



Case Study:

Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council

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Services provided: Web site design, information architecture (IA) and implementation of Sitefinity CMS

Organizational Profile

Founded in 1912, the Girl Scouts organization serves more than 4 million girls worldwide in 90 countries throughout the world. The Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council, serves Oregon and SW Washington, has 40+ staff members, about 5,500 adult volunteers and over 13,000 girls as members.

Business Situation

In 2007, the Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council identified a need to redesign its web site (www.girlscoutscrc.org) to accommodate an active online audience that consumes dynamic content, with ever-changing and expanding needs for information. The web site had ballooned over the preceding years to several hundred pages of content. The web site had become difficult to maintain, page designs and layouts had become inconsistent, and the user experience was poor due to an information architecture never intended for such page breadth and depth. Moreover, because web site updates were funneled through a volunteer web administrator, the need for timely updates was not being met.

Solution

OakTree Digital was selected through an RFP process to redesign the Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council web site. Central to the OakTree solution was the implementation of Sitefinity CMS, which is based upon Microsoft's .NET architecture. The redesign process was undertaken by first rethinking the web site information architecture (IA) to better focus upon target audiences (girls, volunteers and donors) while accommodating informational categories that focused on the organization itself, relevant forms and publications, etc. As a part of the IA process, the existing content was audited and recommendations were presented to pare back the content to the most

essential core—and to retire content deemed out-of-date or superfluous. As a second step of the redesign process, OakTree’s design team presented new graphical designs that were much more sophisticated and keeping with the Girl Scouts brand; at the same time, design templates were conceived that would be used in the implementation of the CMS.

The Sitefinity CMS was selected for Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council for several key reasons:

- Because it was built on the .NET platform, future plans for eCommerce and other related application development would reside on a common, robust platform
- Administrator roles could be assigned to a single web master, but also allow page-level administration to neighborhood “VISTA” volunteers.
- WYSIWYG site management, making it easy for the web master to make accurate and quick site updates without programming knowledge
- Navigation menu updating
- Site-wide search
- Scalable, and inclusive of numerous features that could be integrated in the future as business needs evolve

Because the Sitefinity CMS is based on .NET, creating templates was quick and easy; templates are based on .NET master pages and once implemented, content could be easily created and modified.

Once all the content for the Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council web site was in hand, the development process was very fast—approximately 60 pages were flowed into the CMS in less than two weeks.

Benefits

Today, Girl Scouts – Columbia River Council manages its own web site internally, without the need for an outside developer. Content updates are made daily, without programming expertise and without concern for creating inconsistencies in design and layout. The IA, graphic design and overall site organization directed by OakTree Digital can now be built upon and the Girl Scouts organization can focus on its daily priorities with confidence that the web site is central to its efforts. Just as important, VISTA program leaders can update their own pages and provide their constituents with fresh, dynamic content as it is needed.