Wave2 Provides Self-Service-Plus for Trader

Wave2 Media Solutions, the UK-based publishing software specialist, has announced that it has provided Trader Media Ltd with a fully integrated "self-service" ad solution that goes further than any previous such software produced by the Whitchurch, Aylesbury business. The products currently supported by the Wave2 solution include Auto Trader and Truck Trader.

Wave2's AdPortal automated software package provides the publisher with an enhanced solution for its motor dealers to create their own advertisements with the absolute minimum of human intervention, with the software helping to define the ad content before it creates the ad layout.

Chris Hodges, Managing Director of Wave2, takes up the story: "The issue for Trader Media was that motor dealers are used to a very personal level of service from the publisher, where a sales person would help to compile a new advert for the customer for every edition of the publication. Ad content is also likely to change up to the very last minute, with new cars or trucks coming into stock all the time. Our software needed to mimic this high level of customer service, whilst reducing the costs of creating an ad."

The final software solution, which Chris Hodges believes is at the vanguard of advertisement automation, takes a feed of vehicle details from the dealer, as these are updated during the course of the week for online advertising, and through an enhanced set of pre-agreed ad building rules, the Wave2 Publishing Platform (W2PP) decides which vehicles are most suited to be included in the advert.

The Wave2 Publishing Platform (W2PP) is the "engine" that sits beneath the Wave2 software product. It is a powerful tool that requires minimal skills to consistently produce professional, high quality communications. By providing the W2PP with a set of styles and design rules it can quickly and automatically construct a complete advert, image or document.

"The software that we have installed at Trader Media integrates with the central stock database, which houses the details of vehicles supplied by the dealer for online promotion. We extract the details of each vehicle, along with an image if available. Our software then sorts the basic vehicle descriptions via a number of elements that it expects to find. These might include, for example, the make of vehicle, the model, the age, or the price. Depending on the individual motor dealer's preferences, the advert can be created by managing a combination of these variables and ordering the cars in question," explains Chris Hodges. "This might mean that the priority vehicles for a BMW specialist are BMW's, which will rank above any other makes. Order might then be determined by the price of the car, with higher priced vehicles in his stock taking priority to appear in the ad. The highest value BMW manufactured within the last three years could even be highlighted as the star product of the week – the Wave2 software will add the relevant typographic detail to this particular part of the advert to make this product stand out from the rest of the vehicles."

Once the ad has been created by the Wave2 system an e-mail is automatically sent to the motor dealer providing him with the option to make manual changes to the advert if required. If the deadline passes with no changes from the dealer then the advert is deemed acceptable. For the publisher, this process saves considerable production time, as well as time spent chasing the dealer for final approval.

The system was initially trialled on the flagship Auto Trader publication, and Wave2 has now also moved on to Truck Trader. Further products from Trader Media's suite of publications are likely to follow.

Commenting on the intricacies of the Wave2 software that has been created for Trader Media, Chris Hodges said: "This is the most sophisticated system that we have developed to date. Our software was initially developed to manage the variables involved in layout, including, of course, the actual content of the ad as defined by the user. In the Trader system our rules structure is actually helping to determine what the content is before we fit that content into the predefined advertisement space."

The next task for Wave2 is to find further markets where this software approach can provide the same time and cost saving benefits. "Having worked hard to create this solution for Trader Media Ltd our attention is already turning to other markets where such a level of automation can provide similar benefits to a publisher. Property ads are one obvious example of a composite advert, but any style of ad that contains a lot of smaller items within it would be a realistic target."

About Wave2

Wave2 Media Solutions was formed in early 2004 specifically to develop a range of solutions for the automated generation of documents. With an impressive installed base around the world, Wave2's mission is to provide tools that will enable publishers and content providers to both save costs and to generate new revenue. Wave2's product range includes solutions for Self Service Advertising, Production Automation, Sales Visuals Creation, Automatic Page Assembly and Personalised Publishing.

About Auto Trader

AutoTrader.co.uk is the UK's number 1 motoring website, with over 10.3 million monthly unique users, who carry out over 106 million searches on new and used vehicles*. The brand is building a competitive position across all effective channels including online, mobile and magazine. (*Source: Auto Trader Audit, January 2009)

Visit the new website at www.autotrader.co.uk

AutoTrader.co.uk is owned by Trader Media Group, one of Europe's largest specialist multi-media groups and provider of market leading websites and their associated magazines, including Top Marques, Bike Trader, Truck & Plant Trader, Ad Trader, Motorhome and Caravan Trader, Farmers Trader – all with the largest reach in their sectors, through web visitors and magazine readership.