



## Case Study: City of Kirkland

# City of Kirkland Empowers Users and Improves Website Efficiencies and Information Architecture with Active Content Management Solution

## Background

Located on the east shore of Lake Washington, just 10 miles east of downtown Seattle, lies the City of Kirkland, a home to more than 46,000 residents. The city is dedicated to providing quality services to its neighborhoods and residents via its comprehensive, easy-to-navigate website.

## Challenge

Before Active Network, Government's content management system, the City of Kirkland managed its entire website in a software program that required pages to be updated using HTML code. Although the software enabled Rob Mullin, Webmaster for the City of Kirkland, to design and deploy sites quickly and easily, it created challenges for non-technical personnel to edit content when needed.

"Our goal in deploying a new content management solution was to empower subject matter experts with the appropriate rights to create content they know most about," explains Mullin. "For example, when a project analyst wanted to post a status update about a recent city project on the website, we experienced bottlenecks, as we had to rely on our departmental website representatives to make content edits for this request, among many others."

"The time had come to take our city's website to the next level. We identified the need for a more dynamic, robust back-end management system that would improve efficiencies and enable non-technical staff members to make content updates as needed, without concern for breaking HTML code."

## Solution

The City of Kirkland sent out an RFP to solicit information from web content management solution providers. After months of research, Mullin and a team of city representatives, including the city's Chief Information Officer, an applications analyst, an administrative assistant, a city planner and so on, were able to narrow down the selection to four vendors.

After viewing demonstrations and speaking with each of the finalists, the City of Kirkland chose Active Network for its Active Content Manager solution. "In addition to allowing appropriate controls and editing rights, Active's solution offered far more out-of-the-box features, including surveys, e-mailable forms and automated

## Customer at a Glance

**Customer:** City of Kirkland, WA

**Solution:** Web Content Management

**URL:** [www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)

## Why the City of Kirkland Selected Active Content Manager:

- ▶ **A wide array of page types and out-of-the-box features**
- ▶ **In-house server management**
- ▶ **Unique and easy-to-create page templates**
- ▶ **Multiple ways to access information**
- ▶ **Use and reuse of content throughout the site**
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### Kirkland's Advice to Successfully Deploy a Content Management System:

1. Do your homework and look at what's available
2. Try to get as many features as you need out-of-the-box
3. Make sure the system is flexible to ensure functionality now and in the future
4. Ensure you have access to unlimited editors so you're not tied into buying more licenses as your organization grows
5. When first licensing the software, buy as much as you can at the time of purchase
6. Take advantage of a Business Process Review in order to evaluate how you're doing things and how those processes can be better streamlined
7. Communicate with city officials, staff members and citizens every step of the way
8. Really examine what your citizens want and need and concentrate on functionality and access to information and data

archiving for calendars, and it leveraged syndicated content to pull information from a single source into different areas through the site. None of this would have been possible in our old static site."

In addition to its feature-rich solution, Mullin notes that the city was also drawn to the affordability, security and scalability of Active's solution.

### Implementation

After selecting a new content management solution, the City of Kirkland went through an introductory review with Active Network to identify existing business processes before proceeding with training.

"I took the responsibility of moving over the content to Active's content management solution," notes Mullin. "However, I would advise other cities looking to transfer content to take advantage of Active's capabilities of moving the content over to avoid a very long and involved process."

With training completed, the City of Kirkland's website was "off to the races," as Mullin states. Nine city departments were now linked on a single platform and each department had a dedicated website representative to manage its pages and approve content updates as needed. Using Active Content Manager, non-technical staff members could easily make content changes and submit them for approval from their department's web representative.

### Results

Today, Mullin is pleased with the consistently positive feedback from citizens. "We frequently hear that our website offers a lot of quality information and it's easy to navigate and search. Even other jurisdictions will contact us to say they like what we've done and want to know how we did it. That's a great compliment to us."

### Future

In maintaining a progressive system, Mullin notes that the city tends to do a redesign about every three years and will explore integrating a document management process into Active Content Manager in the future.

"Active Content Manager has absolutely been the right system for our city. Everyone is happy, uptime has been great and we have experienced nothing but success. Active's system has empowered our subject matter experts to make necessary content updates and consequently has allowed our web representatives to reallocate their time to accomplish other important departmental projects. As a lean IT department, we're working strategically and efficiently. Our team invested in a long and diligent process to ensure we chose the right content management solution. We were very confident in Active Network and they delivered what they promised. We're extremely pleased."