Case Study

Icreon

Horse and Country Singles

A social networking service for horse and countryside lifestyle enthusiasts

Our client had an existing website that they wanted to revamp in order to improve its overall performance. They also wanted new features such as video chat, a subscription based membership scheme etc. Based on these requirements Icreon customized the Joomla! open source CMS in developing the revamped website. The solution provides equestrians and countryside lifestyle enthusiasts with a platform to meet like minded individual, create a network of friends and communicate with them.

Customer Profile

Our client is a UK based venture.

Business Requirements

Our client was operating an online social networking service wherein single equine and countryside enthusiasts could meet and interact with each other. They wanted to revamp the website to provide better and more interactive features to their members. New features such as audio/video chat, a subscription model for members, a directory listing etc were required. Members were to be provided with options to hide/freeze their accounts. The administrator was to be provided full control over the website.

Revamp to improve performance and provide enhanced features

Icreon customized the Joomla! open source CMS in developing the solution. The website provides equestrians and lovers of the countryside lifestyle with a platform to meet and interact with each other.

Users can register with the community to create their profiles detailing their characteristics, lifestyle, personality traits etc. They can opt for a premium membership (the plans and rates can be managed by the administrator) to avail additional features such as access to the live chat rooms, options to freeze their account, hide their profile from other members etc. A profile is displayed on the website only after it has been vetted by the administrator. Members have the option to define the characteristics and traits of their ideal partners. The system alerts the member when any new member that matches his/her criteria of an ideal partner joins the community.

An IP locator has been used to identify a user's location. The prices displayed on the website are based on the basis of the location. For users located within UK the prices will be displayed in GBP for all other users the prices will be displayed in USD.

The solution has been divided into two main modules:
- Public Module
- Administrator Panel

Public Module

The public module is accessible to all visitors and enables them to register with the website. The public module includes a variety of features which include:

- **Search:** Members can search to locate other members within the community. Multiple search criteria such as locate by gender, country, age range, appearance, personality traits and characteristics, income levels, employment/education status, interests etc. Members can browse through the profiles, add members to their holist, send kisses, send e-mail etc.

- **Discussion Forum:** SMF Forum has been customized and integrated to provide a discussion forum with the solution.

- **Live Chat:** Third-party tools - Flash Com Room Chat (to enable live chat between all members of a chat room) and Flash Com Communicator (to enable 1 to 1 chat between two members) have been integrated with the solution. Flash Com has customized to include the profiles and photos of the members carrying out the chat. Members can also carry out video chat with each other.

- **Photo Gallery:** The community includes a public gallery wherein members can upload images. Members are provided with options to rate the picture, post comments, send a link to the photo to a friend and report the picture. All images displayed in the photo gallery require administrator approval.

- **Directory Listing:** A directory listing of companies dealing in equestrian and other related products or services is available on the website. Users can submit their details to list their company. To highlight their listing, users can opt for the paid listing service. Website visitors can browse through the directory and are provided with options to rate, review and recommend to friends any company in the listing. Google Maps API has been integrated with the solution enabling users to locate the company on the map. The administrator can manage the directory listing – create listing categories, moderate reviews submitted by users etc.

- **Videos:** The videos uploaded by the administrator are displayed.

- **News:** The news feeds created by the administrator are displayed. Members can browse through the articles available in the feeds.

- **Shop:** An external storefront has been customized and integrated with the website.

Administrator Panel

The administrator can manage the entire website through the administrator panel. We have customized the Joomla! admin module to suit the requirements of the website. The administrator can perform tasks such as,

- View site statistics such as total number of registered user, users currently online, registrations in the current date, most popular profiles, most active members etc.

- Process requests to freeze/activate profiles, hide/unhide profiles, and cancel subscriptions.

- Process (i.e. approve or reject) new profiles and photos uploaded by members. Any changes in the photos and profiles are displayed on the website only after approval from the administrator.

- Search for members registered with the community. Extensive search options have been provided to enable the administrator to locate members. Login on behalf of the user and browse the public website.

- Update and manage content and advertisements appearing on the website.

- Send newsletters, bulk email messages to the subscriber base.

Technologies used in developing this application are: