How NYSAC transformed its user experience with a Govstack website

Mission

To elevate NYSAC's online presence to better meet the needs of its members.

Client

New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC)

Website

www.nysac.org

About

NYSAC is an organization that works closely with local government. They were dissatisfied with their existing website as it had not kept pace with their evolving requirements or need for new technical features. It was more than five years old with a distinct lack of evolving features. The mechanics of the site were difficult to master, making it hard to exercise any creativity. This resulted in a site that looked outdated and did not adequately meet their clients' need for easy navigation or the administrator's desire for more control of content. Additionally, the website was included as part of a larger package, offered generic features, and extremely limited customizability.

The Challenge

– Social media integration: The sharing of content to social media by either the organization or its clients was not easily done. Acquiring metadata required the additional step of going into the back end to add the necessary code, and even with the addition of the code, the posts never displayed properly, especially on Facebook, one of their primary social channels. Their clients were communicating the same frustrations in their forums.

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- Content control: NYSAC has a small staff with relatively limited coding skills. Much of the maintenance fell on the shoulders of the Communications Manager, who felt hemmed in by his inability to easily control the look and feel of the content. He possessed limited freedom to make changes and updates. And while they underwent a small redesign of their homepage some time ago, it proved to be an arduous and expensive endeavor. Even with the redesign, they were still unable to achieve the level of creativity they desired.

- Event registration: The NYSAC client base is made up of municipal members. They often host conferences and other events for these members, where registration is required. Despite paying an additional fee for services such as online conference registration capability, they were hesitant to utilize the solution due to its overly complicated nature. This necessitated NYSAC's use of a third-party tool at additional costs.

- Member engagement: The organization is continually working on new programs and initiatives to offer their members. They needed an engaging way to call attention to specific initiatives. However, their previous site lacked the tools necessary to provide information in a unique and attention-grabbing way.

- Budget: NYSAC operates on a limited budget. When looking for companies to upgrade their existing website, NYSAC found the quotes they received to be outrageous and far outside their budgets.

Solution

NYSAC first heard about the Govstack Platform at the National Association of Counties Conference. It very quickly made it on their short list of RFP candidates. The organization was impressed with the affordability of Govstack when compared to the excessively high bids they received from other companies. They also felt that the platform achieved the right balance between the ability to customize and functionality, and it would allow them to overcome the challenges of their current site interface.

They were presented with a demo of the CMS and were pleased at how easy it was to use and the level of flexibility it offered. The knowledge and skill of othe Govstack implementation team was also important in their final decision, as was GHD Digital's body of work in the municipal sector.

Benefits and Outcomes

The Govstack Platform solves several challenges for the organization and provides several benefits, such as:

- A multi-faceted CMS with the flexibility to create a more

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engaging and visually appealing site that resonates with their members and makes it easy for the administrator to exercise creativity and achieve the look and feel that he desired.

- An intuitive and easy to use news feature that eliminates the need for members to hunt for information relevant to their requirements and interests. It helps to keep members updated on key information and initiatives and allows the organization to share information based on pre-determined categories.

- Social media integration allows members and staff to easily share information across social channels directly from the website.

- A user-friendly interface that does not require a background in code. This was especially important not only for use of the CMS but also for the Events calendar, as NYSAC is now able to manage conference registrations without the requirement of a third-party solution.

- A scalable ecosystem that will continue to grow with their needs and the demands of their members and diminish the need for a new site every few years.

Conclusion

The Govstack Platform has allowed the NYSAC Communications Manager to provide their members with a contemporary looking site that not only meets their needs and interests but also permits him to exercise and enhance the organization's brand and his own creativity – all without the need for coding skills. The response from their members to the new site has been overwhelmingly positive.

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