Kentico

East of England COOP

www.eastofengland.coop

East England Co-Op

Crafted

FOOD&BEVERAGES RETAIL

East of England Co-op launch new fully responsive website on Kentico CMS.

Mobile SEO visibility increased by

62%

Background

East of England Co-op is an independent co-op based in the East of England, owned by over 275,000 members. In 2014 Crafted inherited their previous desktop Umbraco site. Although the site evolved during this time, including a new funeral-plan checkout and mobile specific store finder, it was clear as plans were being discussed for 2016 that the site needed a drastic overhaul, including the infrastructure it was originally based on.

Goals and Challenges

East of England's primary goals were to increase engagement with the brand by visits to the store finder, lower bounce rate on content, direct calls to East of England Co-op, and increase conversion on funeral plan purchases online. Considerations were given to modernising the look and feel of the website (especially as the Funerals aspect of the company was rebranding) whilst optimising the site for their large customer base of mobile users.

A core aspect of the project was to focus on 'at-need' funeral customers. Crafted ensured that throughout the design process, consideration was given to designing for crisis, making calls to action clear and easy to find during this stressful time.

Throughout the project, Crafted also ensured East of England's internal business processes were improved. The previous CMS was incredibly difficult to update, making management of the site, content, and customer data an arduous task. Through the experience of working with the Co-op, Crafted ensured these issues were addressed through the architecture of the new CMS—implementing a brand new CMS with clearly structured media libraries, ensuring common tasks in the future could be easily managed (such as Bank Holiday opening hours), a more user-centred navigation, and designing for different audience segments, dramatically improved the functionality and flexibility for both East of England Co-op as well as their customers.

Crafted worked using an agile methodology throughout the project. This allowed additional features to be captured or amended, ensuring any changes in requirements were addressed during the process.

The website was developed with the following requirements:

- Integration with recurring and one-off payments with PayPal
- Structure the website to improve organic SEO
- Update the look and feel to better reflect the current business positioning
- Provide a CMS that would support their key campaigns
- Improve user engagement by improving site functionality and responsiveness for an increasingly mobile audience

"Crafted did an amazing job with our new corporate website. The site needed to explain multiple different businesses, our work in supporting local communities, and our membership offer. The team have delivered a brilliant final product—one that fits our brand and helps to explain what we call our 'co-op difference'.
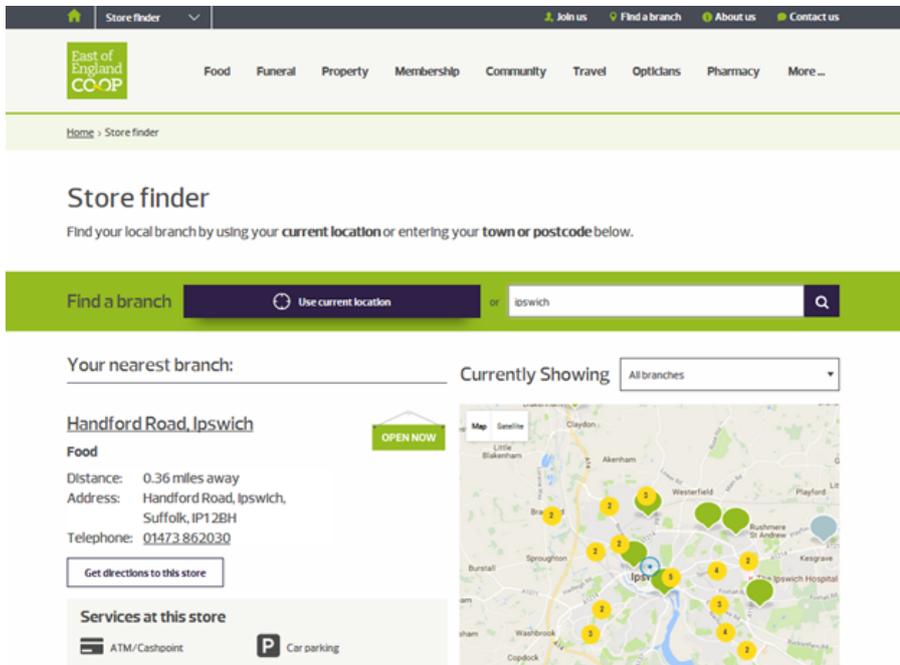
Kentico is a vast improvement from our previous Content Management System. It is fast, easy to use, and made migrating over 300 pages of content from our old site as painless as possible. We've already had some superb feedback on the responsiveness and design of the new site and are excited about developing it over the next few years"

Oli Watts
Head of Communications
East of England Co-operative
Society Ltd

- Increase site speed to assist with organic SEO and increase performance on mobile
- Ensure the new admin is clear, easy to use, and can be updated regularly by multiple members of the team in different roles.

Solution

Crafted worked on the new East of England website over a period of seven months, working to a critical deadline of 22 November 2016 to ensure the website was live for East of England Co-op's Christmas campaigns.

The core development phase was delivered in just under four months—launching in November 2016.

A wide range of Kentico capabilities were implemented, including:

- **Bespoke Facilities Management System** - Kentico allowed the creation of custom tables and these were then added to the admin platform in such a way that makes them feel built in, providing custom facilities to each of the Store Types which makes them easily accessible.
- **Continuous Integration** - By using the Continuous Integration module all of the environments were kept completely separate (dev, test, staging), the code changes and database changes could be made together thus simplifying the testing and release workflow.
- **Performance** - By using Kentico cache helper methods and dependency keys, the amount of SQL queries required was reduced.
- It was possible also to set up dependencies for the output cache of the page and this allowed a dramatic increase in the output cache time and yet have it update when the page or linked pages are published.

- As a result of these changes, the new site uses fewer server resources than the previous site (2% of CPU rather than 10%) and server response times are down even under heavy load, from an average of 500ms to about 60ms.
- **Widgets -** By utilising widgets, it ensured that pages are very dynamic. Using multiple widget zones per page provided the content editors with the maximum amount of flexibility.
- Custom Form Controls - Many custom controls were created that allowed the optimisation of the UI for various elements of the Kentico Admin. Kentico provides useful base methods that allow the creation of quick, specific controls very easily.
- **E-commerce -** Due to the needs of the site a custom E-commerce integration was required. A payment provider was written to handle recurring and one-off payments via PayPal and integration with Kentico's E-commerce methods allowed update of the admin while going through the checkout process. Kentico's Shopping Cart/Order fields were also easily modified to add all the extra information that was needed.
- **Email Templates** – Co-op wanted to send emails from the system that could be easily managed and updated. Kentico's Email Templates allowed the creation of these in the admin and also to use these as an email template, a 'Master' Template, containing layout items. The particular email being sent could be injected in from another template. This provided vastly improved control over the content of emails whilst keeping them fully responsive.

Additional Kentico solutions and features used:
- External Authentication
- Caching
- Event Logging
- Email Templates
- Email Queue
- Page Types
  - Page Inheritance
 - Page type relationships (allowed child classes, etc.)

Results

Improvements to organic visibility

Desktop and mobile organic visibility improved dramatically within one week of launch.

Improvements to site speed

Drastic reduction in load time and improvement of site speed has produced a dramatic improvement on user satification on the site.

**Mobile organic visibility +61.59%**
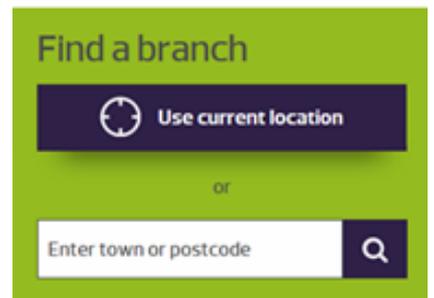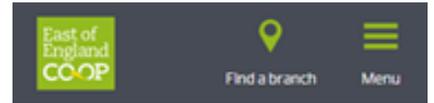
Organic traffic engagement:

- Page views +4.58%
- Pages/session +8.92%
- Session duration +16.06%
- Bounce rate improved from 54.98% to 45.51%, a 17.23% improvement
- New visitors +2.37%

Mobile Traffic Improvements:

- Visitors +0.68%
- Page views +2.35%
- Pages/session +1.65%
- Session Duration +14.24%
- Bounce rate improved from 66.41% to 60.18%, a 9.37% improvement
- New visitors +1.87%
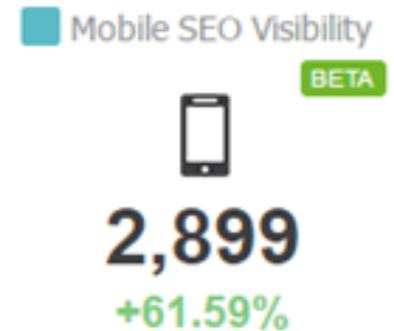
Key criteria for choosing Kentico

Kentico was chosen for the development of the East of England Co-op website due to its flexibility and extensible architecture along with the wide variety of features available. The ability to develop custom features and integrate with Third Party systems was vital to the success of this project; as was the option to upgrade the solution with new features and functionality in the future, ensuring the platform keeps up with any digital trends and business requirements in the future. This is especially important to ensure that Crafted can continue to develop and build upon the site with new features for 2017.

Kentico functionality benefits include:

- Flexibility to create custom CMS pages
- Easily integrated legacy systems into Kentico for better admins
    - Event Log
    - Email templates / queue
    - Admin Authentication and Permissions to access custom admin modules
- Kentico allowed a large amount of configuration settings to be administrable quickly, either for on-page elements or site-wide
    - Enhanced SEO features were also incorporated into the site such as the ability to administer Google Tag Manager IDs and set global HTML snippets within the CMS.
- Custom Admin Modules were integrated as part of Kentico, making it easier for admin users to manage the site.

Crafted

We're Crafted, a full service digital agency that's been solving marketing challenges for brands since 2005. Our ethos is Experience Better; empowering our clients to deliver valuable online experiences for their customers, using insight driven strategies. We achieve this across our four pillars of Consultancy, Development, Design and Online Marketing. Experience Better embodies everything we do, from our results-focused approach to the way we build trusted partnerships with our clients.

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