MARKETING STRATEGIES
FOR BELLEVUE PARKS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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The LCY student team with Project Lead Colin Walker (third from right) and Business School Dean Sandeep Krishnamurthy (far left). TERI THOMSON RANDALL

THE CHALLENGE

The City of Bellevue advertises its recreational activities through both a printed brochure and an online system. In addition to the tremendous departmental coordination it requires to create a physical magazine, the City is concerned about the high cost of producing print material, especially in comparison to its online counterpart. The City spends approximately $12,000 to $15,000 each year to print the brochure. The department seeks to make better use of its limited marketing budget by shifting more traffic through an online portal.

Bellevue Parks and Community Services strives to create a user-friendly webpage that encourages online registration over the use of paper brochures. However, the current online registration system is outdated, and many customers complain about its usability limitations. Students involved in this project sought to pinpoint strategies that could increase online use, while making sure customers who require a physical copy remain able to receive one.

OUR METHODS

SURVEY OF PARKS PROGRAM USERS

Residents were asked about print versus online registration forms and about the navigability and usability of the online site.

ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

Students categorized and analyzed survey data to pinpoint specific issues customers experience using the website.

SOFTWARE RESEARCH

The team researched various software platforms to see if it would make sense to buy software instead of updating the current system. Students also considered platforms used by other cities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Survey insights and market research led the team to select the City of Edmonton's (capital of the Canadian province Alberta) website as a model for their recommendations.

REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT

Students created a requirements document that could inform a web developer of the improvements that should be made to the current registration site.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey findings and the team's research, students formed two recommendations:

Redesign Existing Website: The City of Bellevue could redesign its website to make it similar to the City of Edmonton's. The website would include a home page that would guide visitors to the site to login and create accounts, search for facilities to rent, search for classes, and navigate to a calendar to view class schedules.

Fresh Start: The City could start fresh with a new platform called Wild Apricot. This software is reasonably priced and easy to use. It would allow Parks and Community Services to build a new site without requiring them to have any technical background or skills.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The results of our survey indicate the following, which could be further proved or disproved by collecting more data:

1. **A majority of users prefer the online site (87%); 13% state they use the printed brochure.**

2. **Most respondents who prefer the online registration system are between the ages of 35 and 44; those who prefer the printed brochure are aged 65+.**

3. **Most survey respondents state that their likelihood of registering for programs would not change if the physical copy of the brochure disappeared.**

4. **The online site's main pain points are navigation, usability, and search functionality.**

Wild Apricot is a membership management software. WILD APRICOT