

Mobile Web Experience Fuels Participation in Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes



Overview

The American Diabetes Association is the leader in the fight Stop Diabetes® and offers services and support to individuals affected by the disease. One of the Association's main goals is to raise funds to help change the future of diabetes, which takes a physical, emotional, and financial toll on the people and families it affects. The Step Out: Walk to Stop Diabetes is one of the organization's signature fundraising events to help raise critical funds and awareness about the disease.

The Challenge: An Unfriendly Mobile Website

Growth goals for the 2013 Step Out walk were aggressive: Increase participation by 15 percent over the 2012 figures.

Local event staff and participants depend heavily on the Step Out website to achieve goals, like this, relying on it as the chief tool for communicating with supporters, registering participants, organizing teams, and accepting donations. Shana Masterson, national associate director for interactive fundraising and engagement, worried about how the lack of a mobile site would affect registration.

"We wanted our supporters to be able to register and donate from their cell phones and tablets," Masterson said, "and we knew that our mobile website was not going to meet this need."

The Step Out mobile site was an add-on to a traditional site, and it did not resonate well with users. Content was limited, and it was unclear whether guests were receiving the information they needed. The Association also noticed that visitors to the mobile site did not stay on the site long or interact as they had hoped.

Part of the redesign challenge stemmed from the fact that, in addition to the national Step Out fundraising website, 125 local fundraising managers across the nation had to be able to customize their individual, local sites.

"It wasn't a small problem; we had to allow for customization, make the traditional and mobile experiences easy across all platforms, and retain consistent messaging," said Masterson.

"In 2012, only five percent of users coming to our Step Out site used mobile devices. After we flipped the switch to a responsive design website in 2013, thirty percent of our users accessed our sites from phones or tablets. The user experience on the mobile site is fantastic. More and more people are interacting with us this way, and we only expect the numbers to grow. Once people have a good mobile experience, they come back."

— Shana Masterson,
National Associate Director
for Interactive Fundraising
and Engagement,
American Diabetes Association

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The Solution: Creating a User Friendly Website

The American Diabetes Association already owned a piece of the solution by using Blackbaud **TeamRaiser™** for online event fundraising. At the same time Masterson was contemplating a website redesign, she discovered that TeamRaiser recently made it easier to build a responsive website design.

Masterson was immediately interested. The promise of responsive web design was compelling — one URL, one website, one set of contents, and one set of code. All of which amounted to one streamlined site that worked well on desktops, laptops, cell phones, and tablets.

As a result, the Association worked with Charity Dynamics to design and implement the new Step Out website. Staff used the TeamRaiser solution, including responsive web design, social share, segmentation, and personalization to transform the user experience on the site.

With the help of the web design team, the Association staff created simple bright designs, rethought pop-ups, and streamlined personal fundraising pages.

Today, the site is clean, elegant, and fully responsive. Content, donation forms, registration, and personal and team pages all show correctly no matter how visitors access them.

The challenge of selling the new look and functionality to national staff and 125 local site managers came next: "Change management certainly came into it. Once everyone understood how much easier it was going to be for our supporters, they got excited."

The Association's local staff members have access to TeamRaiser training webinars, which detail site specifications. To keep involvement high, national Step Out staff sends regular email messages and newsletters to field staff, highlighting successful local sites and strategies.

Masterson said, "We focused on the mobile user experience during training. Our supporters are coming to our site with the intent to register, to connect, to share their stories, and to donate. Therefore, it's easy to understand why we had to do away with heavy text, lots of graphics, and large photos that got in the way of that intent. Thanks to TeamRaiser, we were able to provide templates to our regional site managers that help them customize their site within the mobile structure."

Results: Mobile Site Participation Rises to 30 Percent

"This has been an amazing journey," said Masterson. "In 2012, only five percent of users coming to our site used mobile devices. After we flipped the switch to a responsive design website in 2013, thirty percent of our users accessed our sites from phones or tablets.

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And repeat and regular participants are exactly who Masterson and staff want to work with.

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- Tap into your supporters' personal networks to increase revenue and awareness for your cause. [Visit us online](#) to learn more about TeamRaiser® and how it can support your peer-to-peer fundraising programs.
- Join the Blackbaud community online! Get updates on the latest trends, best practices, and need-to-know news at [npENGAGE.com](#). You can also stay connected with us on [our Facebook® page](#) and [our Twitter® feed](#).
- Check out the [Blackbaud Index](#) to get the most up-to-date information on charitable giving today. We're tracking approximately \$12 billion in US-based charitable giving, featuring both overall and online giving.
- Connect with Charity Dynamics to provide an engaging experience for your supporters from their desktop and mobile devices.

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