



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY



SUMMARY



CUSTOMER	CharityVillage
WEBSITE	charityvillage.com
COUNTRY	Canada
INDUSTRY	Non-profit

CUSTOMER PROFILE

CharityVillage serves Canada's non-profit sector by providing a range of services, including community forums, job boards, and content from subject matter experts. It is headquartered in Vancouver, B.C.

PRODUCT IMPLEMENTED



CharityVillage Transforms Online Presence into Community Supersite with DNN

CharityVillage is Canada's largest online community for staff and volunteers in the non-profit space, with more than 70,000 members. Having outgrown its original interaction model, the company turned to DNN to modernize its online presence. The new site leverages a robust Content Management System (CMS) with deeply integrated, modern social capabilities that are transforming the way members interact. CharityVillage can now scale its business with an affordable, extensible and engaging platform.

Business Needs

CharityVillage has a well-established history that was built on a simple idea: provide a central online resource for professionals in the non-profit sector to share ideas and learn from each other. The for-profit company serves Canada's large and geographically dispersed nonprofit sector, including an estimated 160,000 organizations and more than 2 million paid staff.

The original CharityVillage website was unique when it was launched in 1995. In the intervening years, the firm added features such as a job board, a news page, and online learning resources. However, one key characteristic of the site became more and more of a problem for CharityVillage executives.

“It was stuck in 1995,” says Maggie Leithead, President and CEO. “It was designed with static web pages built with Adobe Dreamweaver. It served our purpose early on, but as our audience became more sophisticated about the web, it wasn’t enough. There were no tools for rich interaction among users, and the site had around 10,000 pages of content. It was completely unwieldy. To make a simple change on the site could be mind-bogglingly painful.”

CharityVillage wanted to keep its high-profile spot in the non-profit sector by launching a redesigned site that could attract new members with an updated community model. It wanted to deliver far more interactivity between members, simplify internal content management, and provide a better platform to expand its eCommerce activities. “We needed to transform our online presence to a modern, engaging, social community site complete with eCommerce,” says Leithead.

Solution

CharityVillage has a Microsoft-based infrastructure. It considered several content management solutions, but they lacked strong social capabilities. Then the company began evaluating the DNN web content management system.

“With DNN we saw a strong suite of tools that met our needs, including an incredibly wide range of modules,” says Leithead. “What sealed our decision was the Active Social module. The other social software on the market today wasn’t good enough on its own. We would have had to bolt on point solutions to get the integrated community experience we now have for our members, combined with an easy-to-use content management system for our staff.”

With self-imposed pressure to quickly launch a redesigned site, CharityVillage set to work using the DNN tools and modules. One of the largest



tasks was reducing the number of content pages. The company reviewed 10,000 pages of content and reduced that to around 3,000, then worked with an external partner to migrate the content over to Evoq Content. The development team also used Evoq Content to integrate powerful social features like activity feeds, messaging, enhanced profiles, and groups.

CharityVillage created custom functionality, including ways to manage written content and images to fit the specific needs of the organization and its users. "It was a novel and very positive experience to be able to pick and choose how the modules would work in presenting an interface for our core content," says Leithead.

The company published its new site to a select group of about 200 beta members in April 2012 for a test run. The site went live to the nationwide non-profit community in May 2012.

Benefits

By using DNN to launch its new site, CharityVillage has features and functions that will help drive more traffic to the site, benefitting the non-profit community as well as its own operations. The modular nature of Evoq Content makes it far easier than in the past for staff members to make changes to the site. That, in turn, helps CharityVillage employees be far more productive.

Features to Help Grow User Base

New social engagement features now available in DNN Evoq Content were critical in the decision to implement. "DNN has been instrumental in helping us create richer user interaction and better ways for the non-profit community to exchange ideas," says Leithead. "The new site gives our members a better social experience that is more inviting and engaging, which will improve communication and collaboration. We now also have the ability to launch new products for our community like premium memberships and eLearning that offer valuable new tools for our members."

Easy to Make Changes

Evoq Content makes it vastly simpler than in the past to make changes to the site. "We have a couple of people on my team who, with very little training, were able to quickly start massaging content, formatting it, and posting to the site—all within about 30 minutes of first receiving the content," says Shawn Mitchell, Director of Content. "We recently posted the last article that was crafted in Adobe Dreamweaver, so we compared that process with our new DNN system. It took about half the time to post the content in DNN."

More Opportunity for Outreach

With easy-to-use content management tools, the CharityVillage staff can focus more of their time and effort on outreach. "We have a pool of paid and volunteer subject matter experts who contribute content that will help drive more traffic to our site. By dramatically reducing the amount of time spent on basic content management tasks, our staff is freed up to work on the relationships with our

contributors," says Mitchell. "DNN helps us get away from dealing with the technical aspects of managing content so we can focus on improving content development. That is huge for our long-term plans."

¹ Evoq Content was previously known as DNN Professional and Enterprise Editions.

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Maggie Leithead
President and CEO
CharityVillage



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