalogues provide detailed images and descriptions of the various pieces of silverware produced by a noted American silverware manufacturer between 1889 and 1910. The catalogues are of value for a number of reasons. Authorities on antique silverware use them to establish authenticity. The catalogues help to maintain and increase the value of the silverware by providing a reference for collectors and antique dealers. Finally, they are historical documents that capture the craftsmanship and body of work of the artisans who worked for this silverware manufacturing company.

In preparation for the development of an electronic product, all of the pages in the catalogues were scanned at high resolution in order to have detailed electronic images of each piece of silverware. Each page was also indexed according to the type of the silverware item, its part number and a short description. Newbook was then contracted to complete the design and development of an electronic information product that would best present this large archive.

### Challenge

The information product needed to

- provide fast access to the information and images in the catalogues
- be easy to use, since end users could not be expected to be comfortable with computers nor have access to technical support
- work on diverse operating system platforms
- have a low implementation cost, since the product does not have a wide market appeal

Newbook developed a simple, effective solution, Newbook Publisher, which addresses all of these requirements.

### Solution

**Newbook Publisher** is a browser-based solution that provides end-users the ability to navigate, search and retrieve for display or print, information that is distributed as an "electronic information product". It requires no installation of software on end-user computers, so there is minimal need for product maintenance and technical support. It enables publishers of information to publish electronic information products that can be distributed on CD-ROM or on the World Wide Web.

Because it is browser-based, Newbook Publisher can be used in Windows, Macintosh, Linux or Unix environments. Being browser-based also means there are no software components to be installed locally.

Newbook Publisher was used to produce an information product with a simple, intuitive user interface that provides for searching through the silverware catalogues based on item name, (e.g. teapot), model number, year of manufacture, or full text description. Users can also "page" through the catalogues, as if they were looking through the originals.

### Benefits

Basic features of Newbook Publisher include:

- Full-text indexing of XML and HTML data sets
- Works as a standalone CD-ROM publishing solution or as a web-based solution.
- No installation of software is required, resulting in little or no maintenance and support costs
- Based on open standards and open source software

The current version focuses on providing a simple, cost-effective, easy-to-use, low-maintenance solution to distribution of information on CD-ROM or the WWW. Future enhancements to the solution will include data encryption, user management (for monitoring concurrent users of the information product) and annotation features such as highlighting and "sticky notes".

Possible applications of this solution include:

- Conference proceedings on CD-ROM and on the Web,
- Product catalogues,
- Marketing/promotional information,
- Reference volumes (yellow pages, directories)
- Traditional electronic "books" or encyclopaedias.