

2016 Sautter Award Application

Project Title: The Wisdom Cafe' <http://wisdomcafe.berkeley.edu/>

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Project Leader and Team Members: Inette Dishler - Project Leader; Tom Holub and Jose' Fernandez - Team Members

Project Description:

Problem: UC Berkeley staff members need to continuously learn, grow, and develop to stay relevant and contribute in a rapidly changing environment. The way people learn has shifted dramatically from a passive "push" approach from the training department deciding what people need to learn, developing the curriculum, and pushing it out in the form of training classes, to "social learning", where people "pull" information and learning 24 x 7 using technology, networks of colleagues, and widely available resources. To this end, the Learning and Development function in our organizations need to change to accommodate this shift, and enable staff to own their learning. This revelation led to a vision of a learning website for staff - a social learning platform.

Solution/Innovation: A project was proposed and approved to design and develop a cutting-edge website - the Wisdom Cafe' <http://wisdomcafe.berkeley.edu/> The site is based on learning content coming from two primary sources: 1. content that is curated by learning professionals and 2. content contributed by the staff community sharing their tips, tools, best practices, recommendations, and ideas. The content is organized into 5 primary categories: Leading, Managing, Professional Development, Owning Your Career, and Doing Your Job, and comes in the form of blog posts, videos, case studies, and tool tips. In addition, there are regular features, including "Leader as Storyteller" videotaped interviews with campus leaders, staff "Career Stories", "Spotlights" focusing a variety of content on a specific topic, instant polls, with more highlights being added all the time. We also incorporate social media, having our own Twitter hashtag #wisdomcafeucb, Instagram page @wisdomcafeucb and YouTube channel to host videos.

Process/Timeline: Inette Dishler, the originator of the idea and the project lead, hired Tom Holub, a consultant who had previously been an IT Manager on the UCB campus for many years, to build the site. He enlisted another consultant, Jose Fernandez as the designer. After 9 months of design and development work, the Wisdom Cafe' was launched on July 1st, 2015! A campus all-staff message went out to announce the new site, and Inette Dishler facilitated a session that month at the annual UCB career development conference for staff, the NOW Conference, to demo it. There have been a variety of marketing and communication strategies utilized to promote awareness and usage of the site.

Technical Highlights: The site is built on WordPress and is designed to be responsive on all devices. It went through extensive accessibility testing. We use robust search and tagging tools.

Project Success: The site was received immediately with overwhelmingly positive feedback (see separate page). We set up Google and WordPress analytics to track the progress of the site and have produced monthly infographics of key data for sponsors. We also did a 6 month trajectory analysis. Overall, our subscriber numbers have steadily increased, page views and unique page views have steadily increased, unique content authors and contributors have expanded consistently, and more people keep seeking us out as the place to announce their learning events, share their work and best practices with their colleagues, and support each other's career paths. We have been extremely gratified by the growing adoption of the 'Wisdom Cafe' as a key to staff learning, performance improvement, career development, and talent recruitment and retention.

Collaborations: In addition to the highly effective collaboration that developed the site, there has been a lot of collaboration with the campus to make it successful. This has included an initial Editorial Board of various campus leaders that helped us determine business needs we could use the site for, and how to best engage the staff on it. That board morphed into a Campus Partners Board, made up of campus representatives from different departments and functional areas who are now regular content contributors from their areas of expertise. In addition, many offices have taken lead roles to develop and submit content for our Spotlights, including the CFO's Office, the division of Equity and Inclusion, and the Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning at UCOP. We have also collaborated with a new campus newsletter for managers, to cross-post content most helpful for managers to see.

Feedback on the Wisdom Cafe'

(from UC Berkeley Staff)

"I just had a chance to see a preview of the new learning portal called Wisdom Cafe. It's very exciting and leading edge and will do a lot to create more self-activated learning." Liz Elliott

"I seriously like the design and intent of the site. It is obvious you were extremely thoughtful in its development." Rebecca Portnoy

"Today's launch is an amazing accomplishment. Your vision, creativity, and dogged determination on this project have been inspiring. This site is amazing and is going to help so many people." Kathy Mendonca

"Inette, I see you are the person behind and in front of this awesome resource. I love it! This will make it so much easier to promote professional development with my staff...and maybe myself!" Cathy Kodama

"Congratulations, Inette! What a wonderful introduction about the site, and I look forward to exploring it. The idea is inspired and content sounds inspiring, too." Kendall Moalem

"I just took a quick tour of this site and it looks fantastic! Congratulations to you and your team! This is an amazing resource." Lisa Martin

"Oh, my gosh. This website looks fabulous!!! Just took a peek and look forward to digging deeper. Will help spread the word. Thanks and congrats!" Diana Wu

"Congratulations on the launch of the Wisdom Cafe website! I just took a look at it, and I'm impressed! It looks great visually, there's useful content, and I really like how it features campus staff sharing their knowledge. I will be using the site and recommending it to my staff. Kudos to you and your team!" Stephanie Metz

"Congratulations on your launch - the site looks terrific!" Rosemarie Rae, CFO

"Donna shared this link with me to the Wisdom Café. It's great. It mirrors much of what we are hoping to achieve with our Systemwide Talent Management Portal. I really like the modern design and simplicity of the navigation and text. Even better, it's using relevant UC people, stories, and resources." Steve Heindl (UCOP)

"This is a tremendously useful site. Thanks for all the hard work to make it happen. I have made Wisdom Café my homepage on my browser. :-)" Lori Brooks

"Your website is awesome!!! Thank you, thank you, thank you! The content is great and the project is so inspired." Laura Emery

"Hi Inette, Congratulations on the Wisdom Cafe. I just took a quick tour of the new site ... and will be back for more later. I hope all staff will make time to visit the site -- there seems to be something for everyone there. Thanks!" Michele Bernal

"What a super job on the new Wisdom Cafe! It's both informative and good-looking. I spent quite a bit of time this morning "visiting" the cafe, and I was very impressed. Good Job!" Mark Freiberg

"The best Cafe on campus, with food for the mind. Thank you for the hard work that went into setting up this website." Katalin Markus

WISDOM

CAFÉ



WHERE BERKELEY STAFF LEARN & SHARE



desktop: 15,605 (89%)
mobile: 1,580 (9%)
tablet: 420 (2%)

USERS:
11,081



518 SUBSCRIBERS

PAGEVIEWS



43,573
OVERALL



30,456
UNIQUE

SESSIONS: 17,605

MOST POPULAR PAGES

1. Professional Development
2. Managing
3. Owning Your Career
4. Doing Your Job

MOST POPULAR POSTS

1. Leader as Storyteller: Na'ilah Nasir
2. Interview with Professor Munis Faruqui
3. Career Story: Michael Thompson

Wisdom Café Screen Shots



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How To Build Community

at the Wisdom Café

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