

Situation

- A nonprofit organization providing services and resources as well as advocating for the rights of people with disabilities grew significantly in the last few years, increasing the number of individuals served
- Organization growth required greater reliance on the website as a primary resource and communication tool for a diverse group of audiences
- The old website was no longer in alignment with the brand or image and certainly was not aligned with the newly constructed headquarter location
- The website did not efficiently organize content, allow a user to navigate easily, or effectively use messaging to all of the intended audiences

Objectives

- Design a new site to be a model for accessibility, while incorporating best practices of web design
- Create a more usable, navigable and engaging web presence through the updating of the website
- Develop a better expression of the brand identity
- Support education and awareness in the community to increase involvement
- Support the diversity of all target audiences
- Build advocacy by providing resources and publications that help support independent living
- Stimulate site traffic and increase the effectiveness of resources

Approach

- Assess the current infrastructure and conduct a thorough analysis of existing accessibility standards
- Formulate objectives and performance requirements, including features and functions necessary for the site
- Draft creative and technology briefs, design concepts and technical architecture
- Develop information architecture, simplifying content structure flow and organization so that users with disabilities can easily navigate site
- Co-develop content that is easy to read and also thorough enough to help the users
- Built newsletter formats and templates to help reduce paper distribution
- Test site rigorously for accessibility compliance using 3rd party organizations specializing in usability compliance

Results

- The site has been rated as the most accessible site ever reviewed by 3rd party analysts
- Online donations have risen by 150%
- Event registration has shifted from phone and e-mail to online registration, reducing administrative time
- Reporting on donations and event registration provides statistics that help gain grants and other funding
- Website traffic is up 50% since launch, reaching a total volume of more than 276,000 main section hits
- The online store provides the ability to purchase merchandise online