

Piedmont Community Services / CRP

Executive Summary

Community Partner

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Background

The Community Recovery Program (CRP) at Piedmont Community Services is a non-profit organization located in Martinsville, Virginia, which helps support those with substance abuse and/or mental health struggles recover and seek employment. Started in 2012, it is part of the larger Piedmont Community Services Board. While the broader Piedmont Community Services board provides support for a large range of mental health and behavioral health disorders, the Community Recovery Program focuses mainly on helping those with substance abuse and/or mental health disorders recover and seek and maintain employment. Funded by grants and state budgets, the Community Recovery Program has provided vocational training services to over 700 individuals since its inception, with a goal of servicing another 300 individuals over the next three years.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

The largest issue that the Piedmont Community Recovery Program faced was a lack of program visibility and accessibility via any means other than word of mouth within the Southern Virginia community. This reduced the effectiveness of their mission statement and prevented them from reaching potential CRP participants, particularly those in the 18-30 age range. This cascaded into three main areas of concern in which a technical solution could help: no established online presence, a decentralized referral program, and lack of social media outreach.

Project Vision

The project vision consisted of establishing an online presence for the Piedmont Community Recovery Program. The vision contained three parts: a website for CRP, a social media strategy plan, and the connection of referrals to the CRP office. The website was intended to be mobile-friendly and responsive to accommodate a variety of users who may not have access to desktop computers. Further, we planned to create a robust social media strategy to allow Piedmont CRP to better connect with younger demographics. Lastly, streamlining the referral process allowed more referees to receive recovery services from Piedmont CRP more efficiently. Our vision aligns with and furthers the United Nations Sustainability Goal 3 of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being at all ages.

Project Outcomes

The project's main outcome was creating an online presence for the client, which enhances Piedmont CRP's outreach to a wider audience, and allows Piedmont CRP to provide information about programs and services and connect the community and possible participants to Piedmont CRP. The social media strategy guide, when implemented, will further Piedmont CRP's online presence and allow them to connect with a younger audience via social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook. Lastly, by reforming the referral form process by making the form more user friendly and setting up notifications for when the form is filled out, referees will be more quickly assisted by Piedmont CRP's recovery services.

Project Deliverables

The team provided the client a redesigned website, a social media strategy plan document, and access to a google account that holds the redesigned referral form system. Further deliverables for sustained capacity building include access to the shared Google Drive folder containing all documentation, video tutorials, user manuals and account login information.

Recommendations

The team recommends that the client continue to utilize WordPress as their content management system and hosting service of choice, as it is a budget friendly, all-in-one option. The team also recommends that they consider investing in a business plan on WordPress, as that will allow plugins that can further enhance CRP's online presence. Further, implementation of the social media strategy plan should be undertaken as soon as possible, and continued collaboration with other community organizations to sustain CRP's message and reach via social media platforms. Lastly, the team recommends continued use of Google Forms and Form Notifications for the referral form, as Google Forms give way to a user-friendly and effective referral form system.

Student Consulting Team

Silvia Chen served as the client liaison and a web developer for the team. She is a senior graduating with a degree in Information Systems and minor in Game Design. She will be starting full-time this summer at Pariveda Solutions as a Consultant.

Catherine Du served as a main web developer, user testing lead and capacity building documentation manager for the team. She is a junior studying Information Systems with a minor in Design for Learning. She will be interning at Asurion this summer as a Software Engineering Intern.

Isabella Fons served as project manager for the team. She took the lead designing and creating the website and social media strategy. She is a junior studying Information Systems with an additional major in Statistics, with passions for data science and data storytelling. She will be interning at Facebook this summer as a Data Science Intern.