

Progress Sitefinity Helps Cleco Improve its Performance for Multiple Categories Used to Measure Overall Customer Satisfaction

CASE STUDY



INDUSTRY
Energy

PRODUCT
Progress Sitefinity

SUMMARY

Cleco is an electric power company based in Louisiana that was challenged to proactively deliver important and critical information to their stakeholders, including customers, media, employees and communities with modernized speed and efficiency. Prior to Sitefinity, their website was powered by an outdated CMS, which made it difficult to manage content and impeded the overall user experience. By partnering with Americaneagle.com, Cleco implemented Progress Sitefinity CMS to create a new and improved user experience, as well as allow website contributors the ability to update content in a hassle-free environment and improve several customer-focused features.

“We look for things to be seamless and turnkey. This is why Sitefinity really worked for us because we have a small team. In this day and information age, we can't wait for a third party to make an update.”

Jennifer Cahill
Director Of Corporate
Communications at Cleco

Challenge

Cleco is one of the largest electricity companies in Louisiana. The company comprises two different subsidiaries — Cleco Power and Cleco Cajun. Cleco Power provides electric power to customers in 24 parishes (or counties). Cleco Cajun provides electric power to nine Louisiana cooperatives, two wholesale municipal customers and one electric utility.

Cleco's Corporate Communications team is responsible for the company website. The capabilities and experience of the team are vast. The team works daily to develop and execute internal and external communications that support Cleco's vision, mission, brand and strategic efforts but if you were to ask any Cleco employee before the new site launch in September 2020 what can be improved upon, chances are they would say their website. Take it from Fran Phoenix, a communications strategist at Cleco, who talks about how important first impressions are for websites.

“It's often said that first impressions are everything, so we really wanted to make sure that with the new website, customers and visitors receive an experience that is reflective of our brand and what we stand for,” said Phoenix. “It's the face of the company, and it plays a major role internally and externally because sometimes employees go to the website to get information that they may need for their constituents.”

The DNA of Cleco's former website was powered by an old custom-built CMS managed by a third party, which Phoenix described as being “ten iterations behind.” The lack of a robust CMS platform made it difficult for Cleco employees to deliver critical information to customers in real-time, such as estimated times of restoration after major storms. While it was hard for Phoenix and the other members of the Corporate Communications team to publish information without help from a third party, it was more strenuous for customers, especially if they were trying to pay their bills or access company information while on their smartphones, as nearly half of their user base was accessing the Cleco website on their phone. Accessibility was an area that required improvement as well, as the Cleco website was not compliant with the American Disability Act (ADA).

Solution

Cleco's Corporate Communications team partnered with Americaneagle.com, who began revamping the customer journey with Progress® Sitefinity®, which included making it more mobile-friendly via

responsive design/ framework and ADA compliant. However, one of the most considerable solutions involving Progress Sitefinity is its seamless integration with Cleco's existing third-party systems.

One of these solutions included a revamped method for customers to pay their bills. With Sitefinity acting as a centralized customer hub, customers can easily navigate to the My Account login page and pay online or find a secondary payment location via a new location finder tool equipped with google geocoding for a streamlined experience.

Sitefinity was also used to improve the critical features of Cleco's website. Circling back to how the company always had time-sensitive news on its hands, Sitefinity allowed the company to improve its notification system for severe weather alerts and other emergencies. This improvement came at a perfect time, as Hurricane Delta hit Louisiana a week after Cleco's new website was launched, and Hurricane Zeta was not too far behind.

"I can't emphasize enough that communication is the key, especially in Louisiana where we're very hurricane-prone," said Jennifer Cahill, director of corporate communications. "So, having that technology and the ability to update content in real-time, as opposed to having to wait on a third party to do it for us was critical."

Results

The Cleco website was completely renovated to reflect the company's rebranding, as well as make it more accessible for mobile users and those with disabilities. Because of this, Cleco's website experienced a surge of new users and many of them were accessing content and pages for longer periods.

However, if there is one area Cleco is happy to highlight, it is their ranking within the J.D. Power 2020 Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM. The overall customer satisfaction index examines six factors: power quality and reliability, price, billing and payment, corporate citizenship, communications and customer care. Cahill and Phoenix said many factors contributed to the significant improvement in Cleco's overall industry ranking for 2020, including an overhaul of the company's website via Sitefinity.

Cleco's ranking shot up in the communications category. Out of 143 utility companies, Cleco improved its ranking by 64 places in communications or 59%.

"J.D. Power is one of the tools we use to evaluate customer satisfaction, and the digital experience is a large component of that," said Cahill.

About Cleco

Cleco has been powering Louisiana for nearly a century. Cleco has always believed that electricity is more than just electrons. To us, it's the fuel that powers the good life today and better lives tomorrow. The current that brings all of us closer together. The conduit that connects Louisiana's present to Louisiana's future. For more information, please visit www.cleco.com

About Americaneagle.com

Americaneagle.com is essentially a one-stop shop offering a full range of solutions for anyone looking to succeed in their online endeavors. Americaneagle.com is a family-owned privately held company with a long history of profitability and stability. For more details, please visit www.americaneagle.com



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