

Case Study: ResourceSpace + OXFAM



Background

The fight against inequality, poverty and injustice requires a global effort, and Oxfam is at the forefront of that battle.

The organisation works with thousands of partner organisations, allies and communities in 85 countries, with local affiliates coordinated by an international secretariat responsible for providing cohesion to the communications and multimedia content that are essential to Oxfam's operations and that help to leverage support, encourage donations and push the organisation's programmes forward.

“We need to show how what we do is having an impact”

When Wouter Fransen was hired as Content Manager at the start of 2017, working alongside Content Librarian Matías Téllez, both Wouter and Matias were tasked with coordinating content operations, liaising and networking with different affiliates and content teams, and creating global content guidelines to align standards of how content is produced across the whole organisation.



“The job of our multimedia content is to demonstrate visually what global issues require people’s attention and the urgency of those issues—we need to show how what we do is having an impact,” explains Wouter.

“The role of our communications is to amplify our work, as well as the voices of the people working on the ground, and we were generating lots of photos and films that told those stories.

“Unfortunately, with content being stored and shared across a myriad of different platforms and file-sharing solutions, we weren’t using these assets as effectively as possible.”

“ResourceSpace offers a great balance of usability and configurability.”

Wouter was given the responsibility of implementing a global DAM for Oxfam, and to ensure they found the vendor best suited to their needs, the organisation entered into an extensive tender process.

This process lasted 3-4 years, and included a failed implementation with a competing vendor.

“The original DAM we’d chosen to work with, couldn’t fulfil all of our requirements out of the box, but the vendor had committed to developing their solution in order to meet our needs,” recalls Wouter.

“However, at a certain point during the implementation after we’d signed the contract, we noticed they’d shifted from these promises to saying certain things couldn’t be done or, if they could, that they’d cost extra.

“It was very frustrating.”

As a result, Oxfam aborted the implementation, returned to the tender process and considered other vendors. Despite having no previous experience of the DAM market, Wouter learned a lot during this time, particularly noting what he perceived to be an imbalance between price and granularity.

“You’ve got the ‘Rolls Royce’ vendors that offer huge amounts of granularity when it comes to permissions, metadata and functionality,” says Wouter.

“But these are super expensive, and often require extensive capacity and knowledge to leverage the technical abilities. Also, most organisations don’t need that level of granularity.

“At the other end of the market there are out-of-the-box platforms that have good usability, but offer no granularity of customisation—they just have off-the-shelf functionality and that’s it.

“None of them worked well for us, but ResourceSpace offers a great balance between usability, configurability and price.”





“Granularity is where Montala has delivered an A-star level of service.”

The nature of the work Oxfam performs means the organisation’s digital content is more editorial, with metadata that includes lots of sensitive personal information. To deal with these risks Oxfam’s DAM needed quite a bit of configuration, and the combination of this sensitive content and how Oxfam operates as an organisation required a lot of granularity.

“This is where Montala has delivered an A-star service,” explains Wouter.

Permission settings were crucial to Oxfam, and Wouter worked closely with Montala to ensure this incredibly important challenge was effectively handled.

“Much of the content we produce includes sensitive personal data. The people we interview or photograph, may well face the risk of prosecution or retribution once their story becomes public, so they might want their identities concealed. This means we need to store their real name, pseudonym, contact information and proof of consent.

“While comms teams would see only the pseudonym on the DAM, local DAM managers would need to be able to verify the real name and consent information. Contact information would be restricted even further. In addition to that, the commissioning affiliate would need to have broader access to the story than users from other affiliates, including editing permissions.

“These different levels of permissions depending on user role and Oxfam affiliate meant it was quite complicated to configure, but Montala supported us throughout until we arrived at a configuration that worked for us.”

“No cap on support hours? Are you serious?”

Wouter says that one of the best things about working with ResourceSpace is the quality of the customer service and support Oxfam has received.

“During the tender process we were initially looking for the right product, but we soon realised we were also looking for the right vendor,” says Wouter.

“After our bad experience with the first vendor, the second time around I was insisting on putting in place an SLA for a certain number of support hours per week or per month. It was then that James Rein [Montala’s Chief Customer Officer] said there’d be no cap on support hours.

“I was like, ‘Okay... are you serious?!’

“I’m very happy to say that two years later this has been lived up to. Whenever we require support, Montala has been there. We’ve never felt that we were placed in a queue or had to wait a long time for help, and they’ve been very quick to come back to us to solve issues.”

Wouter has also valued the strategic, consultative approach Montala’s customer success team takes.

“If we ask for support with a specific change they do more than help us implement it—they proactively work with us to ensure the change is going to meet our requirements and think about challenges with us to achieve the best results.”

Thanks to our work with Oxfam International, as well as many other [internationally recognised charity organisations](#) including WWF, British Red Cross and Unicef, ResourceSpace has developed a reputation as one of the leading Digital Asset Management platforms for the charity and non-profit sector.



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