

# VTB Group: Unified Platform to Boost Web Traffic

Bitrix Site Manager / Bitrix Intranet Portal Case Studies 2010

[VTB Group](#) is one of the leading financial institutions in Eastern Europe. VTB offers a wide range of financial services that are delivered by its 40,000+ staff around the globe. Headquartered in Russia, VTB Financial Group has major subsidiaries in Germany, France, Austria, Switzerland, and Cyprus, as well as a large number of significant subsidiaries and representative offices in other countries.



## Project Goals

Because of the size of the Group's footprint, both geographically and across various business sectors, VTB constantly searches for new ways to standardize its business approach and spread its corporate values throughout the whole of its structure. Equipped with the latest information technologies, the organization strives to build a single, centrally-managed knowledge base with activity patterns and templates that unify the existing business processes, accelerate growth, optimize expenses and improve strategic business decisions.

In 2007, VTB Group gained momentum with the world's largest public offering that year, raising approximately US\$ 8 billion in aggregate funds. The company expanded its business into adjacent markets including leasing, factoring, insurance, and asset and pension management. This scaling up required the company to enact enterprise-wide adoption of corporate standards and values to secure sustainable operations and to introduce a ubiquitous group image by means of a unified online appearance.

Achieving this ambitious goal was not an easy task, taking into account that each of the twenty business branches was using home-brew standards for building websites, delivering corporate identity and communicating corporate messages. With over 2 million unique visitors per month and high requirements for business continuity and data availability, the transition of the group's online assets to a new technological platform was expected to be a painful process.

There were two general sources of legacy websites inside the VTB Group. First, some websites were created using a content management system that had been developed in-house by the VTB IT-staff. Other websites were created locally by either IT department specialists of the VTB branches or outsourced from various web design agencies. The content management system developed in-house served adequately up to a point, but once the VTB Group started growing fast, and the number of its websites started increasing year after year, the Group was forced to move to a more professional content management system.

Another difficulty was that the VTB Group employees could not make changes to all websites simultaneously and in a timely manner. There was always a delay in content renewal, especially when changes were planned for all branches and websites of the VTB Group. It was impossible to achieve synchronization for both the informational and graphical representation.

The VTB Group used its own standards for representing information on all information resources it has at its disposal: color scheme and graphical elements guidelines, layout recommendations, etc. Other legacy websites were using different content management systems and were maintained and updated by different web agencies or by the VTB

Group branches themselves. Naturally, there were a lot of discrepancies despite the fact that the web agencies and the VTB branch web specialists were using the same brandbook and operating policies worked out by VTB headquarters. This had a significant negative impact on website traffic and the company's image. Thus, the goals set out were:

- Unified visual representation and website design styles;
- Immediate content revision on all websites managed by a single CMS;
- Cost cuts and general improvements of content management;
- Consolidate knowledge base available to the company's employees;
- Internal workflow improvement using standardized actions and business processes;
- Improved customer feedback using analysis of web form submissions;
- Professional website traffic monitoring and analytics;
- Higher level of data security.

## The Solution

VTB performed meticulous due diligence to select the solution that met its strict requirements. A variety of products were evaluated for their functionality with VTB's existing IT infrastructure and applications. As a result, the tender was won by [Articul Media](#), a [Bitrix Gold Certified Partner](#), which proved to have the necessary knowledge and expertise to complete the project and offered Bitrix Site Manager as a technological foundation.



[Bitrix Site Manager: Premium Edition](#) was used as the content management system for all VTB Group online projects. The Premium Edition was stress tested under high loads to ensure smooth performance even when traffic is peaking. Various parameters like database connectivity, user interface, and more were tested and validated for high-traffic and downloads. Moreover, the Premium Edition supports Oracle and Microsoft SQL as a database backend.



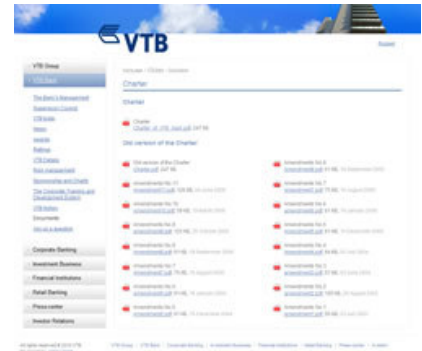
The Premium Edition allows site administrators to create and manage user feedback platforms such as polls, surveys, voting and questionnaires, etc. All of the responses can be consolidated into any CSV format for ease of analysis and reporting. The included Social Networking module simplifies building and managing a social networking portal. With this module, you can almost instantly start your own social network and offer exciting new features to your users.

Any edition of Bitrix Site Manager allows the creation of two independent web projects using one product installation (locally or on a remote server). It was agreed that Articul Media would order an extended license for the VTB Group to be able to create an unlimited number of websites using a single content management platform.

One of the main arguments for Bitrix Site Manager was also its integrated security framework, known as [PRO+PRO™](#), since data security is the cornerstone in the banking business. VTB Group received a number of extra benefits that are not available on competing platforms including extended web analytics, details of visitor behavior, and cross-site features.

### Cost savings

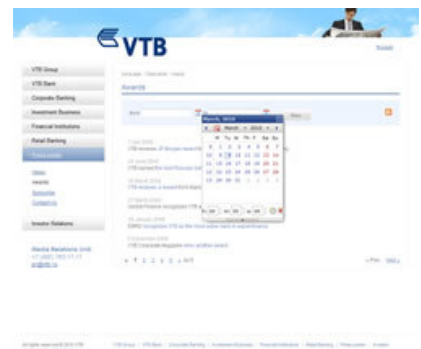
Thanks to centralized website control across the entire organization, VTB has optimized online asset management and reduced costs. Not only are changes in content easier and faster at both global and local levels, but payments to third-party website agencies have been eliminated. The Bitrix CMS allows instant content modification both in the back-end and in the front-end of the product. Access settings are customized for each user group (developers, news editors, etc.) and can be adjusted anytime.



### Feedback through web forms

Web forms that can be submitted online by any visitor of any VTB websites add more value in terms of information about customers' satisfaction. Reports based on submitted web forms are processed in the Statistics and Analytics Department of the VTB Group for a better understanding of what else can be improved online. Thus the process of continuing improvement of the web resources never stops.

*"We are the center of permanent changes that reflect our advancement as a business. We are constantly in motion. Our task is to understand the particular requirements of each branch, develop customized modules and services and integrate them into a solid platform operating across the whole group,"* said Dmitry Fyodorov, Chief of Information Projects at VTB.



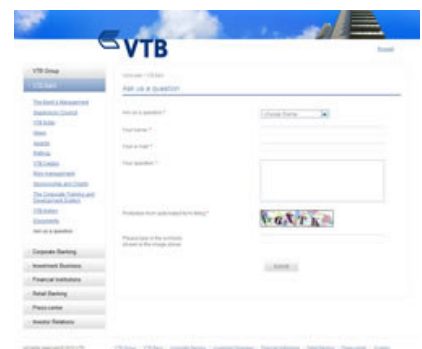
### More security with fixed responsibilities

Data security of all VTB online projects is now on a higher level. The web resources use a common security mechanism with different access permission levels for different user groups (website administrators, content managers, website visitors) which means separate responsibility levels. It was a huge step towards better online governance.

### Better communication and workflow

The company also developed a set of documents regulating website usage that minimizes the risk of miscommunication and mistakes. Every website operator completes a dedicated two-level training course before being allowed to work independently.

*"We noticed a wave of traffic along with overall visitor satisfaction after we introduced the new technological platform, new design and new, simplified structure,"* concluded Dmitry Fyodorov.



### Future plans

The transition to the new technological platform running Bitrix Site Manager is still in progress. Some of the 20 VTB Group's websites are waiting their turn for migration. However, the project has already received recognition from the national Internet community and it was awarded the "RuNet Prize 2009" and "Golden Website 2009", confirming that over 150,000 corporate users and 5,000,000 retail clients will get the best-of-breed online services from the industry-leading financial institution.