

## **Golden Legs Running Group Critique Memo**

### **Introduction**

Our group was tasked with creating a new website for Golden Legs Running with store information, community elements, and e-commerce capabilities. We were able to create a site that fulfilled these requirements. We created pages for each store, where the client can add information about hours and group runs. We also created a message board, event calendar, photo galleries, training logs, and social media integration. The client has chosen to revisit the e-commerce section at a later time; therefore it is not currently accessible to users, only administrators. Basic functionality of the shopping cart has been configured along with sample product pages as a foundation for when the client is ready to launch the online store. Detailed instructions for completing the e-commerce portion will be provided in the user documentation.

### **Setup and Installation of Drupal and Site Hosting**

After individually using Drupal 7 for Project One, our team chose to revert to Drupal 6 for this project, in hopes of increasing the site stability and being able to find more modules and better documentation. This seems to have been a wise choice, as we have not had any serious site issues or data loss, and we were able to achieve nearly all of the desired functionality. Setting up the hosting and installing Drupal on the site was fairly straightforward, with one minor hiccup. Initially it was difficult to install Drupal correctly on goldenlegsrunning.com using Mediatemple's one-click installer. The installer kept installing Drupal on community.goldenlegsrunning.com and the client wanted to create the site directly on goldenlegsrunning.com. The problem was that Mediatemple automatically generates a placeholder file at the domain purchased. Our group couldn't have two folders with the same name on the same domain so the original folder was renamed copy.goldenlegsrunning.com. This allowed our group to install Drupal successfully on goldenlegsrunning.com. (The placeholder text is still at copy.goldenlegsrunning.com.)

### **Creation of Goldenlegsrunning.com**

Themes presented to client and theme chosen

When choosing the following themes it was important to consider their layout options, ease of configuration, and features that would best support the client goals.

- Analytic - Clean modern theme with fine tuned css, will be great for blogs, communities and online media.
- LiteJazz - Features 3 color styles, 12 fully collapsible regions, suckerfish menus, fluid or fixed widths, local content CSS file, easy configuration, and more. (More customizable for the client).
- Deco - Advanced layout options based on regions, highly customizable also great for blogs and communities.

The client chose the Analytic theme.

### **Modules Installed**

As hoped, we were able to find many more modules for Drupal 6 than any of us had for Drupal 7. In total, we installed 37 different modules, though not all of the modules we installed are

currently being used (e.g., the Panels module). Through these modules, we were able to get the functionality we desired, but at times it was surprising just how many modules were necessary to get basic functionality (e.g. five modules were needed to allow participants to add a unit when entering a number). Modules that are being used are listed below, grouped by the section of the site they support.

- Upcoming Events: Calendar, Date, and Views
- Photos: Gallery Assist and Image
- Training Log: Measured Value Field, Units, Format Number API, Formatted Number CCK, Currency, Node Access, Views, Calendar
- Profiles: Tracker, Profile Checkboxes, Reg with Picture
- Message Board: Forum
- E-commerce: Ubercart, Token, CCK, Content, FileField, ImageAPI, ImageAPI GD2, ImageCache, ImageField, Thickbox, Google Analytics
- Communications: Mass Contact, Drupal for Facebook

### **Creation of “Community”**

One aspect of creating a community website is an upcoming events calendar. As explained in the group memo, creating an upcoming events calendar was straightforward using the Date and Calendar modules and Views. The calendar allows Golden Legs Running to add events, such as group runs, trips, and store specials, to the website. The content is easy to create and is easily visible (the most recent events are listed in the left hand sidebar). The calendar feature of goldenlegsrrunning.com helps to move the site toward more dynamic content, which will hopefully help to bring clients and customers of Golden Legs Running back to the website for repeat visits. It also helps move more information that Golden Legs disseminates to the website: currently, upcoming events are shared through Golden Legs Facebook page.

Another aspect of a community site is photo galleries of the community members. Golden Legs Running currently uses Facebook to host and display galleries; adding this feature to the website will, like the calendar, bring more people directly to the website. The galleries are somewhat of a work in progress but adding photos and creating gallery nodes are fairly user friendly (as explained in the group memo), so the content will be easy to update for the client.

An additional community component is the message board. On the old Golden Legs site, the message board had no threading capabilities. There was only one board and messages were simply listed in reverse chronological order. On the new site, the Forum module enables multiple threads and replies, and while anyone can view the posts, only registered users can make new threads and comment. We hope that if this message board becomes popular, it will be a driver for people to register on the site. We spent very little development time on this area, because the built-in functionality of the module was quite robust (which was somewhat refreshing!).

The final community element is the training log. The client wanted registered users to be able to view each other's workout activity and be able to make comments on it. We were able to deliver this, and it will be interesting to see how much the community engages. Getting the input form

just right took a lot of back and forth with the client, but he seems pleased with how it turned out, and we were able to create it for free in Drupal rather than pay the service that powers the site that served as client's inspiration for this feature.

### **Challenges Encountered**

One challenge that recurred frequently for most of the team was that every time a new content type, module, or even a field was created, it was necessary to go to the Permissions area and assign who was allowed to view or edit it. It seems that by default everything should be editable by administrators, but that's not the way Drupal 6 was set up, and we never figured out why. This made it take much longer to tweak the training log form, because every time a new field was created, we had to go to Permissions to enable viewing and editing of it, before we could try creating a new entry and see how it functioned. We are already planning a write-up in the documentation about permissions so that the client knows he'll need to grant permissions if he makes significant changes anywhere in the site.

A disappointment in terms of communication was the limitations of Mass Contact in terms of linking back to the node it creates after sending an email. It would have been nice to allow users to view archived email messages, but Mass Contact automatically generates a recipient list that would be publicly accessible, which is a security and privacy problem. Additionally, the fields generated by Mass Contact are not accessible to the Views module, and therefore the pages could not be aggregated into a single node. After researching the problem on Drupal.org and other forum websites, the solution is to hack the code to create customized output from the module. We determined that this is not a sustainable practice, as our client would not have official documentation to fall back on in the event of a problem and would not be able to use the Mass Contact customization interface to change any customizations that were developed through hacks. We looked into Civi CRM as a possible alternative to Mass Contact, but it has a great deal more functionality than Mass Contact and is more complex. The goal of the client was to email users to bring them to his website and to shift from using email distribution as the primary method of contact with his customers. Mass Contact sufficiently accomplishes those tasks and is a simpler solution than installing another module to add additional functionality where it is not needed.

A more general issue that came up frequently for all group members was the lack of detailed documentation for the separate modules. Each module page has varying degrees of documentation: some, like the calendar module, are fairly well supported with screencasts to explain how to use the module to create content. Others, such as many of the image gallery modules, did not have detailed documentation on how to use the module. Additionally, Ubercart uses core modules with a variety of add-on modules to enhance e-commerce capabilities. More documentation to support how the modules relate to each other along with how configuring settings for one feature enables/disables those of another would have been helpful.

### **Project Management and Client Communications**

We found Basecamp a convenient way to manage who was working on what and when. We adapted our project management plan from the standards described in A Guide to the

Project Management Body of Knowledge; even though we did not have as detailed of a time management outline as suggested in PMBOK, we were able to manage responsibilities and deadlines with no problems. Our project deviated from its charter a bit because the client's requirements changed (e-commerce became a lower priority), but since we learned that fairly early in the project and had already planned on building the other functions that were now a higher priority (transferring old site content, the training log), it was not too difficult to switch gears.

We used Basecamp to set milestones for time management, but because most of our activities could overlap, activity sequencing wasn't too much of a concern. Obviously, the client had to secure the URL and hosting before we could install Drupal on the server (a finish-to-start relationship), but once that happened, we were able to work on our areas simultaneously: Andrew on the Facebook and mass contact integration, Ed on the calendar and photos, Erica on the registration and training log areas, and Carmen on researching themes and Ubercart. The one sequencing issue we needed to monitor was the Ubercart installation/configuration process. It was easier for Carmen to work in the Garland theme, so we had to delay switching over to the Analytic theme until that was finished (another finish-to-start relationship).

Client communications were pretty straightforward. Ed was responsible for handling client communications and because of the personal relationship Ed has with the client, communications could be informal. It was easy to ask questions and request feedback from the client and it was also easy to communicate the client's requests to the group member responsible. Most communications with the client were handled over the phone and through email.

### **Reflection on Project Management Processes**

Looking back on the project, there is nothing significant that we would have done differently in terms of project management. There remain some next steps for the client to take to finish the site, such as adding content to several of the static pages and full configuration of the e-commerce store, as well as learning how to manage the site using our group's documentation. Given the time frame allotted for the project we believe our group successfully met the client's criteria, and we (and our client) are satisfied with the results of our efforts.