

The Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Information Management Systems/TruServ/Just Ask Rental Website Development Project

Mark F. Terry¹

Raymond Einig

Janice Schoen Henry

Dept. of Information Management Systems, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Carbondale, Illinois, 62901, USA

Raymond Gering

EMAC, Inc., 11 EMAC Way

Carbondale, Illinois, 62901, USA

Adam Kantrovich

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, Virginia, 24061, USA

James Sheffer

Murdale Just Ask Rental, 1815 W. Main St.

Carbondale, Illinois, 62901, USA

Keywords: electronic commerce, industry/college partnerships, student projects, website development, internet

Abstract

The project undertaken by an eight-member student team and two faculty members from Southern Illinois University's Information Management Systems Department was the development of a business-to-consumer webpage for the Just Ask Rental co-op members of Chicago-based TruServ Corporation, the parent organization of True Value Hardware and various rental divisions such as Just Ask Rental. Working with the owner of the Murdale Just Ask Rental store in the local community, this group utilized web development, imaging, graphics, database skills and techniques, and project management concepts to develop an "alpha" Just Ask Rental website based upon the Murdale location. The students planned, developed and created the website from January to April 2000. This website was then presented to the corporate leadership and the co-op membership at the Dallas Market (the semi-annual TruServ trade show) in April-May 2000 for their inspection, comment and purchase/rental.

The site has been adopted by the TruServ Information Technology Department and universal application to the approximately 700 Just Ask Rental locations is expected within the next 12-18 months. A portion of the yearly rental fee charged to the individual Just Ask Rental locations will be donated to the Information Management Systems Department in perpetuity for student scholarships, curriculum development, and hardware and software purchases. Further projects linking the department and TruServ are being actively developed at this time.

¹ mterry@siu.edu