

The Henry Ford Taps Sitefinity to Build Member-Only Community and Central Hub for Educational Offerings

CASE STUDY



INDUSTRY
Education

PRODUCT
Progress Sitefinity

SUMMARY

The Henry Ford wanted to support educators by creating one central hub that could efficiently serve all of its classroom resources, experiences, and professional development. It tapped Sitefinity as the platform to build inHub, a community for its Learning Management System (LMS), Member Portal and eCommerce integration. In ten months, it already has over 46,000 website users and 2,200 subscription members.

“If you go to the backend of inHub right now, it is primarily comprised of widgets and modules. You don’t need to have a good background in coding to be able to handle that.”

Sagar Varma Godavarthi
Senior Business System Analyst/PM, Enqbator

Challenge

The Henry Ford is an internationally recognized cultural destination that provides a collection of artifacts from 300 years of American history. In 2016 it partnered with Progress to leverage Progress® Sitefinity® to manage its websites and microsites and to help digitize 26 million artifacts and make them more accessible. The Henry Ford was working to develop a platform (now the inHub) to streamline access to the in-person and virtual learning resources it offers.

The project not only had a tight timeline, but lofty goals as well. The Henry Ford aimed to create a member-only platform for educators, allow members to access curricula, professional development, field trips, digital classroom resources, competitions and experiences, as well as create a community for educators to collaborate and communicate.

The virtual learning that was taking place during the pandemic accelerated the need to launch such a platform. While The Henry Ford was already working on Sitefinity, it didn’t have an existing website or “brand,” for this project, and it needed to work on a compressed timeline in order to support educators during this time.

The Henry Ford tapped its long-time digital partner, Enqbator to help with this project, and given The Henry Ford was already using Sitefinity for their organization’s corporate marketing site (thehenryford.org) as well as their campaign microsite (theinnovationproject.org), leveraging Progress Sitefinity for this project was a no brainer.

Solution

The Henry Ford leveraged Sitefinity to build inHub, a new website and platform that houses all educational offerings in one central Hub. They also set out to develop a portal that’s specific to educators and a place where members can get access to content, resources, information, and courses.

“We’ve seen more traffic to the inHub sites, including a lot of organic traffic to our Invention Convention worldwide pages. Traffic has been increasing month-over-month to over 66,000 sessions and 168,000 pageviews, and in the first ten months, we’ve had over 46,000 users and 2,200 members sign up for inHub.”

Filomena Napolitano

Digital Marketing Operations Manager, The Henry Ford

Sitefinity was integrated with third-party software including Stripe for payment processing (for the main website, the inHub Premium package), Microsoft Dynamics (CRM), Google Analytics, and its Learning Management System (LMS). The integration with the LMS platform allows for Single Sign On to ensure that users are automatically logged into the LMS Platform when signed into the inHub portal as a member. Additionally, affiliate access is managed within Sitefinity as well.

Today, all of The Henry Ford’s websites, which all serve different user base concentrations, are built on Sitefinity.

The project had three main components:

- The primary website, inHub, which consists of nearly 17 widgets and 12 modules, and is the home for the Member Portal, Learning Management System (LMS), and an e-Commerce integration.
- A microsite, the Invention Convention Worldwide (ICW) was developed as part of the inHub website. Invention Convention Worldwide is a global K-12 invention education program. The microsite uses some of the same modules and widgets as the inHub website and has a complementary look and feel.
- Standalone websites for each of the ICW’s global and national affiliates to help promote regional and statewide programs. The ICW microsite can push content to all of the affiliate websites.

Sagar Varma Godavarthi, Senior Business System Analyst/PM, EnqBator, explains why Sitefinity was a good solution to manage inHub, “One of the goals of inHub was to create affiliate sites for different states and allow team members that were not code-savvy the ability to use specific templates and elements and drag-and-drop. If you go to the backend of inHub right now, it is primarily comprised of widgets and modules. You don’t need to have a good background in coding to be able to handle that.”

Results

With this project, The Henry Ford has been focusing on taking advantage of the rich Sitefinity content governance capabilities and ease of use for practitioners at all technical levels. Some of the pages from the main website were redirected into inHub and as Filomena Napolitano, Digital Marketing Operations Manager, The Henry Ford explains, “We’ve seen more traffic to the inHub sites, including a lot of organic traffic to our Invention Convention worldwide pages. Traffic has been increasing month-over-month to over 66,000 sessions and 168,000 pageviews, and in the first ten months, we’ve had over 46,000 users and 2,200 members sign up for inHub.”

In addition to a focus on the build-out of content and experiences for educators, there was a focus on making inHub fully accessible, especially with screen readers.

As The Henry Ford looks to the future, it plans to continue redesigning the website pages, and integrating with its Email Service Provider (ESP) for email nurture campaigns. It also plans to focus on enhancements to the user portal—creating more interactive experiences with courses, grades and more.

About The Henry Ford:

Located in Dearborn, Michigan, [The Henry Ford](#), a globally recognized destination, fosters inspiration in a hands-on learning environment. Its unparalleled collection of 26 million artifacts is the most comprehensive of its kind focusing on innovation, ingenuity and resourcefulness in America. This National Historic Landmark's unique venues include Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation, Greenfield Village, Ford Rouge Factory Tour, Benson Ford Research Center and Henry Ford Academy, a public charter high school. Together with its online presence at [thf.org](#), its national television series The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation, its learning community inHub and its K-12 invention and entrepreneurship competitions through Invention Convention Worldwide, The Henry Ford's purpose is to activate innovative mindsets and unlock individual potential to help shape a better future.

About Enqbator:

Enqbator is a digital solutions agency based in Troy, Michigan that specializes in all aspects of web development, from website design, development and support, data integrations, and mobile app development to analytics and online marketing. Their unparalleled expertise in integrating client sites with clients' internal and external systems provides users with seamless browsing experiences. By striving to work as an extension of each client's own team, Enqbator has forged long-lasting and successful partner relationships. For more information, please visit www.enqbator.com



Learn how to build a connected ecosystem of websites around Progress Sitefinity

About Progress

Dedicated to propelling business forward in a technology-driven world, [Progress](#) (NASDAQ: PRGS) helps businesses drive faster cycles of innovation, fuel momentum and accelerate their path to success. As the trusted provider of the best products to develop, deploy and manage high-impact applications, Progress enables customers to build the applications and experiences they need, deploy where and how they want and manage it all safely and securely. Hundreds of thousands of enterprises, including 1,700 software companies and 3.5 million developers, depend on Progress to achieve their goals—with confidence. Learn more at www.progress.com

- [f](#) /progresssw
- [t](#) /progresssw
- [v](#) /progresssw
- [in](#) /progress-software
- [o](#) /progress_sw_

2022 Progress Software Corporation and/or its subsidiaries or affiliates. All rights reserved. Rev 2022/04 RITM0157987