Pittsburgh Youth Chorus

Executive Summary

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Background

Pittsburgh Youth Chorus (PYC), formerly known as Children's Festival Chorus, is a non-profit organization which offers nurturing and stimulating musical learning experiences to children ages five years and older. During it's more than 30-year history, PYC provided professional-level choral education and performances not only to Pittsburgh, but also to the nation-wide community. With its new name, Pittsburgh Youth Chorus aims to have a new start and attract a larger audience.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

PYC is currently under the process of redesigning the organization. With this, there was a need to update technological infrastructure to better suit organization's future needs. The primary opportunity of the project was updating the website, which is the primary form of communication with audience and chorus members.

Since the original website was developed by a person outside of organization years ago, there was an opportunity to reorganize existing information, create a long-term sustainability, and enhance user-friendliness. By solving some of issues, PYC will be able to reach out to the bigger community with a clearer image. Having a clearer brand will help attracting more users and donors, thus allowing PYC to grow and better serve the community.

Project Vision

The student team's vision was simplifying the existing information structure and creating a user friendly website. By reorganizing the complicated information structure of the original website, the team would enhance clarity and information coordination. By doing so, the team aimed to strengthen the organization's brand so that visitors can have clear understanding of Pittsburgh Youth Chorus's image and purpose.

In order to satisfy such vision and create sustainability, the team decided to implement WordPress, a content management system that is widely-used. WordPress allows anybody to easily work with websites, even with no programming experience. In addition, it offers numerous features, which

meet different needs such as e-commerce and search engine optimization. In summary, the project's vision was to create a website which is user-friendly not only to visitors, but also to future administrators.

Project Outcomes

The project involved multiple teams working together towards creating a new website: student designer from the Pittsburgh Art Institute, database developer of Dedication Technologies, and PYC administrative staff. With basic design from the Art Institute and comments from PYC, the team was able to develop foundational structure of the website. The team continued by gathering content provided by PYC staff and publishing them on the new website. Further changes were made with feedback regarding the design and functionality.

Project Deliverables

The team's main deliverable was the new website integrated with the WordPress content management system. The major work was done in restructuring the overall website from the original design. The team emphasized on enhancing simplicity in order to capture visitor's attention and offer easy-to-find navigation. The team implemented analytics early on and used this information in creating an information hierarchy. In addition, the team integrated PayPal within the website to enable safe donation and e-commerce functionalities. In addition, online registration forms for auditions and events were built in order to alleviate administrative staff's work of communicating with users and deciphering their handwriting.

Recommendations

Although the team has made a significant progress during the project time, there were other possible opportunities that were not addressed due to the scope of the project. While the team is aware of ongoing development of new database system for the new website, the team still recommends not to hesitate to purchase new system since centralized database will significantly simplify the current business process and bring value to the organization. Furthermore, the team recommends the use of analytics to drive content as well as get more staff involved in the editing process in order to create familiarity with the WordPress system.

Student Development Team

Chris Compendio led project management duties and documentation through weekly sprint reports. He is a third-year Information Systems major with an additional major in Creative Writing.

Kang Jun Park was responsible for quality assurance and being a technical lead, along with being the primary client liaison. He is a third-year student in Information Systems and looking toward a career in technical consulting.

Sam Walczak led quality assurance for the project and was the primary lead for testing. He is a third-year double-major in Information Systems and Chinese Studies looking towards a career in technology consulting.