

River Art Works

Executive Summary

Community Partner

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Background

River Art Works is an arts organization based in Westmoreland County, PA, whose mission is to “cultivate creativity, facilitate collaborations, educate the creatives, and harmonize artistic tradition and creative technology” in the Westmoreland region. With a small team of 5 board members, River Art Works offers various programs and events, such as classes, retreats, and art tournaments that inspire artists and non-artists alike to become more involved and channel personal creativity. The organization also hosts the Greater Westmoreland Art Coalition, a platform for artists to showcase and advertise their work with local patrons. This platform connects artists with customers, further building artistic culture in the Westmoreland region.

Project Description

Project Opportunity

River Art Works faced several key challenges that hindered its ability to effectively advertise and kickstart the ArtTEK for Teens program, an engaging and hands-on class for teenagers interested in using the latest art technology to fuel their creativity. These challenges include a lack of information and learning objectives about the program and the absence of a streamlined signup system. Another project opportunity was the lack of clarity on the website as a whole in terms of mission, as well as the various programs and events, due to problematic layout decisions that affected users’ ability to navigate through the website. Lastly, the Greater Westmoreland Art Coalition (GWAC), an organization under River Art Works working to promote local artists, needed automatic registration systems for not only artists but suppliers as well.

Project Vision

Our project vision has been primarily focused on making ArtTEK for Teens a more organized, informative, and functional website, including the addition of an automated registration form to streamline student sign-ups. Other stretch goals included adjusting additional River Art Works pages, such as the home page and Events page, for greater clarity, as well as beginning to build basic functionality for the GWAC website. Fulfilling these visions supports sustained success for River Art Works by enabling them to better reach target audiences and inspire the Westmoreland arts scene.

Project Outcomes

By implementing an automated registration process, prospective ArtTEK for Teen students can learn about the program and sign up independently. Automation also allows Jane to see all the signup information in one Excel sheet, eliminating manual tracking. By redesigning the Events page using a

flyer-style card layout, visitors can now quickly browse upcoming events and register via clear external links, making community engagement easier. By introducing Microsoft Forms sign-ups for GWAC artists and suppliers, the organization now has an automated, centralized system to gather artist interest and supplier submissions, improving administrative efficiency.

Because we built a strong connection and trust with Jane Altman, the founder of River Art Works, we were able to smoothly empower her with understanding the technology and the finished products we have handed over. This included drafting comprehensive documentation on website changes, form and Excel sheet management, and system access. By providing her with these important documents, we are confident that our transparency has built trust in both our product and the detailed process we followed to complete it, paving the way for a sustainable solution that will remain effective long after this semester.

Project Deliverables

Our deliverables include internal resources that helped us build a strong team process, as well as external resources that directly contributed to the solution. These internal deliverables include weekly sprint reports, testing plans, a demo video, project responsibility documents, and draft proposals. External deliverables include the website itself, the registration systems both in ArtTEK for Teens as well as the GWAC site, a proposed site map for future development, documentation for stakeholder reference, and a user manual.

Recommendations

While we were able to cover a lot of ground in our few months with River Art Works, we do have some recommendations for next steps, as well as some stretch tasks that we were not able to accomplish this semester. First, we believe the website would benefit from a revamping of the homepage to properly communicate the mission and value proposition. This could mean clearer program descriptions, highlighting each initiative with clearer navigation buttons, and including a more prominent About Us section. As part of our deliverables, we've included a proposed site map that includes these potential changes.

Our second recommendation would be to install some form of site monitoring, which would give River Art Works a quantifiable measure of the success and the reach of the website. Useful metrics like site visits, average visit times, sign-up clicks, video plays, and more would reveal the efficacy of not only the website itself, but specific elements of pages. These insights would guide River Art Works in the future to improve all facets of their website with real-world data.

Student Consulting Team

Ariel Chiu: She is a junior majoring in Information Systems with a concentration in AI Management and a minor in Business, graduating in 2026. She led the development of the ArtTEK webpage and designed the site's information architecture. She is interested in product management and will intern at Menlo Park as a business engineer.

Cassandra Zhou: She is a junior majoring in Information Systems with an additional major in Computer Science, graduating in December 2025. She proposed, designed, and implemented the Events page, contributed to the ArtTEK page, oversaw user testing, and ensured the mobile friendliness of our webpages. She is curious about solving interesting problems and will be a software engineer intern in San Francisco in a few weeks.

Forest Ma: He is a senior majoring in Information Systems and Music Performance, graduating in 2025. He created the registration systems for both the ArtTEK and GWAC forms and led client training. He plans to begin a career in software engineering in the Seattle area after graduation.