

“Fulcrum helps the world’s largest spiritual networking website attract more traffic and offer its visitors a friendlier user experience by incorporating key components of Social Networking and Web 2.0 technologies”

Industry

Social Networking

Technology Used

.Net 2.0 framework
IIS 6.0
MS Visual Studio IDE for Web services
C#
ADO.Net
SQL Server 2005
ALTAS



Business Need

The objective of this initiative was to create a platform for the client’s current & prospective members to be able to network with each other and create spiritual groups. They required a platform that would enable members to:

- Have their own customizable personal space on the website fostering self-expression
- Create communities and networks of friends to interact with other members, one-on-one and in groups
- Interact with clergy, spiritual leaders, teachers, counselors & guides
- Engage in various modes of self-expression and exploration

Overall the objective of the Spiritual Networking was to dramatically increase the users' engagement with the website, as measured by stickiness and page views.

Solution

Fulcrum developed a strategy to use key features of Social Networking that would fulfill the client objectives and requirements:

- A universal keyword tagging system would allow the client to push content to users, attracting them with:
 - New people, groups and organizations whose interests are similar to the client’s interest areas
 - Content and features on topics matching users’ personal interests
- Users would be offered a variety of fun, interesting activities and learning experiences
- Users would be given their own customizable personal space and tools for self-expression
- Users would be encouraged by participation incentives (points, ratings, & being featured on the site)

All elements of the Spiritual Networking would be consonant with the client’s Mission Statement, and would help users satisfy a desire for guidance and companionship on their spiritual journeys. It would be relationship-driven more than topic-

Brief History

The client is the largest spiritual website available on the internet today and operates under the philosophy of helping people find their spirituality.

With such a mission, the company focuses on people who like to learn more about spirituality, religion, family/relationships and health. The company is not being affiliated with any specific philosophy, religion, or spiritual movement and it has evolved over the years into primarily three main websites – the main company website, a match-making website, and an e-cards site. With the ever-growing popularity of social networking websites it was a natural extension for the client to expand into social networking, keeping in mind the spiritual needs of its existing and prospective member base.

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Solution

driven, but would also enable more in-depth discussion and exploration than was found on most social networking sites.

Social Networking components relevant to Beliefnet’s functional requirements were: Profiles, Entitlement, Roles, Tagging, Flag as Inappropriate related to content, Send to a Friend, Ratings, Ad Tagging and SEM/SEO. The project hence incorporated the latest features of Web 2.0.

Benefits:

- The website was aligned with emerging trends driving increased traffic and high levels of user satisfaction
- Sharp increase in new registration of users due to referrals from existing users
- Users were provided with more personal space and tools as well as richer navigational features and a friendlier user interface
- Increase in the site download speed along with reduction of the size of each page to download
- Admin users have more control and features as a result of which long term maintenance costs were cut down.
- New universal tagging system allows the client to push content to users
- The system was more flexible and adaptable as future technologies can be easily adapted and integrated and a change in business needs can be quickly incorporated into their system

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