

CREATING FOR COMMUNITY

A CASE-STUDY FOR USER-CENTERED WEB DESIGN IN NON-PROFITS
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OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATION

REFUGEE
FORUM
OF KING COUNTY

The Refugee Forum of King County (RFKC) is a non-profit professional organization that supports service providers serving refugees and newly arrived immigrants in the greater Puget Sound area. Members include representatives from government entities (both state and national), local nonprofits and religious service organizations. As such, RFKC demonstrates a wide variety of information needs.

One way the RFKC is valuable to its members is through a meeting held in-person each month. An abundance of resources are provided at these meetings including meeting agendas, guest presentations, and paper hand-outs. However, the information was inaccessible online. The forum discussed the idea of a website for several years, but limited skills and resources were a barrier. We solved this problem by working with them to design a website. Our MLIS skills and commitment to public service, information access, and equity bore a user-centered approach to solving the RFKC's information problem and provided insight into the information issues affecting non-profit web design.

PROJECT GOALS

Sustainable

RFKC will feel confident using and updating their new site after project completion

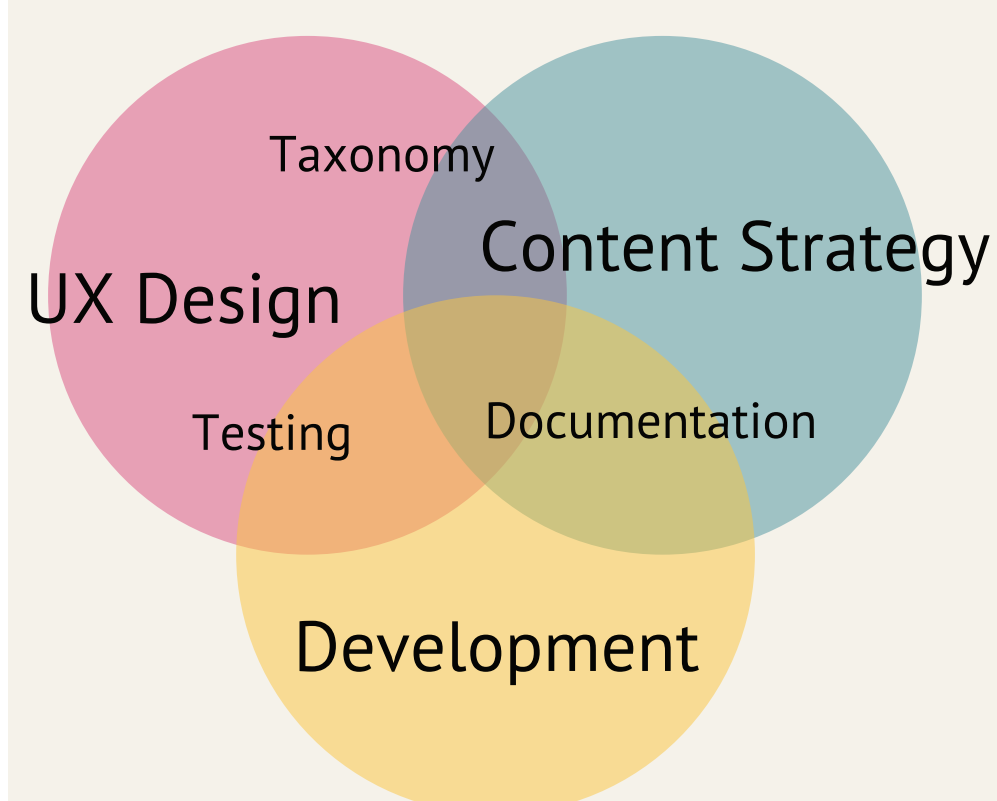
User-Centered

Site will meet the anticipated needs of users and sharing information digitally will supplement in-person meetings and allow for remote access and retrieval

Agile & Collaborative Approach

Constant communication with teammates and stakeholders and utilize feedback in quick iterative design cycles

FOCUS ON USER EXPERIENCE



Although each of us specialized in UX Design, Content Strategy, and Development, we met regularly to collaborate and iterate on our shared designs. Elements of our user-centered approach included creation of personas and other deliverables to inform our design process. Additionally we maintained open lines of communication with the RFKC board and members to get timely feedback on our work.

UX Deliverables

- User research: surveys, interviews, and usability testing
- Wireframing and iterative prototyping
- Taxonomy research & concept mapping

Visual Design

- Facilitate discussion about tone of the organization
- Develop color and type models for site
- Develop logo representative of brand

Communication & Content Strategy

- Content development, gathering, and refinement
- Alignment: technical, instructional and vision
- Management of stakeholder needs and interests



PERSONAS: WHO ARE THE USERS?



I'm a RFKC Member

- Looking for a directory of members
- Want to promote services and events for my organization
- Interested in keeping up with forum news and updates



I'm on the RFKC Board

- Wants to provide access to an archive of meetings and materials
- Seeking new ways to promote the forum to new members
- Interested in ways to share information with a wider audience remotely



I'm an ESL User or Refugee Advocate

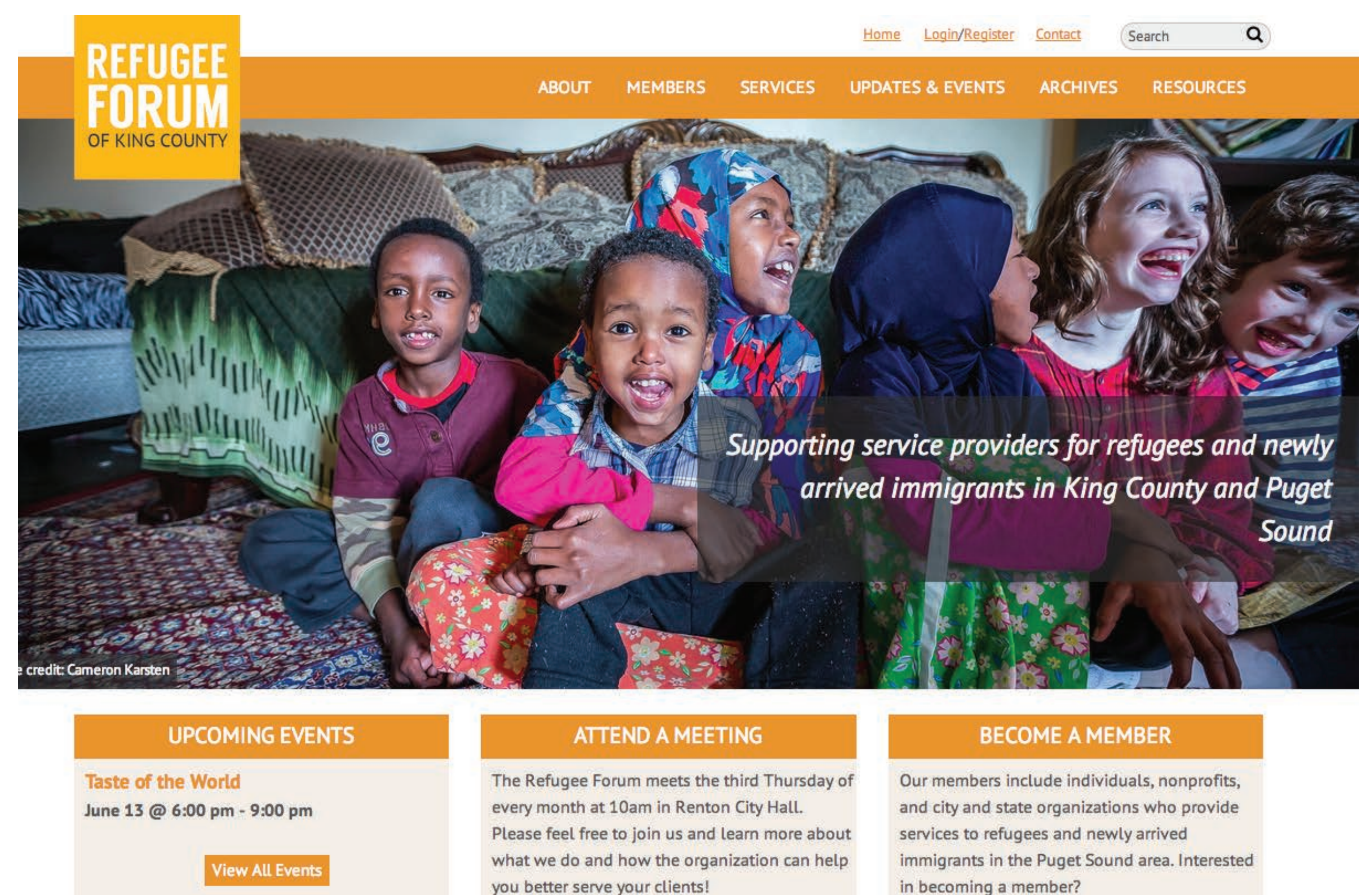
- Interested in participating, but English may not be my first language
- Looking for referral services to fit a particular need
- Wants to learn more about refugee needs and resources

DEVELOPMENT & OUTCOMES

The RFKC website was built according to current design and coding standards in order to ensure maximum ease of maintenance and use. Using WordPress as the platform, we created both a theme and a plugin to house the visual design and custom functionality, respectively. The goal was to make it as simple as possible for the RFKC to find another developer for maintenance issues, and for the developer to be able to make changes with minimal time spent exploring the files. Another goal during the development process was to customize the admin interface appropriately to streamline the web coordinators' workflow. Since the admins are important users, it was important to reduce distractions and make the back end correspond to the front end as much as possible.

In the end, our website included:

- Detailed member profiles
- Capacity for user-generated content
- Customized views of information about members and their services
- Documentation and training for two web coordinators who participate in the organization
- Customized admin interface for easier updating and maintenance



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