Rapid pace of uBid auction site finds the right image solution to quickly and efficiently meet manufacturers and viewers demands

Chicago, Illinois
www.ubid.com

Industry:
Auction Slte

Equilibrium Products:
MediaRich Server

mediarich® SERVER

1.866.378.4542
www.equilibrium.com

The Problem

uBid's website by default is complicated. As the leading retail auction house ecommerce site it manages inventory from a variety of vendors and its time to market responsiveness is heightened by the nature of its business – "an auction". With time constraints and the need to motivate repeat business from would be buyers, uBid requires the ability to not only show the product to be auctioned with complete confidence in its best view but provide alternative views (product shots) in the most detailed form possible to motivate an instant bid on an open auction.

The Challenge

With over 12,000 products for online bidding at any given time, uBid needed to revamp its workflow to sort and manage all the different image sources it received first before it could even began production for web delivery. An automated solution was imperative to meet auction deadlines.

"With over 2 million page hits on the catalog page and another 2 million on the detail item page every day, we have over 26 million image hits per day" stated Pablo Ugaz, Vice President of Technology, uBid. "Our traffic demands that the site to not only be adaptable to add new or changing items but more importantly deliver every page and image that is clicked on in the most efficient and the highest quality to get the viewers bid."

Consequently, uBid's greatest hurdle was how to handle thousands of images that require creation, editing, reformatting, and other processing to display properly on uBid.com.

Our Approach

Equilibrium worked with uBid to address the technical and workflow issues that required consideration including:

- Image identification; sorting; and management

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- Real-time creation of product images on demand

- Engaging product views and consistency across

- Ability to zoom/pan and provide visual and content detail where required

- Ability to update and add product, content, promotional copy, changes, etc. on-the fly

- Automated production workflows driven by templates

- Reduced costs and manpower tasks

- Accelerated publishing

Using Equilibrium's MediaRich Server allowed uBid to easily add a scalable solution that dynamically generates any product shot iterations in the required size & format from one original source. The solution improved their ability to publish products quickly to the site improving auction turns.

The Solution

With the power of MediaRich, uBid created a compelling automated workflow replacing a tedious inefficient system. uBid now has the ability to take any manufacturer's product shot and ingest it into an end-to-end workflow that can execute presentable images of the product that meet both the manufacturer's requirements and uBids.

With the ability to detect and sort photo sources into manageable buckets for production the Web team can than use image editing and other tools to provide innovative functionality including colorization; zoom/pan compositing, and more. This gives uBid the capability to create an unlimited number of derivative images from a single original, providing enlarged product views and engaging product presentations on the fly.

uBid's ability to use media templates provides real-time creation of product images on demand. This streamlined imaging workflow provided by MediaRich enabled the Web team to deliver reliably with turn-key results in a fast paced environment.

"We selected MediaRich to improve their content workflow, reduce their time to market and reduce production and maintenance costs. The return on investment was immediate with reduced labor costs associated with image manipulation and in the overall complexity of managing the product display. "

Pablo Ugaz,
Vice President of Technology
uBid

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The Technology

The patented MediaRich URL-based methodology, Microsoft.NET Web service and COM application programming interface (API) enable seamless and straightforward integration with application servers, asset management systems, content management and delivery networks, databases and stand-alone applications.

Image editing and other production tools provide additional value to simplify users ability to execute projects easily within one familiar system.

Equilibrium's MediaRich technology enables the on-demand zoom and pan on any original asset MediaRich can handle, including documents, images, CMYK files, video frames (SD and HD), etc. The tedious investment in pre-processing tools to create tiled or proprietary formats is eliminated. This patented single-source on demand solution delivers personalized viewing experiences. Almost every available file format is supported and with the multi-page sonic flash zoom the client-side resizable viewing capability allows smart recognition of screen size for any browser that has Flash installed. The easy to integrate server solution for in-page and multi-page pan & zoom allows any video frame on-demand from a web or other selected interface to be resized and scaled appropriately.

MediaRich's patented system for transforming and delivering media to any distribution channel on demand -- web server cache, website, wireless, IPTV, and other devices – also provides bandwidth dependant optimization further eliminating the need for other third party plug-ins along the workflow. Equilibrium's end-to-end automation system allows high quality imaging requests which can be prepared, delivered and automatically tracked so designers and architects don't have to.

Equilibrium's MediaRich's server-based software automates repetitive image production and enables multi-channel delivery of digital assets through rich-media templates. The dynamic imaging integration helps reduce the time and costs required to generate, modify and deploy digital images text graphics and branded assets.

The Results

MediaRich enables uBid to efficiently execute a massive amount of product images daily for each auction.

The number of visual assets to create, manage and store is now manageable. The MediaRich Server scalable solution turns the complication of thousands of images from a variety of sources into an efficient automated workflow. MediaRich's flexible scripting language applies business logic to uBid's product images, ensuring that not only each image conforms to the right size, but enables zooming and panning when a high quality

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image is encountered, thereby creating an engaging experience. With MediaRich, uBid was able to achieve efficiencies immediately.

Today the Web team can generate large product images with appropriate detail, messaging, promotions, associated video, etc. quickly and easily within one system to support 16 auction categories.

"We selected MediaRich to improve their content workflow, reduce their time to market and reduce production and maintenance costs. The return on investment was immediate with reduced labor costs associated with image manipulation and in the overall complexity of managing the product display. " stated Pablo Ugaz, Vice President of Technology, uBid.

About uBid.com

uBid is a leading retail auction and e-commerce marketplace that offers consumers and businesses three ways to buy and sell. The company's Internet auctions feature a rotating selection of more than 12,000 products daily in 16 different product categories, providing consumers and small to mid-sized businesses with the opportunity to purchase a wide range of brand name merchandise through live-action bidding. uBid has over 3 million registered users who look to uBid for computers, home electronics, travel and events, collectibles, and more. www.ubid.com

uBid.com is a subsidiary of publicly traded Enable Holdings, Inc. (ENAB). EnableHoldings.com.

About EQ

Founded in1989, Equilibrium is a software and hosted services company that specializes in helping enterprise clients of all sizes to manage, monetize and mobilize content, and develops and markets automated imaging technologies that save time and money in digital media production. Equilibrium solutions are used by industry leaders in multi-channel retail, manufacturing, publishing, healthcare, financial and entertainment. MediaRich powers some of the largest B2B portals, web 2.0 infrastructures and websites in the world. MediaRich customers include Cisco, Disney, E! Entertainment, Netshops, Omnicom Media Group TMV, and Sony

For more information and software trial: www.equilibrium.com or 1-866-EQUILIB.

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