



The Computerworld Honors Program

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Final Copy of Case Study

Status:

Laureate

Year:

2013

Organization Name:

MicroTech

Organization URL:

MicroTech.net

Project Name:

Latino Donor Collaborative

Please select the category in which you are submitting your entry:

Innovation

Please provide an overview of the nominated project. Describe the problem it was intended to solve, the technology or approach used, how it was innovative and any technical or other challenges that had to be overcome for successful implementation and adoption. (In 300 words or less.)

MicroTech built an online collaborative knowledge portal using an open source infrastructure for the Latino Donor Collaborative (LDC), a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization co-founded in 2010 by Henry Cisneros and Sol Trujillo. MicroTech extensively collaborated with the LDC to provide a tool to promote their non-partisan nationwide initiative to expand and rebuild the Latino brand by advancing a more accurate, fact-based portrayal of Latinos and their significant contributions to America in cultural, economic and national security leadership realms. The LDC is dedicated to helping Latinos who constitute 16.7% (52M) of the total U.S. population. The problem was that the LDC didn't have a platform or cyber presence. MicroTech solved this problem by providing them with a platform

to facilitate their work with other interest groups that share their commitment to rebuilding the "Latino Brand" and reinforce the fact that Latino Americans are patriotic, hardworking, and entrepreneurial citizens. The principal challenge that had to be overcome was organizing and building a total cyber presence for the LDC and LDC Board Members as well as other interested parties so they could use the site to conduct business and engage in dialogue. Since LDC members are not geographically tied to one area, the portal has initially adopted an "LDC Access Only" component where members can communicate, schedule events, and share research. This portion of the portal is pivotal to successful implementation and adoption of the project. This strategic communication feature is used to create and distribute newsletters highlighting LDC events and announcements regarding their work and fundraising efforts. The end result is an online resource that serves as a forum where the LDC collaborates, cooperates with, and supplements the work of other Latino Groups while sharing news and research.

When was this project implemented or last updated? (Please specify month and year.) Has it incorporated new technologies and/or other innovations since its initial deployment? (In 300 words or less.)

The LDC portal was launched in October of 2012. Since that time, LDC members have been instructed on how to use the site more effectively and efficiently to communicate and collaborate with each other. A translation component was integrated into the portal to enable site users and visitors to quickly change the language of the portal in order to better accommodate their needs and language preference. The portal also has been updated to host registrations and travel accommodations for all official LDC events. Members of the board can keep track of all registered participants and easily communicate event details and updates through the automatic event mailing list that participants are added to upon registration. Since the LDC is a non-profit organization, funding is critical to its success. The portal functionality was enhanced to include support for secure tax-deductible donations and tribute gifts through PayPal. To increase the LDC's strategic reach, the portal content was created to be compatible in both Android and Apple environments, thus facilitating the use of mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets. While the work of the LDC is ongoing, any information regarding LDC initiatives shaping public policy matters and other mission driving behaviors are immediately posted to the portal to enhance public awareness and knowledge. Major advancements and key announcements are quickly distributed to peers via the portal's easy to use newsletter template.

Is implementation of the project complete? If no, please describe the project's phases and which phase the project is now in. (In 300 words or less.)

Although the Implementation phase of the project is complete, MicroTech's collaboration with the LDC and work on this project is ongoing. The first phase, which included content gathering and portal design, is complete. The project is currently in phase two which includes the initial public launch of the portal and educating users. Phase two also includes establishing a social media presence for the LDC by creating social media profiles on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. These social media platforms will provide additional venues for hosting and distributing LDC related news. Phase two also encompasses training and an educational component focused on teaching LDC members how to best use social media and the portal to help promote the LDC mission and vision. The final phase of the project will be the formal handoff of the portal from MicroTech to the LDC. This will occur after phase two is completed in its entirety. Once key LDC personnel have demonstrated sufficient mastery of how to operate and maintain the site, MicroTech will coordinate and assist in a proper transition so the LDC can manage and operate the solution without external assistance.

Please provide at least one example of how the technology project has benefited a specific individual or organization. Feel free to include personal quotes from individuals who have directly benefited from the work. (In 300 words or less.)

MicroTech's solution has been instrumental in helping the LDC reach their targeted audiences. The portal solution has enabled the LDC to engage traditional and online media in order to advance the adoption of stories, portrayals and fact-based messages that spotlight the many contributions of Latinos to American society. This approach has helped combat and address negative public perceptions regarding the Latino community by developing coherent and consistent messaging. The portal solution has also played a key role in introducing LDC board members to the media resulting in numerous speaking engagements for both public and private audiences. The attention the LDC has garnered from the MicroTech solution also has expanded board members' opportunities to reach policy makers in diverse sectors and engage them on important issues relevant to Latinos. The solution has promoted open dialogue and problem solving with political leaders and civic leaders from the corporate, philanthropic, media, and entertainment sectors as well. Additionally, the MicroTech solution showcases the work and actions of the LDC on a more visible public platform. Since the platform's launch, the LDC has had their most successful public event to date convening interested parties including New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg who attended as a Keynote Speaker and noted how the LDC's work has made monumental strides forward when it comes to

"rebranding Latinos" by honoring their history, their energy, their patriotism and their entrepreneurial spirit. It is also worth noting that the MicroTech solution has been instrumental in facilitating the awarding of LDC scholarships that fund additional research on crucial Latino issues. Interest generated by the portal has also opened up other opportunities for LDC board members, such as appointments to the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy Executive Advisory Board and the Hispanic Business Chamber of Commerce.

Would this project be considered an innovation, a best practice or other notable advancement that could be adopted by or tailored for other organizations and uses? If yes, please describe that here. (In 300 words or less.)

In an effort to ultimately change the conversation and elevate the national dialogue about the roles and contributions of Latinos in American society, the portal has served as a platform that allows the LDC to make significant progress on their approach of combining framing and messaging skills with commissioned fact-based studies. The solution is considered a best practice for helping to establish an identity and credibility for non-profits, and will ultimately assist with propelling the LDC's mission and work forward. The developed solution is both unassuming, focused, and provides a forum that facilitates the shaping of the views and perceptions of key opinion leaders while maximizing coordination and efficiency. MicroTech's results-driven solution can easily be tailored for other start-up nonprofit organizations seeking to establish a presence and grow a larger following to share a message, construct opinions, and generate donations. The stages of implementation that MicroTech used for the LDC portal can be easily replicated with other organizations.

If there are any other details that the judges should know about this project, please note them here. (In 300 words or less.)

The portal solution was provided to the LDC at no cost to the organization. MicroTech has provided all of the software, engineering, and consulting necessary to design, develop and deploy the portal with a custom designed and developed solution. The end product provides a space where LDC members can communicate and collaborate privately in a single forum, ultimately allowing important constituencies to discuss critical agenda topics and issues. Beyond that, MicroTech has provided a solution where the public can visit, communicate, and collaborate with LDC members and others who hold shared interests of reshaping the image of the Latino brand. The developed solution was built to be able to accommodate ongoing maintenance as well as rapid-response and messaging in order to address breaking issues and collaborate with existing national, regional, and community-based organizations. The solution has also helped mobilize the financial resources required to commission and disseminate



fact-based studies as well as new research-based targeted messaging for the LDC to use to successfully drive their mission forward. The LDC now possesses a platform to publically share past, present, and future projects. The portal provides an area that hosts information regarding Latino and Hispanic research and a separate area specifically hosting work and news regarding board members. MicroTech has successfully provided a solution that enables the LDC to serve as a catalyst that weaves a nonpartisan Latino agenda into the social, political, and economic fabric of America while positively impacting the perceptions of Latinos and substantially increasing their representation in the corporate, political, and non-profit sectors.