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How can content management systems be customized for better user experience?

Mikayla Colston¹, Anne Berry¹, John Schaefer², Kelle DeBoth³, and Madalynn Wendland³

Introduction

PLAAY (Participation in Leisure Allowing Access for everyOne) on the Move is a program promoting independence, mobility, and access for young children with sensory and mobility impairments. This program is a local extension from the already existing GoBabyGo program at Cleveland State University. They provide an emphasis on collaboration as faculty and students from multiple departments, such as education, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, work together to improve and volunteer within the program and the program’s events.

Objective

Prior to this project, they simply had a limited site fulfilling the basic requirements of what they needed, however it was more difficult for them to update and to be used by individuals inquiring about the program. The website would assist in a mission to communicate and connect with the community. As one of their primary goals is serving the community, having an effective site would give them the platform to be able to achieve this task.

Methods

Determining the Best Content Management System: The first goal of finding the best CMS to suit their needs requires:

- Extensive information collection on Content Management Systems
- Empathy interviews with the faculty involved in PLAAY on the Move to gather information on their goals and necessities for the website

Testing the Website: Once the content manage system was decided and used, the website requires testing to prove:

- “In order for a webpage to be accessible, it should accommodate different technological limitations as well as any impairments and limitations of the individual.”

Results

With the user testing, more time is spent considering the personal impairments of the individual. Common concerns noted included:

- Small text or bright backgrounds leading to soreness in eyes and headaches or migraines
- White text on a dark background causing straining of the eyes for the mobile version

Conclusion

To suit the needs of all individuals involved in the PLAAY on the Move program, Squarespace proved to be the best content management system. Allowing for a simplified interface and easy editing allows them to have an effective platform in the long run. The primary and secondary research showed that Squarespace accommodated the program most successfully. After formulating the site, surveys and user testing were utilized to make sure the site was accessible to all people and all devices.

This project gave them a base to grow from while remaining accessible to all users and providing the best user experience. As this program is such an valuable and inclusive program for families and children, it is important for them to have a platform to be able to share what they are doing as well as allowing families and community members to discover more about what they are providing.

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Resources