WEB SOLUTION DRIVES COMPETITION

Glasshouse, the international design competition created by Pilkington and supported by the British architectural journal Architecture Today and media partners throughout Europe, has been confirmed as one of the most successful events of its type ever staged- receiving over 750 entries from student and young architects across Europe.

Glasshouse was conceived to stimulate future interest and growth in glass sales. Entrants were asked to examine and exploit the enormous potential of glass as a structural and decorative building medium in order to develop houses suited to the ways that people want to live in the 21st century, one of the truly great challenges for the architectural community today.

Although Glasshouse was also promoted through a series of European architectural journals and posters placed in colleges, it was primarily an Internet based initiative. The result is believed to be one of the biggest architectural competitions ever held, with over 2000 young architects and architectural students registering through the website.

Given the enormity of the project and huge economies that can be achieved when using web-

based publishing solutions, Pilkington planned right from the outset to utilise the power of the Internet in the promotion, but more importantly in the administration of the Glasshouse competition. Pilkington had used the Internet as a communications tool to inform customers about new product innovations, such as Pilkington Activ™ self-cleaning glass, and had a firm history working with London based database publishing company Complete Picture

Top: The Glasshouse students and young architects competition 2002 homepage

Bottom: The news page kept all entrants informed of current information during the competition

Top: The Glasshouse competition regional winner's virtual tour selection page

Bottom: A virtual tour playing through the Quicktime™ interface

on a number of electronic publishing projects, including CD-ROM based photo-catalogues and web-based new product communications projects.

Complete Picture's extensive experience working with both the architectural and construction industries, combined with their unparalleled experience manipulating Adobe Acrobat™ and many other industry-standard digital publishing solutions made them the obvious choice for this project. The subsequent website served as the main point of reference throughout the competition allowing applicants to register interest and download Acrobat™ PDF application forms. Once registrations were made, automated e-mail confirmations were sent to both the applicant and to the Pilkington mailing house for fulfilment.

Being a truly European initiative with entries from such a diverse range of countries, one of Complete Picture's most significant achievements was to enable the website to

effectively communicate across language barriers. This was done by making the registration form, rules and competition brief available in English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Polish and Russian- overcoming the added complexity of the 28 character Cyrillic fonts.

The regional winners were announced at the Glasstec exhibition in Essen, Germany, and were transferred into virtual tours using the Quicktime™ movie format. The winning entries were rendered from the original CAD submissions into 3D virtual tours allowing the viewer to walk through each Glasshouse entry. (shown above)

The virtual tours were converted to Quicktime™ movie format by Complete Picture and displayed via the Pilkington Glasstec Portal for stand visitors to explore. An electronic voting option allowed stand visitors to express their views alongside that of the Judges.
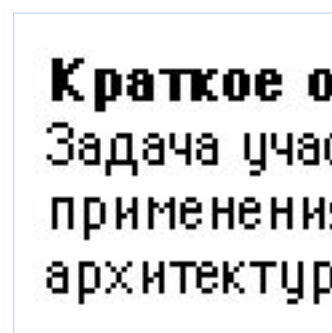
The Glasshouse competition brief was available to read online or download in PDF format in several different languages

Complete Picture's extensive knowledge of enabling complex foreign characters to display correctly online was a key aspect to the success of the competition