Competitive Site Review - Dell

Project:
Phase: Discovery
May 22, 2000

Initial Site Exploration Comments

Dell does not offer test and monitor equipment, services, or consulting. Their services are Interne/Application Service Provider-Centric, and primarily sell equipment (servers, business computing equipment – workstations, desktops, storage, laptop/notebooks, etc.) and targeted/packaged support and consultation services based on Dell's hardware usage.

From the home page, the only compelling test and monitoring related links were "Medium and Large Businesses" and "Internet Service Providers"

The Internet Service Providers Section included some compelling and possibly competitive services, but were very much outside of Newco's competitive space. Dell's network related services are very much contingent upon client usage of Dell hardware, and oriented to the I/ASP market.

One compelling service is Dell's Internet Partner Program/Division that offers incubator-like development service and consultation ("Service Provider Direct.") to ISPs, ASPs, and hosting companies looking to build/improve their internet data centers. This service includes technology, service, support, financing, and on-site expert personnel.

Dell offers three tiers of "Service Provider Direct" service levels:
•Direct Benefit Members (dedicated account team, financing incentives for Dell products, premier support access, use of Dell logo, listing on Dell's preferred service provider resource website)

•Rapid Deployment (all above plus proof of concept testing/feedback, dedicated systems expert, co-marketing package development, discounted parts, tech consulting and services)

•Enterprise Referral (all above plus access to Dell's referral lead network program, full sales harmony from Dell sales of clients service/solution to other Dell customers, on-site dedicated systems engineer, premium listing in Dell's catalog of providers/solutions, biz development consultation, and participation in Dell's Service Provider Council for new product development and testing participation).

All three levels of service require the ISP to use Dell's PowerApp, PowerEdge, or PowerVault data center products, complete requisite strategic alliance agreement docs, and maintain Dell approved content on all web apps/sites.

Other notable Dell.com elements:

Very clean, intuitive, and easy to navigate GUI, succinct, web-centric content, fast loading pages – minimal graphic/image usage, minimal yet comprehensive global nav, concise page layout and iconography across subsections, very good ecommerce interface and product configuration strategy for their massive and complex product line – took a

possibly daunting and intimidating consumer experience and developed an efficient and systematic purchase flow.

Best In Class Recommendations:

Although Dell is not a significant competitor in the network testing and monitoring related industry, their client support/development services, "product configure" interface, and overall web-centric layout and content design were intriguing as possible Newco features. This site provides a good copy/content model for Newco as they move to a new merged content standard.

In the current timeframe, Newco will not have the time necessary to develop a systematic product and service configure or advisor interface. However, this is a valuable feature to implement given the breadth and scope of Newco's product offerings and related services. In addition to an excellent index or product locator interface, the Newco Advisor concept would also provide users with recommended product configurations, related services, and possibly related white papers, reports, manuals, or other support documentation related to product and industry.

In additional to it's customized, personalized approach to customer service, Newco could offer packages, or programmatic development and growth services tied to their product solutions. This would allow for long-term relationship development, opportunities for product and service upselling, and possible initial product discounts tied to long term service contracts.