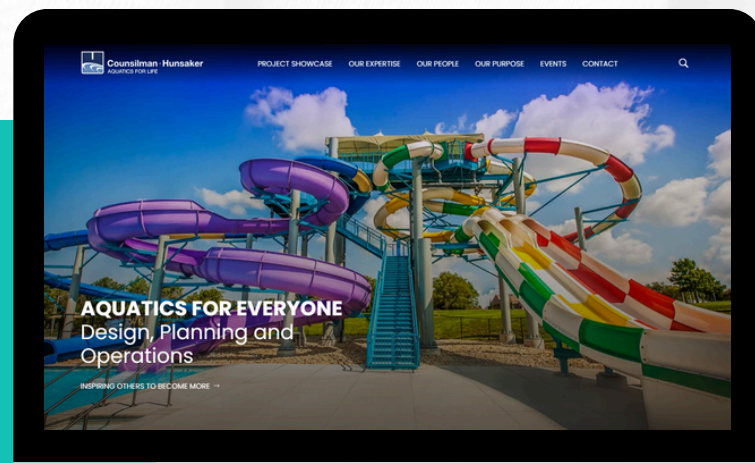


MARKETING PORTFOLIO

Company Website Development Deep-Dive

mdb2bmarketing.com



Counsilman-Hunsaker Website, ca. 2024

OBJECTIVES

In late 2019, Counsilman-Hunsaker embarked on a website development project to replace its aging website, launched in 2012. The old site used a WordPress theme that was no longer supported, loaded slowly, and felt outdated compared to competitors' and clients' websites.

An RFP was drafted and four RFP responses were received. After rounds of interviews, Orange Design, based in St. Louis, was selected as the developer for the new website. The scope of work included building a mobile-responsive site on WordPress with an e-Commerce storefront powered by WooCommerce and the migration of blog posts and project posts (a custom post type) from the original, totaling over 1,400 pages.

SOLUTION

The site took 7 months to develop and was built on WordPress. The total cost for the website development was around \$80,000, including the original scope of work plus out-of-scope items. The site met the goals of providing an improved visitor experience through an ultra-modern, mobile-responsive site design that supported faster speed with lazy loading. Its server was originally hosted by Network Specialists, based in St. Louis.

The new website launched in April 2020, during the height of COVID-19. Launching during COVID, however, enabled us to attract new attention to the website through several initiatives, including landing pages to register visitors for webinars discussing COVID-19 guidance, using the site as a platform for co-hosted content, and adding COVID-specific pages, including an interactive map. These site resources were advertised on social media and served as inbound traffic sources.

The site's home page was configured using widgets to allow users to quickly and easily update sections on the home page, notably the site hero video. This enabled us to update the hero video every six months, which was a requirement from company leadership.

The site took advantage of various WordPress plugins, including Yoast SEO Premium, WooCommerce, W3 Total Cache, HFCM, and Zapier.

The site was integrated with the CRM, sending e-Commerce sales to the CRM as opportunities and enabling cart abandonment email cadences. The e-Commerce payment gateway used was Chase WePay. Other integrations included Google Analytics and Tag Manager, Salesforce Account Engagement (Pardot), ZoomInfo, Meta, and QuickBooks Online.

AT A GLANCE

ROLE

- Client-side Project Manager

SKILLS

- Project Management
- Vendor Management
- WordPress Administration
- Stakeholder Management
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Technical Problem Solving
- Salesforce Administration
- Website Integrations
- Website Mobile Responsiveness

TIMELINE

- Vendor Selection - 4 months
- Website Development - 7 months

COST

- Direct Cost: \$80,000
- Indirect Cost: \$20,000

DEVELOPER

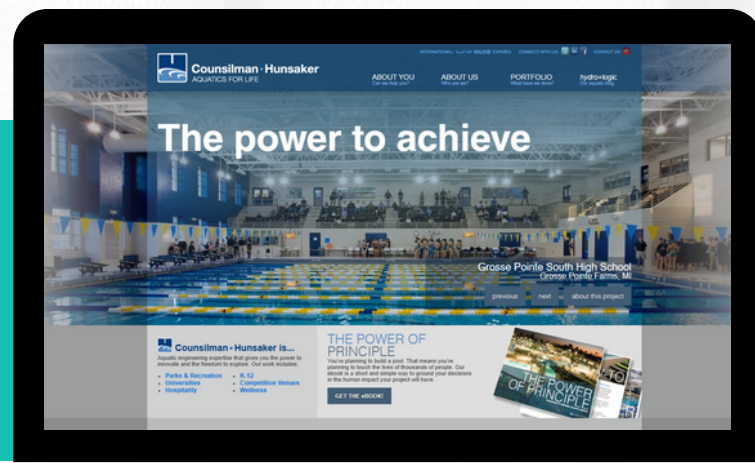
- Orange Design (now Hexxen)

SITE FEATURES

- Mobile-Responsive
- Custom Theme
- Custom Post Types
- e-Commerce Storefront
- CRM Integration
- ERP Integration

MARKETING PORTFOLIO

Website Development



Counsilman-Hunsaker Website, ca. 2012

CHALLENGES

1. Post-launch Site Bloat and Speed Issue

The website began experiencing site speed issues in 2021, at some points taking 30+ seconds for the home page to load and causing frustration for visitors and company leadership. The hosting service provider (HSP) blamed the site design while the web developer blamed the server.

A report from Orange Design uncovered that the site had nearly doubled in size and was now 27 GB. Upon investigation, we discovered that the site bloat was caused by backend usage of the website CMS by business development to store unoptimized images of past projects when adding new Project posts. Business development was also using the website as a database for past projects rather than its intended purpose to showcase projects, and new Project posts were being added at a higher frequency than in previous years, thanks to the company's growing business. They had installed an exporter to export all the Project posts into an Excel file that drew significant resources and was stalling out each time it was run.

Furthermore, we discovered that the hosting service provider was hosting the site on a shared server and was unable to provide additional resources or an alternative server to host the site. Counsilman-Hunsaker sought a new vendor for hosting the website and selected Beanstalk, based in St. Louis. Beanstalk was able to provide an independent server to host the website with plenty of resources from which to draw.

With the site migrated to Beanstalk's servers, the site load speed was reduced to less than one second a page and faster than the original site load speed when first launched.

2. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

The original scope of work included SEO setup and post-launch support but was redlined by leadership. The marketing team had to take on this project in-house, post-launch, using Yoast SEO Premium and SEMRush with the support of a subsequent SEO/Keyword Research audit report, conducted by the hosting service provider, Beanstalk.

3. Project Database Migration

Business Development's use of the website as a backend database did not provide an optimal visitor experience nor was it ideal for them. After verifying and collaborating on their database requirements, I created a custom Project Database in Salesforce and migrated all the Project posts from the website into the new database in Salesforce.

Migrating the Project Database to Salesforce offered multiple benefits, including a) providing data-driven reporting, b) creating consistency with project naming conventions and preventing potential misspellings of related entity names, c) permitting reverse lookup capabilities for project references, clients, and accounts, and d) granting access to the database and project details to any employee with Salesforce access.

With the Project Database deployed in Salesforce and approved by the Business Development team, I converted the Projects Portfolio section of the website to a Project Showcase that only showcased projects newer than 5 years. This reduced the number of Project posts by more than half, further enhancing site speed and visitor experience.



MATT BALL

Marketing Professional

Adaptable, results-oriented marketing professional with over 15 years of business experience and 7+ years in marketing strategy, brand development, and marketing technology management.