KENSINGTON MORTGAGES CHOOSES PROGRESS AS IT PLOTS FUTURE GROWTH

Client

Kensington
Simply Specialist

Challenge

Recently sold by its parent company, Kensington Mortgages, one of the UK's leading specialist lenders—providing mortgages for the self-employed, contract workers and others who may not meet conventional underwriting requirements—was under a strict time constraint to build and implement an entirely new website. It had just two months from the point of selecting Sitefinity to complete the project, and time was not going to get in the way of functionality and usability.

"A condition of the purchase was to break away from our previous parent company's infrastructure to an entirely new web site, and that would require a new hosting platform," explained Alex Hammond, Head of Marketing and Communications at Kensington Mortgages. "It was a business imperative, but we were determined not to compromise on the site's quality in order to meet a deadline."

The previous site was built on the Adobe CQ5 platform. It would have been a seamless transition to stay with Adobe CQ5, but Hammond and his team found the platform lacked flexibility and the licensing structure put too many restrictions on the number of developers who could access the system.

"We wanted to maintain and improve upon existing functionality while finding a platform more suitable to our business requirements," Hammond said. "That meant a content management system that was flexible, intuitive and easy to use, and robust enough to meet our business needs today as well as accommodating mobility, personalization and other enhancements we'll be looking to implement in the near future."

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>
> **Alex Hammond, Head of Marketing and Communications, Kensington Mortgages**

Solution

The sale of Kensington was completed in January 2015. The new site had to launch by the end of July. Time was tight and Hammond and his team dived into due diligence, examining WordPress and other .NET platforms. The team soon found Progress® Sitefinity™ CMS and Sitefinity partner Dock9, a leading UK digital marketing agency known for tackling complex challenges and building beautiful, responsive websites.

"From the perspective of giving us the flexibility and functionality we were looking for, we quickly gained confidence that Sitefinity was a great fit for us," Hammond said. "But we were also buying into people and a team that we would be working with over the long term—and the Dock9 team impressed us as partners we wanted to associate with."

With the decision made, Dock9 sprang into action to meet the launch deadline.

"We leveraged our deep knowledge of the Sitefinity platform and the financial services sector to deliver the project in a compact timescale," said Mark Lusted, Managing Director, Dock9. "Not only did we easily meet the deadline, but we enhanced functionality, including seamlessly integrating a third-party lending calculation tool."

Results

In addition to building and launching in record time, about six weeks, Kensington created a more usable site that is garnering positive reviews, and features and functionality not previously available with its Adobe CQ5 platform, including the lending calculator.

"Our task is to make important information readily accessible to mortgage advisors to make their jobs easier," Hammond said. "The lending calculator, for example, makes our lending criteria more accessible to brokers than ever before. This is a capability we couldn't have easily provided under the previous platform."

With limited internal resources, Kensington relied on external help to implement changes to the site. "The process of making changes represents a direct cost to us. The time to implement changes with Sitefinity is drastically reduced, therefore saving us a significant amount of money," Hammond said.

The ability to easily update content and deliver a clean and uncluttered experience for customers is already proving its value as shown in a recent survey of mortgage brokers, who have a number of options when they select lending institutions for their clients and whose brand loyalty only stretches to lenders that make their lives easier.

"The survey showed that against our two major competitors with all other things being the same, 44% preferred us to 36% to our nearest competitor and 22% for the third. That proves we are doing our job in providing brokers a positive experience," Hammond said.

Hammond notes three significant benefits Kensington has realized to date:

- Reduced time to make simple content changes
- Greater flexibility to make development changes
- The ability to be creative and implement features like the lending calculator that dramatically improves the user experience

Looking ahead, Kensington is anxious to launch its optimized mobile site and create a more personalized experience for its users.

"We are looking to triple our business in the next 12 to 18 months," Hammond said. "With Sitefinity giving us the ability to create an optimized mobile site and the opportunity to personalize the user experience, we are confident we've found the platform to bring our business to the next level."

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Implementing Partner

Dock9 is a London-based digital agency that exists to help financial services companies achieve their ambitions online. They unlock opportunities through digital innovation, delivering impressive business results for their clients and a great experience for their customers. This is achieved through user centric design, solid business analysis, creative thinking and first-class technical delivery. They also optimize, market, support and report on their projects after launch to ensure they are always delivering significant business results.

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