

The new look of the AmCham

The American Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia is all about connecting people, providing information, and promoting advocacy. None of this would be possible without top class communication channels, one of which has recently been completely rethought and renewed – the AmCham Slovakia website.

The previous website had been online since January 2007. A lot has happened in the world of technology in the past few years, pushing the possibilities and requirements of the modern web further and enabling users to find and post information online with less effort than ever. Meeting and contacting others through the Internet has become a part of everyday life. AmCham Slovakia, as an affiliate of the US Chamber of Commerce, is continually enhancing its communication in order to provide its members with the most current information in the most modern form.

2011 has been a year of changes in many countries and businesses. For AmCham Slovakia, it marks the launch of a completely remade website. Two member companies joined forces to complete this unique project. Lightning Beetle, in cooperation with the AmCham staff, has put together an 80-paged project specification for future web service and Comsultia brought the whole project to life using their top-level open source Cyclone3 framework.

Lighting Beetle conducted a series of focus groups aimed at identifying user needs for the new website. The 12 sessions they underwent with all the major target groups enabled them to prepare a website that fits its visitors, both in content and layout. As a result, the new website is tailor-made for its users.

The layout of the new website has been tested in a usability lab on real users. This study showed that participants were able to navigate faster and locate the information they were looking for more accurately.

So what's the new website like and what does it offer to AmCham members?

First of all, membership in AmCham is all about contacts. Annual and special events are only some of the opportunities offered by AmCham that enable members to get to know each other and boost their businesses in pleasant venues. In addition to Thanksgiving, Independence

Day and other 'imported' festive days, AmCham hosts business breakfasts and cocktails, seminars and conferences. However, it is also a charity driving organization and the information on these different events is fully available online with the possibility to import it onto a computer or smartphone calendar with a single click.

To RSVP for an event, all members need to do now is to log into the AmCham website and sign up for the specific event. It's as simple as that. With one click, the user's name is added to the list of attendees, so it is easy to see who will be attending a particular event. After the event, members can also discuss it online, view photos in the gallery, or download documents and lectures related to the event.

Another advantage of the new website is that every member has its company and employee information aggregated on its member profile page, so members can get to know one another. This information can be viewed in the Members section and can be filtered by type of membership, industry, or just searched generally. Every member has a short description, global contact information and a list of selected employees. In addition, a contact card for any company or registered employee can be easily downloaded. Company information can be easily edited through the online profile – the AmCham

staff will be informed about the changes and will then approve them upon their review. If a new employee is hired, he or she can be easily added to the profile, or can even fill in the user registration form himself. Based on their e-mail address, they can be automatically added to your company and your profile administrator will be informed about it.

The company administrator now has more rights and possibilities to move around the page. Apart from editing the company profile and information, he is also able to add a Member to Member Discounts. The list of member-related offers is also available in the online Members section. In addition to member offers, members can also add their own events to the AmCham calendar, post company news, business offers and suggest new policy initiatives for AmCham committees, working groups and task forces.

Policy and advocacy is an important part of the American Chamber of Commerce in Slovakia, making the business and legislative environments better and more convenient for both Slovak companies and foreign investors. All updates and documents resulting from the joint effort of these member groups are available online for logged in AmCham members, helping them to drive their businesses forward.

The policy and advocacy output documents are not the only AmCham materials viewable online. In the Publications section, a whole archive of the "Connection" magazine is available. You can read the newest articles or browse the history to view older information.



website: www.amcham.sk



It is also possible to download Annual Reports or order annuals or special brochures, such as the Directory of Members or Slovakia in Figures. Everything is now online, just a few clicks away.

Doing business in any country requires detailed knowledge of its legislation and investment opportunities. This is where AmCham comes in as a helping hand. With the Business section, members can access up-to-date information. Contacts, resources, country profiles, online business offers are all available and are backed up by AmCham staff helping members to start or improve their existing business.

Another change is that members can use the News section to let

other members know about their successes and improvements. This can now be done easily online through the press release form. After review by the AmCham staff, the news will be published along with the company logo in the member news. Apart from the chamber and member news, you can also list through economy and business news imported from AmCham information portal partners.

The Contact section contains all the contact information members need, including AmCham offices in the Slovak Republic as well as other AmChams worldwide, Slovak government institutions, and specific AmCham staff in Slovakia. The staff link connects

directly into the section with all of the information on AmCham and its employees. Members can also access the organization's statutes, mission and services information here, along with the members of the AmCham Board of Directors, which coordinates the whole effort.

There's also a whole section dedicated solely to non-members who want to know more about becoming a member. They can find out which membership is the best for them and apply for a membership. And of course, this is all possible online.

And just as icing on the cake - a few interesting facts about the new website. To make a cake like this, you would need almost

3,000 files and 2,500 articles, mix in 7,000 images and sprinkle with approximately 500 events. And of course, you would need a 3.5 gigabyte bowl to hold everything inside. Or more. Because this is just a start and there's so much more that can be done to enhance your online AmCham experience...



*Michal Blažej
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Get your website
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