

COASTLINE COLLEGE CASE STUDY

Website Re-design

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Background

Coastline College, an online college based in Orange County, faced significant challenges with its outdated website. Built by a programmer without design or marketing expertise, the site was clunky, lacked visual appeal, and had stagnant content updated sporadically by the programmer. Faculty and staff desired autonomy to update their content, while the executive team aimed for a swift redesign, all within a year.

Challenges

Challenge one

Outdated Platform: The existing website lacked user-friendly content management tools, hindering updates and maintenance.

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Challenge two

Overwhelming Navigation:

With over 80 navigation options, the site was confusing and overwhelming for users.

Challenge three

Branding Alignment:

The redesign coincided with a rebranding effort, requiring alignment between the website and new brand identity.

Challenge four

Tight Timeline:

A year to redesign a large college website was ambitious, necessitating careful planning and phased implementation.

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Solutions

Platform Selection: After rigorous research, Cascade, a CMS used by other colleges, was chosen for its built-in accessibility features and user-friendly editing platform.

Design Firm Collaboration: Partnering with a design firm proficient in Cascade and content strategy, the team crafted a visually appealing and student-focused website.

Phased Implementation: To meet the deadline, a phased launch strategy was adopted, prioritizing student-facing aspects initially, followed by faculty and administrative content.

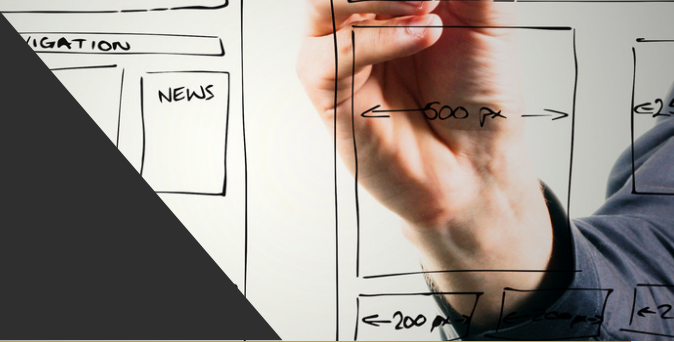
Temporary Interim Solution: A temporary homepage was created to announce the upcoming redesign, managing user expectations while work progressed.

Content Manager Appointment: To ensure timely updates, a Content Manager role was established to oversee content creation and editing, empowering faculty and staff to contribute effectively.



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Results

Successful Launch: Despite initial concerns, the phased launch approach enabled the timely release of student-facing aspects, aligning with the college's rebranding efforts.

Positive Feedback: The new website garnered praise from faculty, staff, and external stakeholders, showcasing Coastline College's commitment to accessibility and user experience. Student feedback was extremely positive with a 98% approval rating year over year after initial launch.

Industry Recognition: Following the launch, other college marketing directors sought insights into the redesign process, highlighting the website's impact and effectiveness.

Improved User Experience: Faculty and staff appreciated the newfound autonomy to update their pages, streamlining content management processes and ensuring timely updates.

Conclusion

Through strategic planning, collaboration with design experts, and phased implementation, Coastline College successfully transformed its outdated website into a modern, user-friendly platform aligned with its brand identity. The project's success demonstrates the importance of user-centric design, effective project management, and leveraging technology to meet organizational goals.

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