Lucky Dog Rescue adopts scalable platform to drive collaboration and marketing

Avanade delivers a robust, integrated back-end combined with an intuitive website—and a new brand identity

Business situation

As with many non-profit organizations, what started out as a small idea—to save homeless dogs in the Houston area from euthanasia—has blossomed into something bigger.

With Lucky Dog Rescue's growth came the need for a more efficient, effective and easy way for its all-volunteer organization to make good on its mission of providing rescue services, vet care, foster care and adoptive placement to stray and abandoned dogs.

Thanks to Lucky Dog Rescue's volunteers, more than 600 homeless dogs have been adopted into loving homes since the organization began in 2009. But adoption is the end of a long journey that involves many elements: identifying, coordinating and training foster families; managing veterinarian and other records for each pet; screening adoptive families; and consistently meeting significant fundraising needs.

With the number of dogs saved growing steadily, Lucky Dog Rescue had outgrown the homegrown and disparate technology infrastructure used to support its mission. The system deployed to track each dog's information—from placement into foster care through adoption—had become cumbersome for volunteers to use.

Lucky Dog Rescue also had outgrown its online presence. Its customized website lacked functionality to enable mobile access or to update content easily and quickly. Communicating with an increasing number of donors, volunteers and adoptive families had become difficult, inefficient and costly with its reliance on a third-party newsletter platform.

"We needed a complete overhaul of our back-end systems and our online presence to reflect our organization's goals and, more importantly, make us more efficient so we can continue to

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increase the number of dogs we rescue," said Jodie Eisenhardt, Board Secretary, Lucky Dog Rescue. "Avanade brought its expertise across a wide range of areas—including collaboration, knowledge management, digital marketing and branding—to help us realize our goals and change our organization in some very powerful ways."

The solution

Avanade worked with Lucky Dog Rescue to understand every step of its processes and its long-term goals. Avanade then identified opportunities to automate manual tasks, implement new solutions and increase efficiencies. An assessment of the organization's existing web presence and brand also revealed opportunities to refresh its web presence.

For the rescue's business activities, Avanade recommended a solution leveraging Microsoft SharePoint 2013 and Office 365 that would let the organization leverage the power of a cloud-based platform to manage back-end and website content with greater ease and in a cost-effective manner. Avanade brought its significant SharePoint design expertise to the

project, automating several existing manual processes to help Lucky Dog Rescue efficiently detail the history of each rescued dog. A new knowledge management repository aligned with the way volunteers work, supports the capturing and storing information about each rescued animal.

To better manage Lucky Dog Rescue's online presence, Avanade helped build an automated, intuitive content management process. Volunteers now can easily locate a dog's photo from the internal SharePoint repository and publish it to the external website, driving interest in adoption. New tools help volunteers easily update the home page to promote upcoming events and make changes to commonly used adoption-related forms and documents.

Although the project's goal was to help volunteers collaborate and efficiently populate web content, Avanade saw another opportunity to help Lucky Dog Rescue. Tapping its vast user experience design and digital marketing expertise, Avanade refreshed Lucky Dog Rescue's brand identity with a new logo and color palette. This new look-and-feel became an important component to

a fully redesigned website in which Avanade leveraged HTML 5 to ensure faster performance, plus access from any device, anywhere.

"I am incredibly impressed with what we accomplished together. With Avanade's help, we've dramatically increased our ability to rescue more dogs," Eisenhardt said. "Avanade's passion, commitment and expertise helped us solve a wide range of challenges that once hindered our ability to grow our organization."

Results realized

Through its new content management platform, website and branding, Lucky Dog Rescue is well positioned for future growth. With Avanade's help, Lucky Dog Rescue has:

- A new brand that reflects the organization's current and future goals. Avanade's digital marketing and branding expertise gave the Lucky Dog Rescue brand a much needed refresh. Lucky Dog Rescue credits its new logo and refreshed brand identity—more closely aligned with its status as a growing non-profit— with its strengthened ability to attract more volunteers, adoptive families and donors to its organization.

- A single source of truth about each and every rescued dog. With SharePoint's user-friendly platform, Lucky Dog Rescue can readily manage all information about each dog in foster care from a single location— and make it easy for a variety of volunteers involved in the process to collaborate and update this information. This fully automated knowledge management system enables the organization to keep a current record of services provided for each dog, as well as pending and
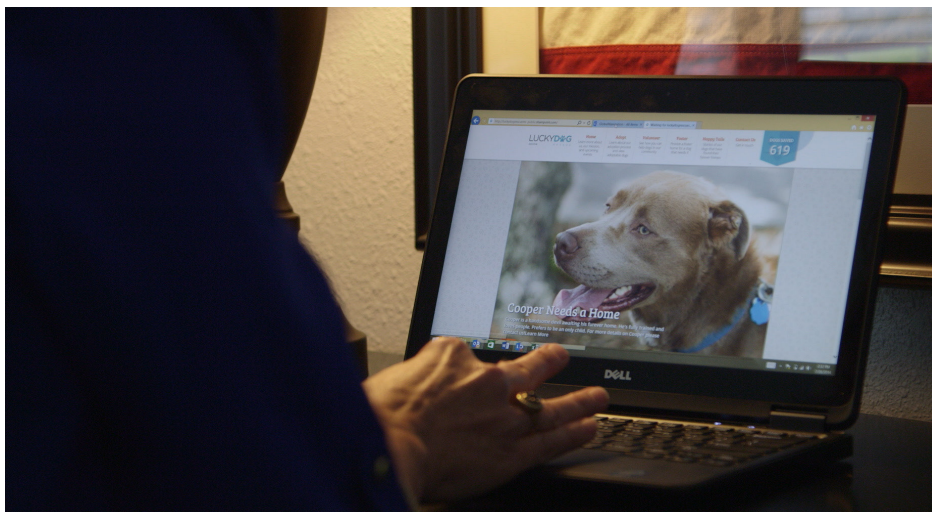
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completed adoptions, and to filter and view information with keyword searches and to generate reports on specific activities.

- A single database of volunteers, adoptive families and donors. For the first time, the organization can capture event and contact information automatically from its new website, and automatically collate that information into an Excel spreadsheet. As a result, the organization has up-to-date information on its growing number of volunteers and donors, making outreach to segmented groups not only possible for the first time, but easy and efficient.

- A modern, responsive website. Built on HTML 5 and managed in the cloud, Lucky Dog Rescue's new online presence can be viewed on any device, from anywhere. Its revised layout makes it easier for viewers to find relevant content, download volunteer or adoption forms, contact the organization and even make a donation. With full integration into Lucky Dog Rescue's social media channels, the organization can share information while maintaining a consistent message and brand across all channels.

- A fully optimized web content management system. By leveraging an intuitive, cloud-based SharePoint 2013 platform, volunteers can update content on the organization's new website faster than two shakes of a dog's tail, from any location. This has empowered Lucky Dog Rescue to make more frequent updates to its site, which it expects will lead to more inquiries from prospective volunteers, adoptive families and donors. The organization no longer needs third-party vendors to make website changes or distribute newsletters.

The new solution will serve Lucky Dog Rescue for many years, scaling as the organization grows. Eisenhardt commented, "Avanade has helped Lucky Dog Rescue fully realize its vision of finding loving homes for a growing number of homeless dogs in the Houston area. With our new platform, we are empowered to do more and reach more prospective volunteers, adoptive families and donors. We are truly positioned for the future."

About this customer

Lucky Dog Rescue, Inc. is a 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit animal welfare organization. Lucky Dog is an all-volunteer, foster-based organization dedicated to providing rescue services, vet care, foster care and adoptive placement to stray and abandoned dogs based on availability of fosters and donated funds.

Lucky Dog Rescue's goal is to find permanent, loving homes for the pets in its care. Lucky Dog Rescue focuses rescue efforts on BARC (the City of Houston Animal Shelter) and on supporting individuals who find dogs and are willing to foster them until adoption.

To find out more, please visit http://www.luckyrescue.org.

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