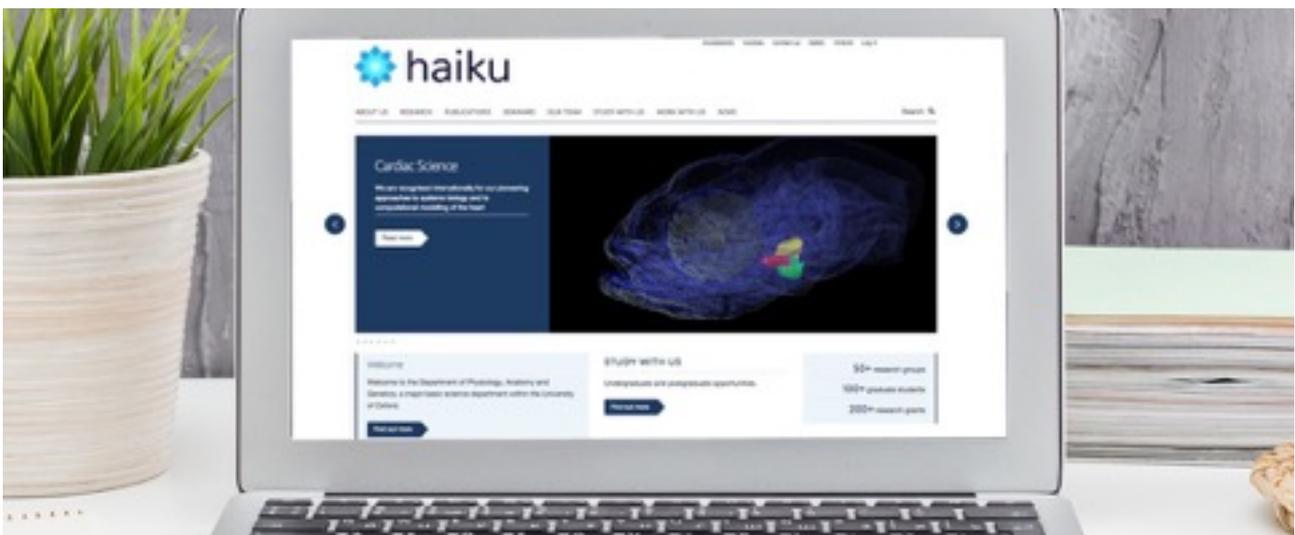

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD AND FRY JOIN FORCES

World class university Oxford, chooses Fry to help create a world-class website Content Management System

The oldest university in the English-speaking world, Oxford is among the world's "six super brands" according to the Times World Reputation Rankings. In this case study, you'll read about work that started in Oxford's Medical Sciences Division (MSD) but thanks to its



success is now spreading to other Divisions within the University and hopefully beyond. The Medical Sciences Division is the largest Division within Oxford and has consistently ranked highest in the UK for teaching and research, so at Fry we consider ourselves privileged to work with such a prestigious group of people.



The Client Problem

The federated and democratic nature of Oxford is one of the key factors that differentiates it and has enabled it to produce 27 Nobel laureates and 26 British Prime Ministers. For the web team at MSD, however, this strength created a weakness because it made it difficult to serve the varied requirements of the large number of departments that make up the Division.

When it came to punching above their weight on the web, the team simply didn't have the resources or an appropriate method of prioritising requests that were coming to them. They were faced with a disparate range of solutions, with some departments using the Content Management System that was provided, while others had chosen to procure a range of bespoke systems from third parties or develop a solution with internal technical staff.

This variety of different approaches made it difficult, time consuming and costly to manage the internal system and administer upgrades and requests. The bottom line was that this world-class university was being let down by its not so world-class web presence. It became clear to the web team that they couldn't continue as they were; they either needed a significant increase in head-count or the help of an external agency.



The Options

The options open to the web team were:

To struggle on with an increasingly disgruntled group of departments.

To demand very significant extra resources.

To find a ready-made, off-the-shelf solution.

Or to source a third-party to create a bespoke solution.

The Fry Solution

Oxford investigated a total of 4 solutions and fortunately for Fry, it was to us that Oxford looked for their solution because the others didn't fulfil their needs in the same way. Fry has worked with several universities (including Oxford) to support and improve their website CMS systems. We have expertise and first-hand knowledge of the problems and pitfalls in servicing Oxford users. From the beginning Fry was committed to developing a world-class product for creating, running and managing cloud-based turnkey websites for Higher Education and for Oxford in particular.

Fry agreed to dedicate a team of designers, project managers and developers to the development of the perfect system for Oxford University first, with a view to potentially rolling that solution out to the rest of the Higher Education sector later. In working with Oxford it was clear to Fry that there was no guarantee that any department, other than the initial three pilot departments would take the new product. Oxford's organisational structure meant that the other departments would have to be persuaded and they were free to make a choice. Needless to say, this helped keep us on our toes, focussed and transparent.



Fry worked with the Division, the pilot departments and other interested departments for over two years to create the perfect system. Since going live the Fry team continues to work consistently to improve the product and add new features based on close feedback from users. All sites are updated every week without any downtime or hitches.

The results speak for themselves: of the four Divisions within Oxford three have chosen the system and over 35 departments now use the system; over 3000 academics are on the system and regularly update their profiles. The websites now look world-class and the heads of departments, administrators, staff and students are delighted. There is now a consistent look and feel across their online presence but each department has huge amount of control over their site. The sites are responsive and look great on mobiles and pads; they integrate into many systems automatically saving a huge amount of work and duplication (academic publication systems, jobs feeds, talks and events, authentication systems etc) and everyone is happy.

This job wasn't just about technology and design however. Fry runs bespoke training for administrators, editors and users. Fry also arranges workshops on how to write for the web as well as arranging

photography of staff and buildings and offering help-desk support. In addition to this, Fry has developed a user portal where users can find all the latest information, documents and training materials. Fry also provides helpdesk support, weekly open day surgeries in Oxford and regular user meetings to decide on





upcoming functionality and road-mapping requirements.

Not surprisingly, other departments have taken a keen interest in this solution. Other Universities are also expressing an interest in this new product.

What the client has to say

"We were interviewing a candidate to come and work for us last week and they spontaneously commented on how good our site is and how easy it is to navigate".

"I love the fact that I can just edit the site myself incredibly easily."

"The Fry team give us a weekly catch-up call every Friday morning – just to check the site is running smoothly and ask whether we have any issues."

"The new site updates all of the new publications and research automatically so I have so much more time to develop other content for the department."

"It is without a doubt that the Fry system will serve the Division well in its strategic communications goals, and I look forward to developing the content more over the next few months; it will be a piece of cake with such a super system and excellent support team!"

Find out more

If you think that your institution might benefit from the Fry touch, why not contact us to find out more? Contact info@fry-it.com