

Developing a Website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Program

A Senior Project

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By

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to create an effective website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Program in order to improve communication with key audiences and ensure continued success for the organization. This website was intended to remain consistent with other Cal Poly websites, such as those listed on the Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) Student Life page under Clubs and Organizations, and was included on this page once created. A secondary purpose of the project was to give the Cal Poly Rodeo coach an easier way to recruit and contact potential student athletes. The project included research on the history of the program, content generation, collection and capture of photographs, edits of the website once it was created, and ensuring the website was included on the Cal Poly CAFES Student Life page under Clubs and Organizations.

Acknowledgments

This project would not have been possible without the hard work of many people including Coach Ben Londo of the Cal Poly Rodeo Program; Haley Marconett, Ryan Lau, Lauren Miller and Will Robbins of the Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences' Office of the Dean; Laura Sorvetti, of the Robert E. Kennedy Library's Special Collections and Archives; and Dr. Scott Vernon of the Cal Poly Agricultural Education and Communication Department - who acted as the guiding force throughout this entire process. A special thank you is also due to Connie and Clint Pearce, who have provided me with this education, and have loved, supported, and encouraged me every step of the way.

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Chapter One

Introduction

To communicate with a range of audiences in today's technology-centered environment, web presence is vital. Using a website and social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter not only allow an organization to reach a number of different people, but also helps keep its followers up to date with current events and encourages interaction between the organization and its audiences. Once established, websites and social media platforms need to be well structured, well maintained and properly utilized in order to be effective.

Cal Poly Rodeo, West Coast Region, NIRA

At California Polytechnic State University of San Luis Obispo, the school's competitive rodeo team is called the Cal Poly Rodeo Team. It operates as a club at Cal Poly, although it's not formally recognized on the school's Student Life page. Cal Poly exists in what the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, or NIRA, has deemed the West Coast Region.

Cal Poly Rodeo Webpage

Because the rodeo team only has a poorly functioning website at this time and is not listed officially on the Student Life page, it is difficult for people to find information about the team and events. These audiences consist of prospective students and parents, current students,

Rodeo Club boosters and alumni, prospective as well as current Cal Poly Rodeo sponsors, and others in our community. The Cal Poly rodeo team currently maintains multiple social media platforms but does not have a well maintained or properly-structured website. As a result, the team's web presence is weak. This makes it difficult for the organization to disseminate information and even more difficult for interested audiences to stay informed about the club's current events. The difficulty communicating hurts the organization because the team depends on incoming students to remain competitive with other schools; as well as it depends on the funds from boosters and alumni, sponsors, and other various donors to operate.

Statement of the Problem

Many of the audiences that the Cal Poly Rodeo Team depends on to function successfully are not currently getting reached. The Cal Poly Rodeo Team needs to be able to reach their various audiences electronically so that these groups can learn about everything they want and need to know about the team instantly. Though a Cal Poly Rodeo Team website currently exists, it is not well maintained, well organized, properly linked, or included on the CAFES Student Life page. The Cal Poly Rodeo Team needs a website that is well organized, well maintained, linked to various social media platforms and, most importantly, linked to the Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) Student Life page.

Importance of the Project

This project is important because the Cal Poly Rodeo Team's future existence depends on communication with its five key audiences. This project will benefit these audiences by keeping them better informed and connected with the rodeo team and its news and the team may benefit from the project through increased support. This support will consist of bigger crowds at Poly Royal Rodeo and other fundraisers, as well as ensure the general acceptance of the greater San Luis Obispo community. The western industry as a whole, which depends on public support to thrive, may benefit through the increased communication with audience members that may not be well informed about rodeo practices, values, or goals.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to create an effective website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Team which will improve communication with key audiences and ensure continued success for the organization as a club and a team. This website will be consistent with other websites listed on the CAFES Student Life page. Once created, the website is intended to be an included link on the CAFES Student Life page. A secondary purpose of the website is to make it easier for the Rodeo coach to source team members and maintain or improve the competitive quality of the team.

Objectives of the Project

The objective of this project is to create a website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Team by doing the following:

1. Identify what aspects of the current webpage are not functioning properly;
2. Research strategies to creating a strong web presence through an effective website;
3. Attain a website template that is consistent with the Cal Poly style guide;
4. Gather information about the Cal Poly Rodeo Team and begin to develop content to populate the various data fields of the website template;
5. Develop a plan for sustainability in order to maintain the effectiveness of the website in future years;
6. Create and launch a website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Team;
7. Contact CAFES tech support to publish the website under the CAFES Student Life page;
8. Eliminate the ineffective website.

Definitions of Important Terms

Content Management System (CMS) – A software system that enables the user to create and manage a website without requiring significant knowledge of web programming techniques or languages

Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) – A web language used to describe the look and feel of a website, giving structure to the page through technical code language.

Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) – Hidden code integrated and used on the website which connects the website and the users on that website to others on the world wide web.

Information Technology (IT) – The use and analysis of computers and other technological systems to collect, store, and send data.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) – Optimizing a website so as to increase its visibility to search engines and thereby improve ranking in search engine results.

Social Media – applications and web services that enable users to connect with other users, creating a social network.

Website Metrics – The interpretation and analysis of raw data to measure the effectiveness of a website.

Web Presence - An organization's virtual impression - made up of the organization's various digital platforms such a website and various social media outlets.

Summary

The Cal Poly Rodeo team is a university organization rich in heritage, history and tradition. In the past, Cal Poly Rodeo has been one of the premier rodeo programs in the West Coast Region. This success is dependent upon the recruitment of high quality student athletes, as well as the continued support and sponsorship of alumni and community members. To reach and

stay connected with the various target audiences that are important to this organization, an optimized website is vital and will enhance the relations already established, as well as create an opportunity for new ones. Once created, the website will benefit the Cal Poly community by allowing them to become more actively involved in the rodeo program, as well as make recruiting athletes and sponsors easier for the rodeo club. Increased support for the rodeo program will help ensure the team's continued existence, acceptance and success.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

A website is one of the most important elements of communication with large, diverse audiences. There is a proper way to create a website and once created, a proper way to maintain it and gauge its performance. The Cal Poly Rodeo Team, a division of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, could greatly benefit from the improved communication that better web presence would provide.

The Cal Poly Rodeo team currently has an outdated website, as well as some social media outlets, but these are not doing anything to help out the team's search engine prevalence. With a better website and better Search Engine Optimization (SEO) initiatives, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team's web presence will be greatly improved: bolstering its credibility and strengthening communication with prospective students, current students, alumni and sponsors alike.

Web Presence Rationale

Today's cutting-edge marketing practices are not possible without web presence – a component of information technology (Berisha, 2013). “In today's environment... a company needs to have an existing web presence in order to appear legitimate in the eyes of the consumer,” (Hulbert, 2010). Not only does web presence instill credibility in an organization, but it also allows for improved communication with global audiences. “The internet has given new impetus to direct marketing approaches... and tools like Facebook and Twitter have revolutionized the whole notion of customer engagement,” (Hulbert, 2010). Simply put, web

presence is the combination of an organization's website, social media presence, search engine prevalence, and online advertising presence (Adams, 2013).

Prospective Students and Parents

Without the engagement of prospective students, who can gain exposure to the team before entering college, the team's talent may suffer. This is because there may be fewer interested incoming freshmen which will force the pool of possible team members to shrink. Getting a larger group of students interested in the rodeo team will make it easier for the head coach to select a diverse, skilled, competitive team. Web presence is especially important for this audience, not only because many of the members of this demographic are already quite comfortable with the internet, but more importantly because an online encounter may likely be the first impression that these individuals ever have of Cal Poly's rodeo team. Additionally, the parents of these prospective students must be convinced that the program is credible enough to entrust the time, money, safety and well-being of their children once they leave home. To provide an adequate amount of pertinent information, make a good first impression and gain trust, the website must be strong. A professional, informative, clear and well-maintained website is essential to establish credibility which will allow parents to feel comfortable with their student's decision. Apart from this first impression, a first interaction could be encouraged with a detailed contact page containing a question entry widget and information on how to request an official Cal Poly Rodeo information packet.

Current Students

Current students, which include Cal Poly rodeo team members, non-rodeo students and rodeo team members from other West Coast Region schools are important audiences to reach and stay in contact with because they account for such a large portion of attendees, supporters and athletic competitors. More student support and involvement at events such as the Poly Royal Rodeo, fundraisers and merchandise sales will generate the funds necessary to continue putting Cal Poly Rodeo on the upper echelon of the West Coast Region (Londo, 2014).

Cal Poly Rodeo Boosters and Alumni

Alumni are the primary members of the Cal Poly Rodeo Club Boosters; a club which pays for and provides numerous events, scholarships, program improvements, work days and fundraisers. Alumni who are not boosters also account for a large portion of the sponsors that make it possible for the team to continue operating (Londo, 2014).

Sponsors

Other important sponsors of Cal Poly Rodeo are comprised of families and business owners throughout the Central Coast, California, and the United States (Londo, 2013). These demographics would benefit from the webpage through increased exposure for their brands on our sponsors page, as well as an improved information channel which the webpage could provide. For prospective sponsors, much like prospective students, the team's web presence must be strong enough to build trust and engagement in the organization. When these audience

members not only feel that they are able to trust the organization but also feel personally connected to it, they will be more inclined to donate resources (Londo, 2014).

Our Community

The Cal Poly Rodeo team greatly benefits from the support and good will of the community. By appealing to this audience, it is more likely that rodeos and fundraisers will be more supported by the greater San Luis Obispo community, rather than just the Cal Poly community alone. It is also important to the Cal Poly Rodeo team to give back to the community by hosting Special rodeos for mentally or physically handicapped children and adults and other charity events. This audience is important to connect with to ensure they are properly informed, respected and invited to participate in events (Londo, 2014).

Website Creation

A website is “a collection of Web pages containing text, images, audio and video,” (Sreedhar, 2010). In today’s context, being a web designer is virtually the same as being a web master because of Content Management Systems (CMS) design themes and ready-made templates which make publishing a website much easier than using Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) codes to build each and every element of the website design one piece at a time. After a domain name has been purchased, a site host has been chosen and content has been created, the website can be published (Heng, n.d.).

It should be noted that although web design should be a continuous process, care and attention should be paid to various elements such as accessibility and navigation during the

initial rounds design. “Poor and careless web design leads to hard ship to public utility and does not serve the purpose,” (Sreedhar, 2010). Once the website has been published, further steps, such as website testing and SEO, ensure that the website is functioning properly and garnering traffic. According to Heng “few new webmasters perform (website testing) accurately,” (Heng, n.d.). Directly testing your domain name from browsers such as Firefox, Opera, Safari and Chrome is the only way to ensure that the website is functioning properly in each operating system. The final stage of web creation is getting recognition from search engines. If there are valid and operating links on the website, the search engine algorithms will likely find the site on their own. If there aren’t any links, however, the site would need to be submitted to search engines manually (Heng, n.d.).

Website Metrics

Although it is important to make sure that a website is loading and linking properly, there are some more complex methods to gauge a website’s effectiveness. SEO, “can be described as a cluster of strategies and techniques used to increase the amount of visitors to a website by obtaining a high-ranking placement in the search results page of a search engine,” (Parikh, 2013). The value in this is the ability to attract new traffic, rather than traffic from users that are already familiar with the site.

As was earlier mentioned, some SEO can be done on-page with proper design strategy using proper keywords and HTML codes. Off-page, post-publish practices which were also previously mentioned include submitting the site to various directories, checking links, optimizing for various keywords and visitor tracking (Gupta, 2012). One way to monitor visitors to the website is through web analytics tools such as Google Analytics. Google Analytics “is not

just about the number of people visiting a site, but is also about the quality of the traffic and what the visitors do when they access a site,” (Plaza, 2012). Using the raw data supplied by web analytics tools, webmasters can “improve the effectiveness of websites, and managers make decisions about campaign effectiveness,” (Kent, 2011).

Social Media Marketing

Due to its low cost margins and wide popularity, social media is one of the fastest growing marketing strategies. “By 2011, approximately 83% of Fortune 500 companies were using some form of social media to connect with consumers,” (Naylor, n.d.). Not only does social media create a source of inexpensive marketing opportunities, but also a chance to connect with consumers and allow for interactive conversation. Since social media sites are often used by consumers more frequently than websites to gather brand information, care should be taken to ensure the organization is adequately and correctly represented. Correctly utilized, social media can be “the best instrument to reach the customers globally and receive their valuable feedback,” (Kirits, 2011).

National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association

The Cal Poly Rodeo Team, a division of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, could greatly benefit from the use of a properly built and maintained website (Londo, 2014). The National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association, or NIRA, is a governing body which seeks to, “promote college rodeo, preserve the history of college rodeo and honor the accomplishments of

collegiate contestants and alumni,” (Londo, 2013). Beginning in August of 1949, NIRA is still going strong today with over 137 member schools totaling over 3,500 students annually (“The First 50 Years,” n.d.).

Cal Poly Rodeo Program

California Polytechnic State University is a member school of NIRA and sends Cal Poly student athletes to the College National Finals Rodeo annually. The Cal Poly Rodeo Program has been in existence since 1939. The Cal Poly Rodeo Club is open to any current Cal Poly student who upholds a 2.0 minimum GPA complete 12 academic credit hours per term, be a dues-paying, card-carrying NIRA member, abide by the NIRA code of conduct, and submit high-school transcripts during their incoming year (“The First 50 Years,” n.d.). The competitive team members are chosen at the coach’s discretion before each rodeo, and are subject to change from competition to competition. This team is comprised of four men and four women. These individuals compete for both team and individual points at each rodeo. Cal Poly Rodeo Team members travel across the state of California to compete in NIRA sanctioned rodeos. The Cal Poly Rodeo Team has won six national titles since 1960 (Londo, 2014). The Cal Poly Rodeo class, listed in the Cal Poly academic catalog as AG 243, is open to any interested students and focuses on the theory and practice of the sport of rodeo (Londo, 2013).

Jack Roddy, a former World Champion Steer Wrestler and Professional Rodeo Sports Hall of Fame and National Cowboy Hall of Fame inductee, remembered choosing Cal Poly, “because it was the Notre Dame of Rodeo,” but also because it offered “a first-class education” and “the contacts needed for success” (Londo, 2013). Today, the goals of the Cal Poly Rodeo

team continue to be success, both in the classroom and the arena, and a perpetuation of the Cal Poly Rodeo heritage and tradition (Nichol, Torlai, 2013).

Summary

Websites and social media are essential to effective communication. Additionally, by incorporating Search Engine Optimization techniques, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team can create a web and social media presence that will ensure it remains successful in reaching audiences for years to come.

Chapter Three

Methods & Materials

Methods

In order to create a Cal Poly Rodeo website, there were numerous steps which needed to be taken. Most of this involves consulting faculty to plan, coordinate, and collaborate on developing the website layout and content. Firstly, representatives of the Cal Poly Rodeo Program need to be consulted to determine what the most important elements of a website are, and how they should best be presented. After meeting with faculty from the Cal Poly Rodeo Team, it is important to meet with faculty from the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science Department's Office of the Dean – specifically faculty members associated with advancement and information technology (IT). These faculty members are vital to this process because they help to determine the best layout or template for the website, and useful editing tips for website content, as well as ensure the actual website is indeed created and published. Once this has been done, it is important to meet regularly with a faculty advisor from the Cal Poly Agricultural Education and Communication department. This individual will be an instrumental figure in providing guidance and critique of the website during its creation stage.

It is important when creating a Cal Poly Rodeo Website to ensure that the website looks like and is linked on the CAFES website. This will ensure consistency, as well as establish credibility with the audience. The second thing which is of great importance in creating the website is to make sure everything is in a simple, yet useful format. For the website to serve the needs of both prospective and current students, as well as faculty and community members, the

site should include the following general topics: an About Us page, including information on – the team, history of the team, West Coast Region, NIRA, College National Finals, National Champions from Cal Poly, the Cal Poly Rodeo Coach, Facilities and Practice, and Our Community; a Rodeos and Results page, with information on the Poly Royal Rodeo, Regional Rodeos, and Results; a Join the Program page, including information on – Membership requirements, the Rodeo Class, Membership forms, and Scholarships; a Support the Program page, with information on – Current Sponsors, How to Become a Sponsor, Boosters and Alumni, Donations, and Merchandise; and a Contact Us page with information on the Cal Poly Rodeo Coach, Contact information, Ask a Question submission, and information on how to Follow us on social media.

Rodeo Faculty Consultation

Ben Londo, the current Cal Poly Rodeo coach, was the first faculty member who was consulted. Londo offered vital information on what kinds of purposes the website should serve, as well as how the website should be designed for optimum efficiency. He explained that the website should give a student who is looking to join the program all the information they need to do so. Additionally, it should be designed in a way that requires only minimal upkeep to remain current. After a rough draft of all the copy had been created, the Cal Poly Rodeo Team’s Student Board was consulted for comments and suggestions that they might have to improve the functionality of the website.

Agricultural Education and Communication Faculty Consultation

Dr. Scott Vernon of the Cal Poly Agricultural Education and Communication Department was the next individual consulted for advice on how to design and format the website. He offered very useful information regarding which parts of the website needed to go where and how it should all look online. He also offered edits on the copy that would be included on the website.

CAFES Consultation

Once the author had created a general outline of the website, Ryan Lau, of the College of Agriculture Food and Environmental Sciences' Office of the Dean, created the template for the website which was consistent with the look and function of other Cal Poly CAFES websites. After this was done, the author was able to make adjustments to the template as well as write the copy which would be submitted in the various sections of the website. Once a rough draft of all content had been created, a meeting was held with Ryan Lau and Haley Marconett, who also works with the CAFES website, to go over the specifics of what information needs to be hyperlinked, what forms should be included, and also gave edits on copy. After the suggested edits were made, these individuals uploaded the content to the website. Other individuals from the CAFES Dean's Office provided pictures that were thought to be of interest for this website.

Continuous Revisions

Multiple revisions were made after each of the consultations. It is important that a website be continuously revised so as to ensure that any errors are corrected and also that any links which are included on the website are functioning properly. Additionally, photos can be added or swapped out as time goes on to give the website the most professional and current look possible.

Many more revisions were made during summer, after the first round of copy had been uploaded to the website.

Materials

This website was created by individuals from the Cal Poly CAFES Dean's Office using a website creation program called Drupal. Drupal is a software package that allows users the ability to easily organize, publish, and manage web content. It is not necessary to have extensive knowledge of Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to use this software, making it very user-friendly. This program was chosen so that minor edits could be made to the website by the author of this project, as well as individuals who may be in charge of keeping the website current in the future. Drupal is highly customizable and is a free software package, making it ideal for use in this project. Photos used on the website were obtained and digitized with formal, written permission from the Cal Poly Special Collections and Archives, located in the Cal Poly Kennedy Library.

Summary

It is vital to consult multiple faculty members throughout this process. Rodeo faculty are important because they are the ones whom this site represents and is created to benefit. Agricultural Education and Communications Faculty are important to consult because they have overseen many similar projects and can give crucial feedback as far as layout and content is concerned. Additionally, they have the most contacts which could be beneficial in either asking

for advice on how a template should look, or who to contact to create a template. Lastly, staff from the CAFES Dean's Office specializing in advancement and IT are important to consult because they will ultimately host the website, and are responsible for facilitating any major revisions that need to be made to the website. Without these resources, rodeo website creation could not have been possible. Their guidance and support enables the author to create a website that is professional, functional, and highly informative.

Chapter 4

Results and Discussions

Since the overall goal of this project was to develop a website for the Cal Poly Rodeo team, the full project can and will be viewed at cafes-rodeo.calpoly.edu. Apart from finding the website via the direct URL, users will also be able to find the website via the Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences Student Life page, under clubs and organizations. The website was officially published on November 1st, 2014 and was placed on the CAFES Student Life page under Clubs and Organizations on November 1st, 2014.

Results

The result of this project, which was a functioning, published website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Team, will be presented in this section through a series of numbered screenshots representing the various pages and their functions.

Figure 1. First Screenshot of Home Page

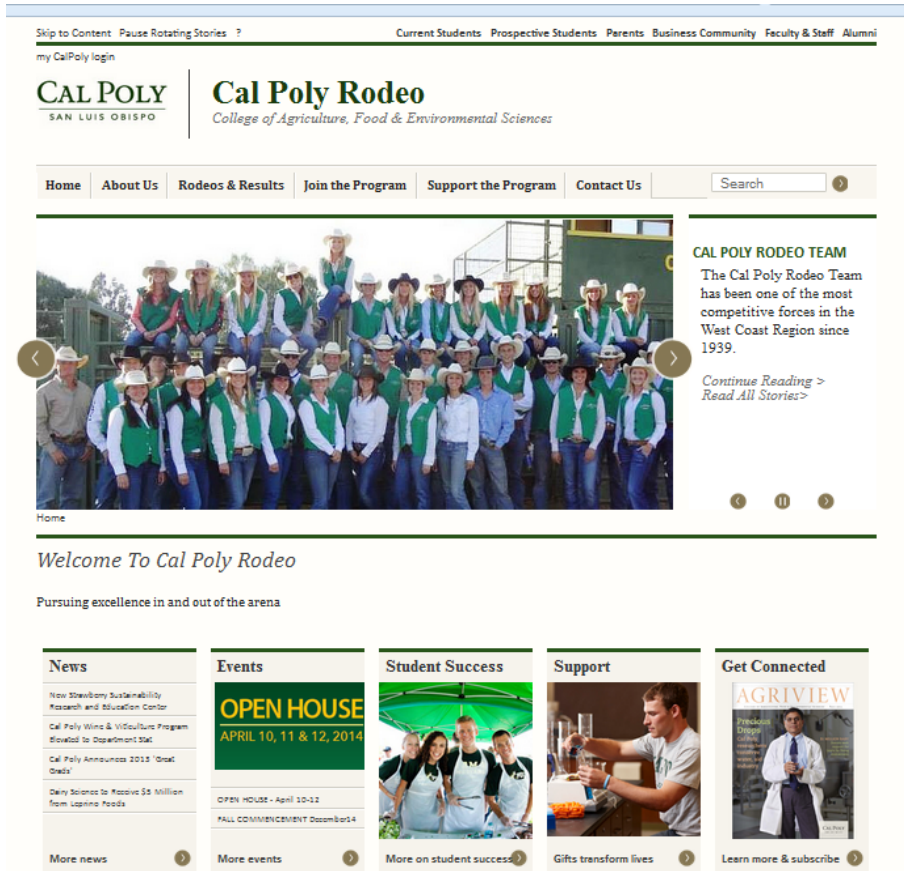


Figure 1 is a view of home page, featuring “Home Page Hero #1” with Navigation Tabs at top and six rotating “Home Page Hero” photos with captions and links to their full stories. These are intended to create a sort of visual appeal, along with showcase some of the things a viewer might be specifically interested in. This screenshot shows the first of six rotating home page heroes. This image is a current photo of the rodeo team, with a caption that states how long the rodeo program has been in existence at Cal Poly. When the user clicks “Continue Reading,” they are taken to the “About Us” page where they can read more about the team.

Figure 2. Second Screenshot of Home Page



Figure 2 is a view of home page with second of six home page heroes. This image is of student athletes practicing in the arena, with a caption stating that the rodeo facilities are close to school. When the user clicks “Continue Reading,” they are redirected to a page located on “About Us” that says “Facilities and Practice” where they can read more about Cal Poly Rodeo’s practice facilities and boarding amenities.

Figure 3. Third Screenshot of Home Page



Figure 3 is a view of home page with third of six rotating home page heroes. This photo is of a Cal Poly student athlete competing at the annual Poly Royal Rodeo with a caption that says tells a little about the history of this event. When the user clicks “Continue Reading,” they are taken to the “Rodeos and Results” page that has details on the Poly Royal Rodeo, as well as other rodeos that the team competes in.

Figure 4. Fourth Screenshot of Home Page



Figure 4 is a view of the home page with the fourth of six home page heroes. This photo is of the current coach, Ben Londo, at the arena; with a caption stating that he encourages any interested in joining the team to enroll in the Beginning Rodeo class, AG 243. When the user clicks “Continue Reading,” they are directed to the “Join the Program” page where they can learn more about how to get involved.

Figure 5. Fifth Screenshot of Home Page



Figure 5 is a view of the home page with the fifth of six rotating home page heroes. This photo is of the student board members, with a caption stating their names and corresponding positions. When the user clicks “Continue Reading,” they are redirected to the “About Us” page where they can learn more about the student board members.

Figure 6. Sixth Screenshot of Home Page



Figure 6 is a view of the home page with the sixth of six rotating home page heroes. This image is a photo of the current Rodeo queen, with a caption saying her name. When the user clicks “continue reading,” they are taken to the “About Us” page where they can learn more about the queen’s bio and interests.

Figure 7. Screenshot of About Us Page

Skip to Content ? Current Students Prospective Students Parents Business Community Faculty & Staff Alumni

my CalPoly login

CAL POLY
SAN LUIS OBISPO

Cal Poly Rodeo
College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences


Home About Us Rodeos & Results Join the Program Support the Program Contact Us Search

Home : About Us

About Us

The Team

The Cal Poly Rodeo points team, which competes for team points throughout the competitive rodeo season, is selected at the coach's discretion and is comprised of four women and six men, all of whom are also members of the Cal Poly Rodeo program. Apart from earning team points, individuals on the points team receive partial compensation for travel expenses. Priority registration is given to selected individuals, based on the coach's discretion, during fall and spring quarters.



The Cal Poly Rodeo program is open to all students who comply with Cal Poly student athlete requirements. These requirements include:

- RODEO HOME
- About Us
- Titles & Champions
- Facilities & Practice
- Rodeos & Results
- Join the Program
- Support the Program
- Contact Us

Figure 7 is a view of the “About Us” page, which includes information about the team, the coach, the board and the queen. Also accessible from this page are “Titles and Champions,” “Facilities and Practice,” and “The History of Cal Poly Rodeo.”

Figure 8. Screenshot of Rodeos & Results Page



Figure 8 is a view of the “Rodeos and Results” page, which contains information on the Poly Royal Rodeo, Regional Rodeos, and a link which takes users to a website which posts results from recent rodeos.

Figure 9. Screenshot of Join the Program Page

Skip to Content ? Current Students Prospective Students Parents Business Community Faculty & Staff Alumni

my CalPoly login

CAL POLY
SAN LUIS OBISPO

Cal Poly Rodeo
College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences

Home About Us Rodeos & Results **Join the Program** Support the Program Contact Us Search

Home : Join the Program

Join the Program

Membership

The Cal Poly Rodeo program is open to both competitive and non-competitive members. To become a competitive member of the Cal Poly Rodeo Program, individuals must meet the membership requirements specified by NIRA, as well as the membership requirements specified by the Cal Poly Rodeo program. The criterion for competitive membership is as follows.

NIRA Membership Requirements:

- Maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA
- Complete 12 academic credit hours per term
- Be a dues-paying, card-carrying member
- Abide by the [NIRA Code of Conduct](#)
- High school transcripts are required for incoming first-year students

Cal Poly Rodeo Membership Requirements:

- Complete and submit a [membership application](#)
- Enroll in AG 243-02 (Advanced Competitive Rodeo) during the fall and spring competitive quarters
- Attend scheduled practice sessions, member meetings and program events



RODEO HOME

- About Us
- Rodeos & Results
- Join the Program**
- Support the Program
- Contact Us

Figure 9 is a view of “Join the Program” page which includes information about NIRA and Cal Poly Rodeo membership requirements and forms, the rodeo class, and scholarships.

Figure 10. Screenshot of Support the Program Page

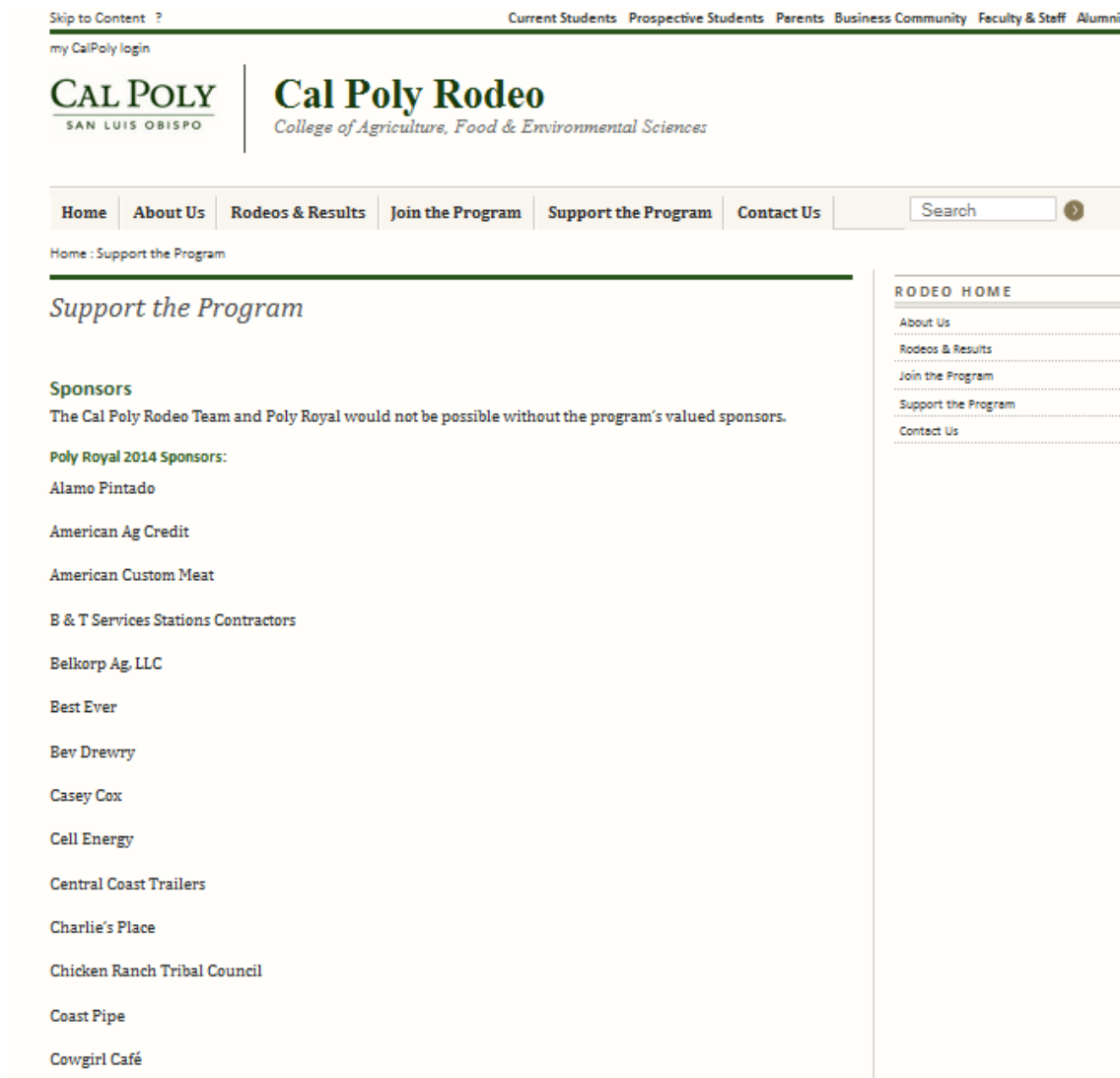


Figure 10 is a view of the “Support the Program” page which includes links and information on Poly Royal sponsors and becoming a sponsor, Rodeo Boosters and Alumni, how to make donations, and where to buy Cal Poly Rodeo merchandise.

Figure 11. Screenshot of Contact Us Page

Skip to Content ? Current Students Prospective Students Parents Business Community Faculty & Staff Alumni

my CalPoly login

CAL POLY **Cal Poly Rodeo**
SAN LUIS OBISPO College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences

Home About Us Rodeos & Results Join the Program Support the Program **Contact Us** Search

Home : Contact Us

Contact Us

Coach Bio

As a Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) cowboy since 2003, Ben Londo has amassed an admirable list of achievements, including three-time Saddle Broc Champion for the Columbia River Circuit. Before he began competing in the PRCA, however, Ben was a proud Cal Poly Mustang who graduated in 2007 with a B.S. in Construction Management. During his on the Cal Poly Rodeo Team, Ben earned Bareback Riding and All-Around Championship titles for two years running at the College National Finals Rodeo. Ben strives to build student's strengths both inside and outside the arena - by stressing the importance of a commitment to both academics and practice. Under Ben's guidance since fall of 2013, The Cal Poly Rodeo Team has continued to flourish as one of the most competitive college teams in the West Coast Region.

Contact

Please fill out and submit a [membership application](#) before contacting the Cal Poly Rodeo coach.

Ben Londo (Coach)
E-mail: blondo@calpoly.edu

Shauna Fry (Regional Secretary)
E-mail: westrodeo13@gmail.com

Phone: (559) 740-8594

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Figure 11 is a view of the “Contact Us” page, which provides information on how to contact the rodeo coach and the regional secretary, along with links to Cal Poly Rodeo social media sites.

Results and Discussion of Objectives

1. Identify what aspects of the current webpage are not functioning properly
 - Met – the content on the old website was partially incorrect, dated, and failed to give background on the team and information on who to contact to get involved
2. Research strategies to creating a strong web presence through an effective website
 - Met – Research was conducted and compiled on effective ways to create and manage a website
3. Attain a website template that is consistent with the Cal Poly style guide
 - Met – Ryan Lau of Cal Poly's College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences IT department obtained and populated a website template that was consistent with the look, feel, and functionality of other Cal Poly websites.
4. Gather information about the Cal Poly Rodeo Team and begin to develop content to populate the various data fields of the website template
 - Met – The Cal Poly Rodeo Coach, Ben Londo, was consulted numerous times to brainstorm what information the website needed to contain, along with how the information should be organized.
5. Develop a plan for sustainability in order to maintain the effectiveness of the website in future years
 - Met – The newly created website, along with the written portion of this project, will serve as the framework for future website managers to carry on and upkeep this site.
 - Ben Londo, the rodeo coach, will serve as the main website manager in future years.

- The possibility of creating a new “Digital Ambassador” position on the Cal Poly Student Board was discussed with Ben Londo. Duties of this position would include upkeep of the website, as well as other social media.
6. Create and launch a website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Team
 - Met – the first version of the website was first published in April of 2014.
Subsequent edits and additions have been made since that time.
 7. Contact CAFES tech support to publish the website under the CAFES Student Life page
 - Will be met once the finalized version of the website is launched
 8. Eliminate the old website
 - Met – the old website is no longer live

Chapter Five

Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Summary

The purpose of this project was to create an effective website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Program in order to improve communication with key audiences and ensure continued success for the organization. This website was intended to remain consistent with other Cal Poly websites, such as those listed on the Cal Poly College of Agriculture Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) Student Life page under Clubs and Organizations, and was included on this page once created. A secondary purpose of the project was to give the Cal Poly Rodeo Coach an easier way to recruit and contact potential student athletes. The project included research on the history of the program, content generation, collection and capture of photographs, edits of the website once it was created, and ensuring the website was included on the Cal Poly CAFES Student Life page under Clubs and Organizations.

The new Cal Poly Rodeo website will be much more helpful to current and prospective students, boosters and alumni, the greater Cal Poly and San Luis Obispo communities, and other schools that compete in the NIRA's West Coast region. This is because it contains content that will allow for a better understanding and appreciation of the team's history, structure, and accolades; as well as correct information about how to contact key members of the organization. The Cal Poly template used for this website gives the website a more professional look that is consistent with other Cal Poly departments, and is much more user-friendly than the old Cal Poly Rodeo website. The website has been designed in a way that will only require minimal upkeep

throughout each calendar year, which will increase the likelihood that it will be kept up-to-date by future managers. It should be continually reviewed and revised in future years to ensure that the images and information provided are current and correct.

Recommendations

The following recommendations should be consulted by future website managers to ensure that the website remains relevant:

1. If the website manager is new to the position, a meeting with key players of the CAFES Dean's office should be set up at the beginning of each year. Establishing a relationship with the Director of Communications and perhaps the student assistants they employ, will be vital for making updates if the website manager is not familiar enough with the Druple, the website-management platform, to make these edits on his or her own.
2. Make yearly updates:
 - a. A new team picture should be taken and posted at the beginning of each year. Users prefer pictures to content and especially prefer seeing people in these pictures. This group picture should be of the team in its entirety, wearing their official Cal Poly vests and dressed in western attire. Faces should be clear of both sunglasses and shadows and the photo should be of a high enough resolution that it will not be small or pixilated on the website.
 - b. A new Cal Poly Rodeo student board picture should be taken and posted at the beginning of each year. This group picture should feature the student board in its entirety – although the Rodeo Queen does not necessarily need to be pictured. Again, the photo should be of a high quality and should clearly show the students'

faces. New board bios should also be attained from each officer for posting on the “About Us” page.

- c. A new Rodeo Queen picture should be taken and posted at the beginning of each year. This could be a headshot or an action shot, as long as the Queen’s face is clearly visible and she should be wearing her crown, sash, and western attire. Her bio should also be obtained for posting on the “About Us” page.
 - d. A current Poly Royal flyer should be obtained and posted to the “Rodeos and Results” page as soon as it is created. Until then, the previous year’s poster can serve as a placeholder.
 - e. An updated list of sponsors should be obtained and posted after Poly Royal each year and placed on the “Support the Program” tab under “Sponsors.”
3. Conduct yearly audits as needed to ensure all information is still current and correct.
- a. Should the coaching position change hands, photos and a bio should be obtained from the new coach and posted to the “About Us” page, as well as the “Contact Us” page
 - b. Should the West Coast Region’s rodeo schedule change, the “Rodeos and Results” page should reflect these changes under the “Regional Rodeos” section.
 - c. Contact information for both the coach and the regional secretary should be checked for accuracy.
 - d. Add any new championship titles to the “Titles and Champions” page located on the “About Us” page

- e. Consult the coach and the Cal Poly Rodeo student board yearly to ensure the website is effective and see if there are any other revisions that could be made to make it more user-friendly, informative, and helpful.
4. If revising or re-creating the website as part of a senior project, regular meetings with the Senior Project Advisor are not only helpful but also necessary.

Conclusions

Creating a website for the Cal Poly Rodeo Team was a success because the objectives set forth at the beginning of the project were all met and the website is currently serving an important purpose for those involved with or interested in the Cal Poly Rodeo Program. The template used is consistent with that of other Cal Poly departments and organizations which make the website look unified with the school. The template also does a good job of displaying the information and pictures in a way that is clean and user-friendly. The information, documents, and photos gathered will not only be beneficial for the interested users, but also for students or coaches who want to make future revisions to this website, or create website for a similar Cal Poly organization. Due to time and scheduling constraints, the author was unable to provide pictures and bios of each individual team member. In the future, the addition of this component could greatly enhance the website. Additionally, a student-run blog could help add another component of personality to the website. Overall, however, the website is effective and accurate as it is and fulfills the need that the Cal Poly Rodeo Program had at the onset of this project.

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