Humane Action Pittsburgh

Executive Summary
Community Partner
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Student Consulting Team
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Background

Humane Action Pittsburgh (HAP) is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania that advocates for animal welfare.

Our team specifically worked with the Habitat Regeneration department on the "Reimagine Takeout" campaign to promote Pittsburgh's transition from single-use plastic to composting. The website highlights local businesses and restaurants in Pittsburgh that offer compostable items, as well as information on how to begin composting.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

Reimagine Takeout is intended to be a thorough, "one-stop shop" campaign through which users can understand the importance of composting, as well as how to create their own personal compost projects. From how to compost at home to teaching businesses how to implement composting to supporting businesses who compost, our partner organization wants to be *the* source of education for composting.

The primary issue we addressed with HAP was determining compostability; to accomplish this, we streamlined the process for users to identify which takeout items are compostable and how specifically each item can be composted.

Currently, even users who have already implemented composting in their homes are unsure of how to dispose of takeout items that are not 'traditionally' compostable, such as single-use plastics. Items such as these vary in their composting needs, with many requiring industrial-grade composting in order to break down correctly. HAP is striving to provide information and guidance about these more complicated items for users who want to improve their composting.

Project Vision

In order to decrease single-use plastic waste and increase composting, we used the WordPress Directories Pro plugin to create and host a custom database for the HAP team to manually enter information about different takeout items. The Directories Pro plugin also offers multiple front-end experiences for the end user based on the backend

database, which optimizes the user experience and creates a more efficient searching process to target specific takeout items.

Project Outcomes

We created a search feature on the ReimagineTakeout website to search for compostable items, as well as a custom database for the HAP team to collect user data. This project meets the KPIs of increased website traffic and increased engagement in our tool, as well as maintainability (which was achieved through adequately educating and training our client on the final tool we build).

Project Deliverables

The final deliverable of our project is a web page of the completed search feature and item/business submission page on HAP's ReimagineTakeout website.

Recommendations

Based on our analysis of outcomes, we recommend the HAP team frequently and regularly check on form submissions so that the database is kept up to date and be regularly added to. In addition, we recommend the HAP team dedicate energy towards advertising so that there is increased visibility and use of the search feature and also build more item/business submissions to help the HAP team build their custom database with more data.

Student Consulting Team

Esther Bae managed the client relationship. She scheduled weekly meetings with the client, sent agendas before client meetings, and also sent updates post-meeting. In addition, she coordinated the logistics of client formative evaluations.

Anita Cheng was responsible for quality assurance. She established clear, concise coding standards and maintained responsibility for development such as reviewing changes and accepting changes.

Richelle Guice was responsible for client transition. She coordinated scheduling capacity-building time with the client and planned and worked with the client to ensure the sustainability of the project. In addition, she deployed and transitioned the solution to the client.

Emily Zhang served as the project manager. She created agendas for all meetings, tracked action items for each team member, and identified gaps in the delivery of previous action items.