

Final Report

Vegetable Digital Asset Redevelopment - Veggycation

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Vegetable Digital Asset Redevelopment – Veggycation – VG16080

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Summary

The Veggycation website was originally designed to provide relevant, helpful information about vegetables to Australian consumers and growers.

The existing site was no longer meeting the needs of its audience, and an RFP was issued for its redevelopment.

This project sought to design and develop a contemporary resource of information that fulfilled the needs of its users by allowing them to quickly and easily find relevant information about vegetables, nutrients, cooking methods and health benefits.

Hardhat Digital (Hardhat) was engaged to lead this project with assistance from various subcontractors. These were The Lab Insight and Strategy Pty Ltd for customer research, and Get Started Pty Ltd for technical integration.

The project included an initial research & scoping phase, followed by a design & development process that culminated in the launch of a refreshed website that benefits the vegetable industry by providing great utility and access to information for vegetable growers and consumers.

Research & scoping included user research comprising twelve in-depth consumer interviews and four expert interviews, as well as a thorough immersion process. The latter saw the Hardhat and Get Started project teams interview key stakeholders, align on business context and objectives, research best-in-class executions from both in and out of the vegetable industry, and finally scope all features and pieces of functionality on the revitalised website. In the design & development phase, the project team utilised an agile workflow to create full sections of the website in two-week cycles, which were showcased to Hort Innovation) and iterated on throughout the proceeding cycles until the entire website was fully designed and developed.

The website was built in Episerver, Hort Innovation's preferred CMS provider. Get Started Pty Ltd conducted a CMS training session which equipped the internal Hort Innovation team with all the knowledge and information required to perform business-as-usual updates to the website after completion.

The new Veggycation website features a contemporary look and feel, designed to position Hort Innovation as a credible, unbiased expert on the properties and benefits of vegetables. The design of the website has been structured to encourage users to learn more and more about different vegetables and nutrients, and relevant information on health benefits, cooking methods and farmer information. It provides an easy-to-navigate, clean interface with a range of features including related vegetables, 'veggy tips' and various clear pathways to broader sections of the site for a holistic learning experience.

Keywords

website; vegetable levy; online; veggycation; website redevelopment; education, vegetable; vegetables; nutrition

Introduction

Over the past 5-10 years, the amount of information available online with regard to nutrition, dieting & cooking advice has grown exponentially. Australian consumers broadly understand that including vegetables in their weekly eating habits will be beneficial for their health, however there is an endless stream of new dieting fads and it is hard for consumers to understand the difference between scientifically researched, proven information and unproven advice being shared by organisations for commercial gain.

The previous Veggycation website had been produced under three projects (VG12043, VG14027 & VG13087) and met a lot of needs for Australian growers and consumers. However, the ability for users to find the information they were looking for was complicated and confusing due to the need to appeal to such a broad audience.

The website's look and feel suited a younger consumer audience. The type of information available about each vegetable ranged from practical information (i.e. cooking tips, serving sizes) through to highly scientific facts (e.g. phytonutrients). Some of this information was incorrect and/or out of date, and many were designed for an older audience. In short, the website had several conflicting priorities and the key messages to users were getting lost, so it was decided that a website redesign was required to realign the website with user needs.

In order to understand the needs of the website's users, a research project was conducted with three key audiences in mind – consumers, nutritionists and growers.

The below six key areas were identified as likely to facilitate greater engagement with the Veggycation website (Appendix 1 provides further detail):

1. **We are unfussy healthy** - celebrate vegetables as an opportunity for people to do something positive for their health every day.
2. **Deliver tools for action** - pure information is not enough to inspire people to make a change. People are looking for clear tools to help them take action.
3. **Be clear on the target audience** - there is a need to focus the target to adults. Children are unlikely to seek the site out on their own, and on arrival might be discouraged by the detail of some types of information available. This will ensure the information provided also feels relevant for both vegetable lovers and vegetable tolerators.
4. **There are four key benefits of vegetables that we should celebrate** – opportunity, versatility, effortlessness & speed.
5. **Understanding motivation is key** - not all adults are motivated in the same way. In the ideal world, the site would be structured around three key motivational mindsets:
 - Motivated by information
 - Motivated by positive feedback
 - Motivated by being held to account
6. **Tone is very important in driving engagement** - the wrong tone can be disheartening for consumers. The tone must never be judgmental, overly-worthy, patronising, or overcomplicate things.

Methodology

PHASE 1 – CHALLENGER

The methodology for this project was centered around four key phases that encompassed a series of structured planning tools & exercises.

Phase 1 set the scene for the project. It ensured that we were setting out to tackle the problems most worth solving.

It included a range of stakeholder interviews with Hort Innovation staff, grower representatives, AUSVEG staff and other industry experts (Appendix 13). The information gathered from these interviews was then discussed and elaborated on by the Hardhat project team and transposed into a range of key areas. These key areas were presented formally to Hort Innovation's PRG at a workshop where all findings were reviewed. The group interrogated the steps necessary for successful completion of the project.

PHASE 2 – STRATEGIC APPROACH

This session was used to bridge the gap between the Business Context Phase (understanding the project context and identifying the problems worth solving) and the Visionary Phase (researching best in class executions from in/out of industry). In a formal presentation of the strategic approach (Appendix 3), the two below key objectives were identified and agreed upon:

1. Educate and inspire the general public to eat more vegetables
2. Become a credible resource on vegetable information

The presentation touched on key audiences & challenges as well as some reference points from websites in, and outside, of the industry (see Appendix 3 for a full list). This provided practical examples of how the development of the website was being proposed.

PHASE 3 - VISIONARY

With a clear, shared understanding of the task and priorities at hand, we entered the Visionary Phase of the project which focused on taking the key objectives from the Strategic Approach Phase and exploring best-in-class executions of how others had achieved those objectives.

To do this, the Hardhat project team combined research with handpicked trends and case studies relevant for the Veggycation website. These elements then came together in the form of a formal presentation (Appendix 4) and workshop.

PHASE 4 - REALIST

In this final phase of the consultative process ahead of website development, the Hardhat project team 'roadmapped' every part of the website into discreet tasks using the below structure:

- **Epics**
Green cards that give a logical order to the 'stories' (e.g. Common Modules).
- **Stories**
Blue cards that represent a feature or piece of functionality (e.g. Rich Text Module).
- **Use Cases**

Yellow cards that represent discreet tasks of four hours or less that together will deliver the ‘story’ they sit under. Each use case will detail a task that the relevant discipline within the project team will need to complete.

- **Risks/Unknowns**

Red cards that flag any risks/unknowns that must be resolved before that ‘story’ can be delivered.

DEVELOPMENT

After the four-phase immersion process was completed, the Hardhat project team moved into an agile development process. The process revolved around two-week cycles.

In each cycle, the project team designed & developed sections of the website that were then presented in formal cycle showcase presentations to the Hort Innovation project team for feedback and amendments as required.

The early phases centered around strategic/design outputs including sitemap (Appendix 12), tone of voice (Appendix 8) and user persona documentation (Appendix 7). The later cycles were more heavily focused on the technical development of the website. This process lasted six cycles before moving to a User Acceptance Testing (UAT) phase ahead of final deployment (Appendix 9 describes the purpose of this phase). A copy style guide was also produced (Appendix 15) to ensure consistency with any future copywriting for the website.

In the UAT phase, Hort Innovation stakeholders were provided with either a UAT user worksheet (Appendix 11) or a UAT content administrator worksheet (Appendix 10). They were requested to work through these, and provide back to Hardhat for consideration ahead of launching the website.

Outputs

The key output of this project was to deliver a contemporary website (www.veggycation.com.au) that provided greater utility to its key audiences. Whilst keeping this overarching objective in mind, the below three outputs were also identified throughout the RFP process and Immersion Process - and were also achieved.

Episerver Content Management System

VG16014 – *Review of Vegetable Digital Assets* provided recommendations to Hort Innovation about how future digital platforms should be developed and managed. The recommendation centered around the selection of one enterprise Content Management System (CMS) which would be used for all digital platforms developed by Hort Innovation moving forward.

Hort Innovation conducted the selection process for a CMS provider which led to the appointment of Episerver as the preferred CMS.

The Veggycation website is the first digital platform project after this selection and was developed using the Episerver CMS.

Modular Design

The website was designed in a modular fashion, where features on the website are reusable in different areas on the site, as well as potentially on future Hort Innovation websites (with the required styling updates). This will lead to efficiencies moving forward for Hort Innovation as more and more modules are able to be restyled and repurposed in future projects.

Low Maintenance Requirements

Throughout the Immersion Process it was made clear that there would be minimal resource from Hort Innovation for ongoing updates and maintenance. The site was developed with this in mind, so the content is evergreen and the design utilises self-changing sections (e.g. vegetables listed on the homepage). This ensures that the website constantly looks fresh and different to users, despite few manual updates being performed in the back-end of the website.

Outcomes

Increased Vegetable Consumption within Australia

Veggycation will educate and inspire the Australian general public to eat more vegetables.

The design and content of the website was crafted to provide access to relevant, helpful information on vegetables and nutrients that engage users and encourage them to increase their vegetable consumption. The product pages for vegetables include health benefits, preparation & storage tips, cooking methods and 'veggy tips' with simple pieces of advice for each vegetable.

Increased Access to Farmer Information

Veggycation will provide greater access to relevant information for growers and industry.

Every vegetable product page has an 'Information for Farmers' section that includes validated research on the following topics; harvesting, postharvest storage temperature, controlled atmosphere storage, ethylene sensitivity, humidity storage and disease & infection.

Monitoring and evaluation

This project was successfully implemented throughout both the initial immersion process and subsequent development process. Participation from a broad range of stakeholders paired with some strategically-timed PRG engagement activities & workshops ensured Hardhat was able to successfully deliver the website. Below are the key tools that were used to monitor the program of work:

Stakeholder Interviews

The 13 stakeholder interviews (Appendix 13) that were carried out with a broad range of industry representatives proved invaluable to the process. People interviewed included a cross section of Hort Innovation staff, Australian growers, industry partners and industry experts. Having access to this selection of stakeholders enabled Hardat to develop a well-informed understanding of the project from a range of perspectives.

Formal Workshops

Formal workshops that included the Hardhat project team and Hort Innovation's PRG ensured a high level of collaboration. It meant that there were constant check-ins in the initial consultative phase of the project, each of which had specific key outputs which allowed us to continually evolve our understanding of the project and land on an exact scope of work that met the needs of Hort Innovation and its users.

Cycle Presentations

Once we entered the development phase of the project, there was a cycle showcase every two weeks where the Hardhat project team presented sections of the website to Hort Innovation's PRG. These sessions included strategic discussions, design direction presentations and live product demonstrations. Utilising an agile working methodology, we were able to quickly implement feedback and iterate on designs with a high level of transparency, meaning there were no nasty surprises as the project evolved.

Recommendations

Below are the recommendations for the ongoing management and updating of the Veggycation website:

Internal CMS capabilities

With Hort Innovation selecting Episerver as its preferred CMS, it is recommended that there are regular CMS training sessions for key Hort Innovation staff to ensure there is internal capability to make basic updates to website copy, imagery etc.

A CMS training session was conducted as a part of the project and was accompanied by a CMS editor guide (Appendix 5). It is recommended that Hort Innovation maintain a core team of CMS administrators within the organisation that have the knowledge & skills to make basic updates to the growing number of Episerver websites within the Hort Innovation digital ecosystem over the coming years.

Until Hort Innovation has such a team in place, it is recommended that any required updates are recorded internally and briefed to an external agency to implement the updates. The time sensitivity of the changes should be considered, with urgent updates completed as soon as possible, and all other updates briefed together in one project every 6-12 months.

Continuous improvement approach to website copy and imagery

The website and CMS have been structured in a way that allows for simple execution of 'business as usual' tasks. Whilst the maintenance requirements to the website were deliberately kept to a minimum, it is recommended that administrators within Hort Innovation utilise updated content as it becomes available if it is relevant for a section of the website (i.e. vegetable/nutrient descriptions, veggy tips, health benefits etc.). This will contribute to the ongoing credibility of the website.

Life cycle management

It is recommended to have a strategic check-in on the website between 6-12 months after go-live. By this time there will be a statistically significant amount of analytical data available that will provide insight into website usage, user demographics, best performing pages etc. As well as deeper insight into specific user experience performance metrics including bounce rates, user journeys, dwell time etc.

It is expected that minor updates will be required to continually improve the website's performance and level of utility to users over the proceeding 36 months post go-live; with a more robust audit on the structure, design and content of the website after this period to evaluate if there is a need for a larger scale redevelopment of the website.

Refereed scientific publications

None to report.

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