



The Computerworld Honors Program

Honoring those who use Information Technology to benefit society

Final Copy of Case Study

YEAR:
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STATUS:
Laureate

Organization:
Kellogg Company

Organization URL:
<http://www.kelloggcompany.com>

Project Name:
Project Boot Camp

What social/humanitarian issue was the project designed to address? What specific metrics did you use to measure the project's success?

According to Veteran's Affairs, about 1.5 million veterans are at risk of homelessness due to poverty, lack of support, and poor living conditions. These veterans turn to social workers and homeless providers for help. However, providers encounter difficulty finding information regarding services available to veterans. In our effort to address this issue, Kellogg Company partnered with the DuPage Federation of Human Services Reform, a catalyst to leveraging the relationship between social workers and veterans. The Federation builds knowledge to create an effective and efficient health and human service system. Project Boot Camp was one of Kellogg Company's many investments in the communities where we live and work. This project specifically benefits veterans and social workers by providing a link to critical resources and creating a centralized web-based information portal. Project Boot Camp provides social workers with critical information necessary to inform veterans of available benefits. The tool supports traditional classroom training and discussion forums. Prior to implementation, the DuPage Federation utilized PowerPoint slides as a means of communication to social workers and veterans. Project Boot Camp transformed PowerPoint slides into interactive web-based training modules using Adobe Captivate. The information portal help social workers navigate through the complex benefit application process to provide more effective targeted assistance. The success of the project was measured on timeliness, organization, exceeding client expectations, and quality deliverables. Timeliness determined the project's success due to the immediate need of veteran benefits and the state of homeless veterans. Organization was important due to immense amounts of information taught to social service workers and ensuring the training materials were categorized

properly. Meeting expectations was a factor when evaluating the project success to ensure that the project was exceeding the demands and expectations of the client.

Please describe the technologies used and how those technologies were deployed in an innovative way. Also, please include any technical or other challenges that were overcome for the successful implementation of the project.

The technologies used included a new web content management system and scalable application solutions allowing for a better training experience. The site was hosted on a GoDaddy domain and migrated to a HostNine domain because of its unlimited bandwidth. The original site consisted of only static web pages. Due to the lack of financial resources available through the Federation, we faced a challenge to complete this project with limited resources. We were able to obtain a license for Adobe Captivate through Northern Illinois University, an affiliate of the Federation. Many users who utilize the services provided by the Federation do not have high-speed Internet connections. This was another challenge that was faced by creating a web-based training that is compatible for all users. To accommodate the users, we created separate online modules that require lower bandwidth, improving the overall functionality on all devices. We were also able to make the information portal available on mobile devices, improving the accessibility for the clients. A new web content management system named Joomla was used to display the newly updated content. Joomla's wide array of features and new tools increased user productivity. Some of the additions made were the use of an application called MeeboMe, allowing users to chat in real time with site administrators that are logged on. A Facebook page and Twitter account were created, tying into the web pages content management system. This created a direct feed from the web-portal to these social networking pages, allowing for better convergence of new updates in the community. Lastly, one of the main programs used to update the portal was the Adobe Captivate software. This allowed standard PowerPoint slides to be converted into a web video dialogue which supplied a voice-over for the modules and user interaction.

Please list the specific humanitarian benefits the project has yielded so far.

The VA has reported a reduction of homelessness amongst veterans through the education and sharing of information provided in the web-based training modules. Since the project was completed, the portal was shared with over 100 social workers and homeless providers in Illinois. Project Boot Camp provides the users with the proper knowledge needed to assist the veterans with health care and income support. Veterans and social workers are now able to access the information at their convenience, with training that would normally require a four-hour in-house training, cutting down on travel expenses and time constraints. In addition to accessing information, Project Boot Camp implemented an online chat where users are able to inquire with the DuPage Federation members and receive an immediate response.

Please provide the best example of how the project has benefited a specific individual, enterprise or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work.

The key stakeholders of the project are Kathryn Nelson and Candace King, employees of the DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform. Their roles are to conduct training courses for social workers throughout Illinois. Implementing the information portal eliminates the need and expense for Kathryn to travel across the state to conduct training. Illinois social workers are now able to access and complete the web-based training to bridge the gap of missing information to veterans. Kathryn states that when she, "informs colleagues about the modules, they consistently say that this will be a valuable resource and helps improve their ability to refer veterans and their families for the services they desperately need." Candace King, director of the DuPage

Federation, stated, "We were very pleased with the results of the online training on veterans' benefits. This approach to training will make the valuable information available to a much wider audience, providing direct benefits to the thousands of veterans who are returning to our communities." In addition to employees of the Federation, veterans also benefit from Project Boot Camp. Veterans are now able to utilize the information portal that provides direct access to the resources they need.