Creating the New Horizon Discovery: Merging the best of Horizon and Dharmacon with Sitecore

Horizon Discovery drives the application of gene editing and gene modulation within the global life science market – supporting scientists on the path from research to therapy. Horizon has an international customer base of over 1,400 unique organizations across more than 50 countries, including major pharmaceutical, biotechnology and diagnostic companies, as well as leading academic research centers.

In 2017, Horizon acquired Dharmacon Inc. As leaders in custom RNA synthesis, Dharmacon, Inc. had been an early participant in the field of RNA interference (RNAi) having contributed several key scientific findings and some of the first commercially available reagents. This acquisition added significantly to the Horizon portfolio enabling the company to alter almost any gene or modulate its function. Using the most appropriate solution (CRISPR-Cas9, ZFN or rAAV) in human and other mammalian cell lines has enabled Horizon to build up an extensive offering for the life science market.

Custom faceted search ensures customers can easily navigate Horizon's 160 million SKU's

Because search acts as the initial step in Horizon's primary business flow, a key project priority was on delivering pertinent results to the user. Working closely with Horizon, XCentium created a custom Solr faceted search solution, going through many iterations to ensure that search was accurate and fast. Some of the search outcomes include:
- Marketers can display a featured search result item
- Mass import of content tags for use in filtering
- Resources, Genes, and a Product library comprised of over 160 million SKUs were indexed for search
- Dynamic search filters

Creating an exceptional customer experience for Horizon

Following Horizon's acquisition of Dharmacon, XCentium was engaged to consolidate the Horizon and Dharmacon websites, bringing together the functionality, content, and updating the styles into a single Sitecore solution. In collaboration with Horizon marketing, XCentium led a full site redesign focusing on creating a best in class global user experience, along with a full Sitecore implementation.

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Horizon

WEBSITE

www.horizondiscovery.com

INDUSTRY

Life Sciences

SOLUTIONS

Sitecore Digital Experience Platform
Horizon's homegrown API
Active Directory
Eloqua
Geo IP
Live Chat

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XCentium's UI/UX Design team created Axure wireframes, which were used for site content definition and used as the basis of the site designs. XCentium created and implemented a responsive design with mobile in mind. All designs were used to test customer flows with external industry customers.

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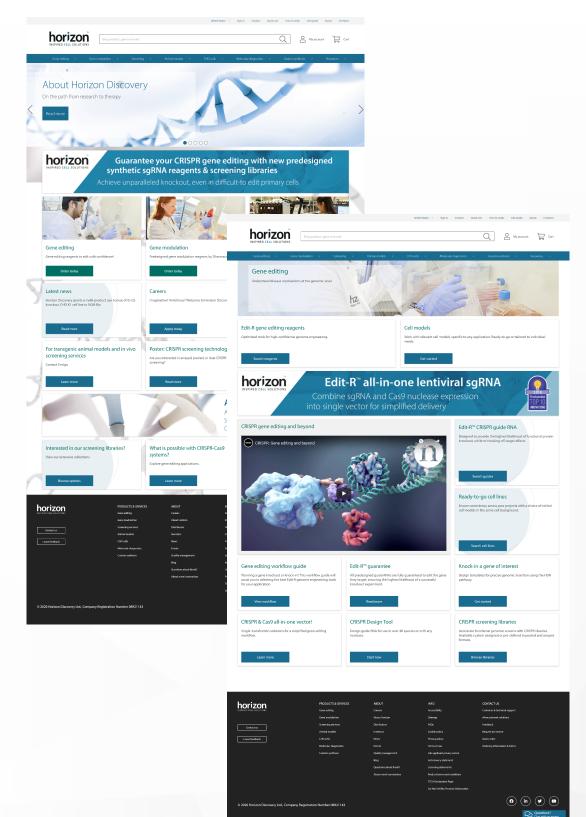Horizon's homegrown API
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Implementing a full ecommerce experience

With 160 million product SKUs, ensuring a sleek and efficient ecommerce experience was a key hallmark for Horizon. Custom checkout flows were created to ensure customers can accurately search and locate products, request a quote, add it to their cart and checkout. This checkout flow was specifically designed to ensure the end user is able efficiently secure their purchase, leading to customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Delivering gene editing and gene modulation products worldwide

Customers from all over the world can order products from Horizon, which derives significant complexities including delivering content in multiple languages, ascertaining customers correct information and complying with geographical regulations and nuances. Because of this, there are many ways a user's location is derived:

- Geo-IP set upon site visit
- User's country set by profile address information
- Manual country dropdown in Global Header

Additionally, Horizon's contact information varies depending on which country's information the user is inquiring about. This enables Horizon to ensure that all geographical complexities are adequately addressed.

Sitecore's API facilitates multiple integrations to build a custom

As with most enterprise clients, Horizon required custom integrations with the Sitecore Digital Experience Platform to facilitate running their business online. Prior to the Dharmacon acquisition, Horizon had built their own homegrown API that needed to be integrated with this project. This API fed product pricing, product data, and search information. Additional integrations include:

- Active Directory – Seamless login into Sitecore utilizing Horizon's AD groups
- Eloqua – Embedded form data capture
- Live Chat – Customers can interact with Horizon support through embedded live chat functionality

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> "We started our ecommerce replatforming effort 3 years ago, with our main goal to enhance customer experience. With that focus, we ensured we were getting accurate data by implementing a PIM before working with XCentium to help us replatform with Insite Commerce. We then spent 6 months testing the product with customers to ensure satisfaction. Even though we just launched, we have already seen a dramatic uptick in online customer engagement. We are incredibly excited for the future and how our ecommerce solution will help us serve our customers."
>
> **- Eugene Kim,** Senior Project Manager, XCentium

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Effortlessly migrating large quantities of content, products and data

One of the most daunting things about replatforming a website solution is moving over content and data. The mere thought of this can keep stakeholders awake at night. Due to the enormous amount of products and product data that needed to be transferred from the Horizon and Dharmacon websites, the XCentium team created scripts to automate the import of this information into Sitecore. Salesforce FAQ items were also imported via a custom script. The team created several tools for Horizon to streamline the mass content migration into Sitecore.

Ensuring Horizon's site complied with regulations worldwide

With the ever increasing regulatory landscape, special attention was given to ensure ongoing compliance with current and upcoming regulations including WCAG, GDPR and CCPa, among others. First, Horizon's Sitecore solution was built on Helix principles with multisite setup with serialization. New user signup, login, and user cookie implementation ensures customers are able to choose how their personal information is used and stored. Sitecore Content Author workflow creation also helps to ensure oversight and compliance. Additional Sitecore Content Author and Developer training helped train the Horizon team on how the site needs to comply with regulations going forward. XCentium setup Azure infrastructure continues support customers globally. Meanwhile, CI/CD pipeline creation enables automated code deployments for the Horizon team.

Bringing products to market quickly with exceptional customer experience

Combining two sites into one with massive data, products and content is a considerable undertaking. The combined XCentium and Horizon team was born of true collaboration and delivered remarkable results including:

- Horizon is now able to quickly bring their expanded product offerings to market
- Ease of creation from marketing inception to site delivery
- Customers can easily find desired products on the new Horizon website
- Updated user experience and Help features have helped reduce traffic to Horizon's internal help center team