



QCA: National Curriculum in Action

www.ncaction.org.uk

About our client

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is the guardian of standards in education and training. They work with others to maintain and develop the school curriculum and associated assessments, and to accredit and monitor qualifications in schools, colleges and at work.

Their work is designed to give pupils, students, trainees, parents, teachers, further and higher education tutors and employers increased confidence in the standards that underpin the curriculum and the national assessment and qualifications systems.

Business requirements

The QCA were publishing booklets, tapes and videos aimed at teachers and other education professionals detailing examples of pupil's work – but these were proving expensive and weren't always available to all who needed them.

They required a website that would provide them with a more efficient way to publish information and make new examples of pupil's work available rapidly and with ease. A major requirement was that the website had to be accessible and easy to use. Teachers need to be able to use the site for guidance and curriculum information as well as being able to print off examples of work.

QCA needed to be able to upload examples of pupil's work across all keystages and levels, and in all subjects. Users were also to be able to create their own portfolio in a single area for high quality printing and off-line review.

Due to the amount of content the site contains, a comprehensive set of search functions was required to aid teachers in finding the right information as quickly and easily as possible.

Project Type

Website
Integrated media
Databases

Keywords

CD Rom
Online identity
Accessibility
Usability
Content management
Oracle database

Keymedia solution

Keymedia assessed QCA's requirements and the nature of the website and provided them with a more efficient way to publish information.

We developed a database driven website which incorporates all of the requested functionality. Our Oracle database solution provides teachers with access to different types of media assets. Users can download not just documents but also images, audio clips and streaming video. The database also holds high quality images as well as web images, which are used in the PDFs created in the "My Portfolio" area of the site.

My Portfolio was created to provide print quality material online saving the QCA the cost of posting and producing offline print materials and also to supply the information as quickly and efficiently as possible to the end users.

We engaged in a process of usability testing with groups of teachers to ensure that we were providing them with the level of service and ease of use they need from a service such as this. The result is a clean, efficient design with a clear navigation structure which adheres to IAG and meta data standards. Ease of use is the key to this outstanding online service. The use of colour and accessible user interfaces was extended across the website to include the national curriculum colours on children's t-shirts. We also built an Advanced Search functionality which provides very specific keyword and subject searches of the huge database from which the site draws content.

We also produced a set of hybrid CD-ROMs which work in tandem with the website, giving teachers in Music, PE and English access to higher quality audio and video offline, without having to download each file.

Business benefits

The National Curriculum in Action website is the main source of National Curriculum information for teachers in the UK. It provides:

- Easy publishing of childrens work by non-technical staff using a custom-built content management system
- A unique online teaching resource which is intuitive, powerful and which adheres to usability and accessibility standards
- Cost effective publishing and distribution of up-to-date guidance materials