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Implementing a Campus Wide Universal Student Event Calendar

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Implementing a Campus Wide Universal Student Event Calendar

Presented by: Chris Sligh

Student Activities and Leadership Programs Director

Background: Nothing to Do In Kalamazoo?

Western Michigan University registers close to 300 student organizations every year. As you can imagine, that's a great deal of activity. Students will sometimes complain that "there isn't anything to do." The fact of the matter is... there is plenty to do, but the problem has been that students don't know about it or find out about events after they have taken place.

Additionally, student event planners are not always aware of what else is going on and will often end up programming their larger event that with one that coincides with another larger program or one of similar purpose.

University Relations has a calendar system but do to the fact that there are too many student events, it would flood its current program. The purpose of this project was to find a solution that would greatly enhance the communication for not only students but for the whole campus community.

Project Goals

- 1.) Find an on-line calendar that would be easy to navigate and find the wide array of student events that are held throughout the year
- 2.) Come up with a way to easily disseminate information to the campus community that might be interested in attending the student-led events.
- 3.) Find a calendar that students would actually use



Process

May -August 2009	Researched online event calendars
August	Conducted on-line web demos
August	Narrowed it down to two
September	Competitive comparison
October- February 2010	Vetted Stakeholders
February- June	Implementation
August	Project Start
April 2011	Review/Evaluation

Key Stakeholders

First of all, it is important to note that this project would not have been successful without the help of all these areas.

Administration

Dr. Diane Anderson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students: This was her vision and something that she was interested in for quite some time. Her ability to understand the need for better communication amongst student organizations was paramount in the success of this program.

Dr. Anderson's support of this program and staying vested and interested in the project also played a major role in the success of it.

Student Leaders

Students are great at asking questions. Collectively, they are a very inquisitive group. They want to know how it works, how much it's going to cost, how will it benefit them, etc. As the project was rolled out to key student organizations, having answers and/or collecting additional information helped to confirm that we had the right solution. Additionally, more support for the project was garnered as information was shared with various students groups.



Information Technology Systems

The university's Office of Information Technology and Students Affairs Information Technology departments played a tremendous role with the project. They were able to get provide critical technical projections about how the software solution would integrate with the university's current system. They were also able to help us avoid or be aware of challenges that might software users might come across along the way. Their energy and excitement about the innovation of the project helped encourage other stakeholders and the project itself.

University Relations

University Relations (UR) staff were consulted to make sure that we were not crossing into any territory that they might have considered as their domain or responsibility. The UR staff also brought support through their excitement of the innovation of the project. They were able to ask key questions that hadn't been considered by other groups and they also played an important role in navigating where students and the campus community would best access the online calendar solution program.

Legal Counsel

There are the obvious terms of any contract that would need to be considered. However, after considering the amount of information that would be transmitted through the program, legal counsel's role in determining the logistics of the contract language was just as vital as all the other stakeholders.

The Enhanced Product

Imagine from going from this:
 Web database

Name	Nick Name	Classification
Bass Fishing at Western Michigan	Bassers of WMU	Sports & Recreation
Pre-Dental Organization at WMU	Pre-Dental Organization @ WMU	Academic/Department
Stallions Men's Hockey at WMU	Stallions	Sports & Recreation
Waterski and Wakeboard Team at WMU	H20ski & WAKEBOARD	Sports & Recreation
A.P.I.C.S	APICS	Academic/Department
Ackley/Shilling Active People	ASAP	Student Government
AdClub @ WMU	AdClub	Academic/Department
Air Force ROTC at Western Michigan University	AFROTC	Special Interest
All Girl Cheer Club Alliance for Socioeconomic Justice	Western All Girl Cheer ASJ	Sports & Recreation Political & Social Action
Alpha Chi Omega	a chi o	Sorority

To This!
 Collegiate Link Public Flyer Board



Limitations of Current Software Program

- No master student event calendar
- Difficult student organization registration process
- Limited software administrator controls
- Limited ways for students to promote their student organizations

About Collegiate Link

"CollegiateLink, the campus engagement and activities division of StudentVoice, provides the premier student involvement management system for higher education institutions in the US and Canada. Since 2004, CollegiateLink has helped Student Affairs divisions enhance educational offerings and encourage student participation while reducing costs of program delivery. CollegiateLink's focus on student utilization and our four-stage implementation process has contributed to a track record of demonstrated results at more than 100 member campuses throughout North America."

excerpt from: <http://www.collegiatelink.net/About/>

New Services for 2010

- Master Calendar
 - Will allow organizations to better plan their events
 - Events will be searchable through various categories
 - Publicized events can link with Facebook
- Individual User Profiles
 - Students can track the organizations that they belong to
 - Students can track events that they are going to
- Improved Student Registration System
 - Less steps for students to register their organizations
 - Easier administrator controls
- Online Elections
- Co-Curricular Transcripts
 - Students can better determine their transferrable skills
- Student Delegation Tools
 - Student leaders can delegate tasks to their members
- Improved Organizational Profiles
- Reduce/Eliminate use of paper
 - Students can RSVP or register for events online
 - Students can apply for positions online
- Enhanced communication amongst everyone



Academic Leadership Academy Reflection

As I reflect on my experience with the Academic Leadership Academy (ALA), I must say that the journey was more important to me than the project. The networking amongst other colleagues from all over the university was remarkable. The honest and in-depth conversations that we were able to have were quite insightful. The support and encouragement that I received from colleagues and our mentors (Dr. Beach and Dr. Fuqua) kept me motivated to continue along the way. I am so glad that I was able to participate in this year's class and I strongly encourage those who are reading this to apply. The wealth of experience from our outside presenters was amazing as each one of them could have spoken on their individual topic for a whole semester. Finally, I would like to say thank you to my colleagues and to anyone that took time to invest in my professional development.

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