Think Rice Created Engaging, Industry-Focused Content with Progress Sitefinity, Resulting in a 67% Rise in Page Views

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CASE STUDY

Progress Sitefinity

**2022 Website
of the Year**

CATEGORY WINNER
Association

THINK RICE
U.S.-GROWN

INDUSTRY
Associations & Non-Profit

PRODUCT
Progress Sitefinity

SUMMARY
USA Rice delivers both industry-focused and community-facing digital experiences powered by Progress Sitefinity. As the voice of the entire industry, USA Rice set out to bring its consumer-centric microsite in line with its main association website. Built on Sitefinity, Think Rice is a modern looking, content-driven, search-optimized, and high-performing website providing stellar experiences to both contributing content editors and end users.

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Katie Maher
Director, Domestic Promotion Programs, USA Rice Federation

Challenge

A unique, food-based trade association, USA Rice is an advocate on behalf of the entire American rice industry. What makes the organization distinct is its fractionalized audience and how it uses two websites to communicate with each of them. Its main website is created for those who they advocate for: farmers, millers, merchants, allied businesses and, in some cases, government agencies working on legislation.

Think Rice is a public-facing microsite promoting more consumer-friendly content, such as recipes, cooking tips and resources for foodservice employees. USA Rice's marketers began developing a long-term project where the goal is to expand USA Rice's audience and grow the visibility of the Think Rice microsite. Additionally, the team wanted to increase the sales of US-grown rice products, while showcasing various rice growers across the country. To accomplish this, they wanted to focus on upgrading the user experience and create content for any stakeholder visiting Think Rice. One such feature was the implementation of a search engine that featured a myriad of rice-based recipes.

Regarding their current CMS, USA Rice was unable to accommodate these updates. Their marketers were using an outdated platform. It didn't support the design or content changes they were seeking for a project like this. Not to mention, its website was not optimized for mobile which resulted in a poor user experience.

Moving forward, USA Rice began to look for a new CMS and begin these new marketing efforts.

Solution

USA Rice previously deployed Progress® Sitefinity® to manage content and make updates. Think Rice began leveraging its features with assistance from Results Direct, a longtime Sitefinity Partner.

Think Rice integrated a handful of marketing automation platforms and third-party applications. Microsoft Dynamics, for example, was being enabled for single sign-on for administrators. However, the standout integration is Solr, a robust search engine finally allowing the web marketing team to start building out their rice recipe database. With the integration of Solr, USA Rice diversified its search categories, including the ability to look for recipes based on what meal,

lifestyle or cuisine. Additionally, a new side display featuring an assortment of related recipes was also introduced with the new recipe search function.

Katie Maher, Director, Domestic Promotion Programs, USA Rice Federation was ecstatic when the team began to put this together.

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Other features include a series of fresh page redesigns, in order to give the navigation a much-needed advancement, and its new blog The Scoop. Marketers, chefs and influencers contributed and wrote a series of articles based on the rice industry.

Results

As more content was pushed to The Scoop, navigation improved and Think Rice began to laser focus on the user experience, the microsite began to receive improved traffic. Thanks in part to the pages and blog posts optimized for SEO Think Rice had a 43% increase in traffic from a variety of search engines in the United States.

When it comes to new and unique users coming to the Think Rice microsite, Maher is glad to report those numbers have increased as well. There has been a nearly 50% increase in unique page views, 67% increase in overall page views and a 52% increase in sessions. It could be on account of the new 400 (and counting) rice recipes being included in the search

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>
> **Katie Maher**
> Director, Strategic Initiatives, USA Rice Federation

engine, the interactive rice farm maps, the aesthetically pleasing redesign or a combination of all three features.

"We are seeing improved analytics because we took the time to improve the user experience," said Maher. "Not only does the Think Rice website have a beautiful design, but it functions on all devices. The combined factors of a streamlined navigation and updated content make it easier than ever for people to find what they are looking for."

About Think Rice (USA Rice)

The USA Rice Federation is the global advocate for all segments of the U.S. rice industry with a mission to promote and protect the interests of producers, millers, merchants and allied businesses. For more information, visit www.usarice.com

About Results Direct

Results Direct | RD Mobile is an award-winning Digital Experience Agency for 350+ global associations. Web & mobile solutions include Digital Strategy, Web Design & Development, CMS, Virtual Event & Member Apps, AMS/Systems Integration. Celebrating 25+ years providing web & mobile solutions. For more information, visit www.resultsdirect.com

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