

Berbee Information Networks



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Information technology



Madison, Wisconsin



700 employees

“Mediasite allows us to train engineering and sales staff in a way that is scalable and impacts our bottom line.”

> Brad Parkel, Senior Web Designer/
Multimedia Designer, Berbee

Berbee® achieves rapid ROI and reaches more qualified prospects with Mediasite.

Berbee Information Networks Corporation is a proven partner for IT solutions, including network, server and storage infrastructure, application development and security. Berbee's data centers deliver hosted applications, co-location and managed services to clients nationwide. Since its inception in 1993, Berbee has grown to more than \$300 million in revenue and 700 employees.

Challenge

Brad Parkel is Berbee's Senior Web/Multimedia Designer, overseeing the company's website and multimedia production.

Three years ago, as part of a marketing initiative, Berbee interviewed a random sample of clients to determine clients' preferred methods for learning more about Berbee solutions. Prior to the interviews, Berbee relied primarily on direct sales contact, white papers and hosted events to inform clients about its services. The survey results indicated overwhelmingly that clients preferred to learn about Berbee via webinars, and the company determined that on-demand webinars also would increase their reach.

An eight month search began to select the most effective tool for this purpose. The selection team evaluated several web communication tools, compared options and conducted cost/benefit analyses.

“We looked at other collaboration and publishing solutions, but the reason we were interested in Sonic Foundry's Mediasite was because it has a video channel and could stream the audio over the Internet. The video allows executives to directly communicate with the audience. Mediasite also allows for live or on-demand viewing,” Parkel said. “I have a strong background in video production and, for me, this is like having a mobile satellite truck at your disposal to go live anywhere in the world. It's an incredible tool to achieve an easily viewable web presentation.”

Solution

Berbee purchased Mediasite in 2004. Parkel said, “It was easy to deploy without taxing our already busy internal support staff. The system was up and running in one afternoon.”

“Both the audio and the visual presentation come through the computer speakers rather than a phone bridge,” Parkel said. “The ability to package these presentations on a CD or a thumb drive allows us to do a variety of things with presentations after they have been recorded. Reuse of content allows us to maximize the moment.”

New hires, especially in the sales area, have a significant learning curve during their first six months on board. Since Berbee provides a wide array of technical services and products, it is not a simple task to learn everything in the services portfolio. The ability to view recorded content as it was originally presented provides not only a first exposure to the material, but also a refresher on-demand whenever the situation arises.



Additionally, the recorded training sessions eliminated the need for trainers to present the material each time sales staff were hired. On average, each trainer gained 40 hours of work time by not having to deliver the material live.

Lastly, Mediasite content has also been a timesaver for solution specialists who travel to client sites to consult on specific solutions. In many instances, this work can be performed just as effectively remotely with a pre-recorded Mediasite presentation and a conference call. Travel is reduced and customers always receive a consistent, high quality presentation.

Result

"Mediasite continues to be a valuable tool for us. The people who sit down and create presentations right up to the last minute can bring their laptops, plug them in and give a presentation immediately on the fly," Parkel said. "As a producer and designer, the flexibility of the tool has been great. If we're doing an event, I can set it up as if I am doing a video production. It's very portable. I can place it wherever I want in a room."

Recently, Berbee hosted a traditional in-person seminar event in its Chicago branch office on server virtualization and twenty prospective clients registered via the website to attend. With 11 Berbee offices in six states, taking this seminar on-the-road to all Berbee locations was costly, inefficient and impractical. Instead, Berbee used Mediasite to broadcast the Chicago event live to offices in Madison, Milwaukee, Grand Rapids, Cleveland and Cincinnati. Each location projected the presentation to an audience of 10 to 25 prospective clients in their conference rooms. Local Berbee representatives were on hand to answer questions and a moderator was available to submit questions to the presenter in Chicago.

By using Mediasite, Berbee reached more than 80 additional prospective clients that self-identified as "very interested" in learning more about the subject. Attendees in the remote locations all gave extremely high marks to the quality of the presentation and the experience of attending a Berbee event via Mediasite.

One of the selling points of the web seminar program was that Berbee employees could burn presentations to CD and hand them out at tradeshow. About half of the presentations Parkel records are for executives and staff who need to communicate with clients via webinars. The other half are training sessions delivered to company employees through a learning management system. With the addition of a quiz or performance-based activity, Berbee now has provided a substantial curriculum of internal courses.

"The comments I hear at presentations are that Mediasite is easy to watch," Parkel said. "Viewers do not need to download anything to see the content. They simply open up on their browser and watch it. Our company has grown phenomenally within the last two years. Mediasite allows us to train engineering and sales staff in a way that is scalable and impacts our bottom line."

Benefits

- Trainers regain time that would have been spent repeating company information to new hires
- Solution specialists save time not having to travel to every company sales event
- Executives provide company information to clients through webinars, the method most commonly requested
- Presentation flexibility is increased by the ability to make last minute content changes and simply plug in and present on the fly