

CASE STUDY

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AquaClara Inc.



Ito (left) and Furuya (right) at AquaClara Inc.

Website based on the balance between control and autonomy

Introduced product

NOREN Content Server
+ JIN

Company information

Company: AquaClara Inc.

Establishment: 1st Feb., 2005

Address: Shinagawa Tokyu
Bldg. 4F, 1-6-31, Konan, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Business area: Manufacturing
and delivery of soft drink

Company overview: The water of AquaClara is the "design water" produced by filtering the potable water that satisfies the criteria specified by the Food Sanitation Act and blending minerals with our original technology.

A Japan's leading mineral water manufacturer and delivery company AquaClara Inc. carrying on its major business with franchisees nationwide has been aiming at website operation that can retain identity of each franchisee and enhance its brand image.

The company knows well it is quite challenging to enable each franchisee that has different website operation capability and different system to publish information based on its identity and autonomy and to make them work under efficient and centralized control by HQ at the same time.

Let's find out more on how the company wanted to address challenges and how NOREN helped it.

■ Project Background

Challenges AquaClara has been facing were:

- The inconsistency on the website between identity of each franchisee and AquaClara's corporate image.
- Out-of-control website management resulting from individual webpage creation and operation by each franchisee.

Furuya: "We already pushed ahead with leveraging IT in terms of work systems within our organization. But as for websites, we gave franchisees overall control except for the guideline on CI, which led to inconsistency of our brand image and sometimes omission of important information. Further, it was a fact that both AquaClara and franchisee had to spend huge money on addressing the challenges and improving website operational efficiency. We gathered opinions from franchisees and learned that it is time to think about the overall ROI of AquaClara group."

In an effort to make franchisees operate valuable websites with AquaClara's brand consistency we decided to employ CMS.



■ Project Goals

- Centralized content management with NOREN Content Server
- Control of information deployment
- Regular website monitoring with ease
- Website with brand image consistency
- Content updates with little IT knowledge using a template-based block editor, JIN
- Roles and responsibilities for each content and task within the CMS

■ Implementation Effects

Ito: "A combination of NOREN Content Server("NOREN CS") and JIN was a breakthrough in that even people without HTML knowledge can create and update web pages as long as they have a little knowledge in MS Word and blogs. The combination gives us the balance between control and autonomy which conforms to our policy to operate websites. If every



franchisee starts website design from the scratch, each website will lack consistency of the brand image.

Earlier we surveyed franchisees regarding website operation status and we learned that many due to the IT utilization capability gap, some of them assign the person in charge of the website and some contract out to 3rd party companies. I tried to convince franchisees highlighting "If you know how to use MS Word, creating webpages would not be a problem."

We feel also grateful for the kind cooperation of iact Corporation("Iact"), an implementation partner of NOREN. Iact not only is a design-savvy but it also has outstanding system development capability. I think they have a lot of experiences implementing NOREN CS because they have been so attentive and always tried to give us advice whenever we had no idea."

■ Future Plan

Furuya: "Before NOREN CS, each franchisee had run its own website and there could be some franchisees where they didn't get ROI yet. We're not rushing into complete change for all the franchisees but we will invest time to lay groundwork for our goal of CMS utilization.

Our mid-term goal of this project is introducing NOREN CS up to 40 franchisees by 2014. As we work for it, I expect there would be more and more websites with brand consistency where then we need to focus more on SEO strategies. We hope to continue to work with Iact to address the challenge in the near future."

Ito: "Website is live, creation of it is not the end of it. It seems quite important to train NOREN users to make the best use of the system. There's a NOREN user community organized by NOREN and I hope AquaClara can organize such community on its own. In addition, for the smartphone users, accounting for nearly half of the entire users, we also have a mobile dedicated website in mind in the future."

