



WEBSITE MODERNIZATION

Montgomery Township Redesigns Their Website With CORE

AGENCY NAME Montgomery Township

LOCATION Pennsylvania

AGENCY TYPE Township

DEPARTMENT Public Information

SOLUTIONS Citizen Engagement, Content Management



**INCREASED
ACCESS TO
INFORMATION
AND FORMS**

**IMPROVED
WEBSITE
NAVIGATION**

**MODERNIZED
THE LOOK AND
FEEL OF THE
WEBSITE**



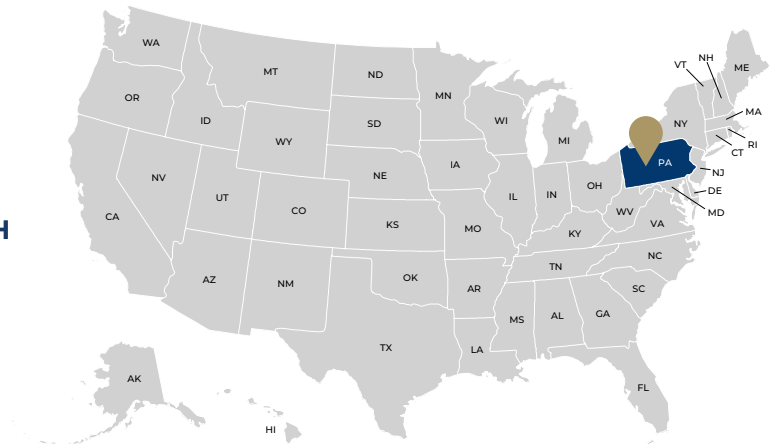
**HIGHER CITIZEN
ENGAGEMENT ON
THE WEBSITE**



**FASTER SELF-SERVICE FOR
CITIZENS WITH SMART SEARCH
AND UPDATED NAVIGATION**



**EASY-TO-USE BACKEND
TOOLS TO UPDATE THE
WEBSITE QUICKLY**



“ It’s been a great experience working with CORE! Everyone did a great job and our website is exactly how we want it to be now — built to engage citizens and easy to update on the backend.”



Derek J. Muller
CPRP, The Public Information Coordinator



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A CORE customer since 2010, Montgomery Township in Pennsylvania was ready in 2022 to redesign and refresh their website. “We needed to freshen up the site design, enhance the navigation, and see what CORE could do for us to make the website more accessible,” said Derek J. Muller, CPRP, the Public Information Coordinator responsible for the website.

Montgomery Township’s goal was simple — get as much information as possible on the site, make it easy to navigate, and ensure it was easy to use. With CORE, Montgomery Township modernized their website with Smart Search added to their search bar, an updated navigation menu, a redesigned look and feel, and a repository for each township department to add events, information, breaking news, forms, and more. “It’s been a great experience working with CORE,” said Derek. “Everyone did a great job and our website is exactly how we want it to be now — built to engage citizens and easy to update on the backend.”



CHALLENGE

Over the years, documentation and different strategies for the website left some challenges for future stewards. The website had nearly 11 years of history before Derek took over and was ready to lead a redesign. “My job is to take complex government projects and all of the government communication and make it all accessible to residents,” said Derek. “For the Montgomery Township website, our goal was to get as much information on there as possible. We needed it to be easy to navigate and easy to use.”

Derek broke down the needs of the new site into three main categories — organization, search, and design.

The website demographic for the Montgomery Township isn’t just younger generations. Montgomery Township is seeing a need across every demographic and age group. Derek shared, “The website demographic is pretty across the board now. We have a senior volunteer committee in Township and they are working on getting more resources online. They’re finding that more and more senior citizens are using computers to find information as well—so they want to ensure that our website has the information they need.”

By partnering with CORE for a website refresh, Montgomery Township was prioritizing citizen needs and engagement expectations for local government. “There are so many channels to manage as a township or organization. But the website is essential,” said Derek. “The website is always there — it’s a constant channel for communication with our audience — the citizens of our town.”

NAVIGATION WAS A STRUGGLE

“We really needed to organize all of our documentation and create a website that was easier to navigate,” said Derek. The old website relied on a navigation bar that was pieced together through the years with no clear strategy to help citizens find key categories of content.

NO SMART SEARCH

“We needed to add Smart Search to our search option,” said Derek. “That was a big deal for us because we didn’t have the option in the old design for citizens to quickly search for whatever they couldn’t find in the navigation.” Without a smart search option, citizens were left to struggle through their search with the poorly designed navigation menu.

AN OUTDATED DESIGN

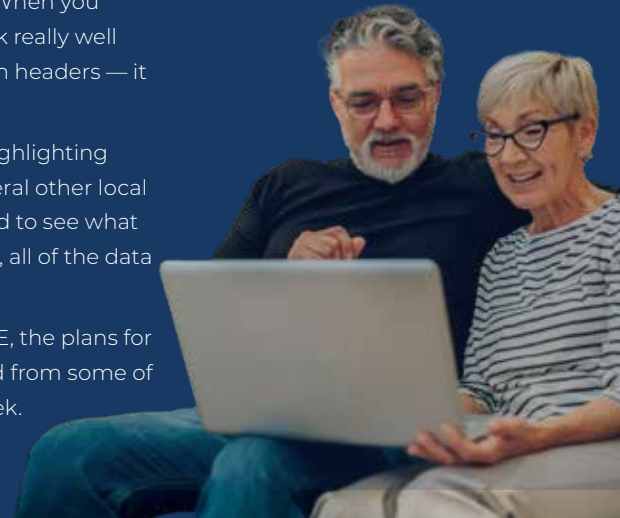
“Aesthetically, the website was outdated. We needed to redesign the site to bring it into the modern age,” said Derek. Since the site had been designed more than 10 years ago, the colors, design elements, and imagery needed an update. “Plus, if we were going to push to make the website more accessible and really reorganize it, we wanted to put a fresh aesthetic on it so people would notice we were putting effort into the website and enhancing it,” said Derek.

SOLUTION

As a CORE customer, Montgomery Township turned to CORE to help them with their website redesign. The process was collaborative, flexible, and customizable. Derek explained, “When you work with the CORE team, they outline options and show you what they think will work really well for you. We could pick items we wanted to feature, pick our images, pick our navigation headers — it was all very customizable.”

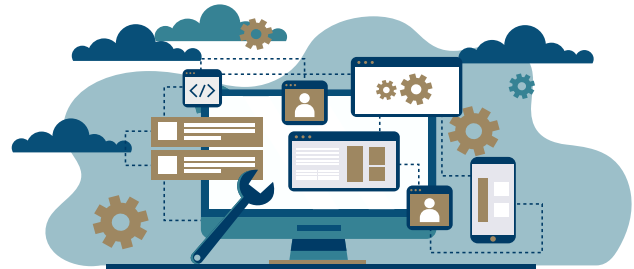
The Montgomery Township team came to CORE with some of their own research — highlighting design elements and other features they liked from other websites. “We looked at several other local websites to understand what we liked and what we didn’t like,” said Derek. “We wanted to see what our peers were doing in the local area.” any available financial data. But now with CORE, all of the data is available in real time.

Using the research from Derek’s team and the options and examples outlined by CORE, the plans for the new website were born. “We pulled together what we liked from our examples and from some of the sites CORE had worked on to really mix and match the features we liked,” said Derek.



RESULTS

After partnering with CORE for a website redesign, Montgomery saw incredible results:



HIGHER WEBSITE ENGAGEMENT

“The first place citizens look for information or news is the website,” said Derek. “The new website redesign helps us put that critical information online so citizens can engage with us more online.”

The new site features a user-friendly navigation, helping citizens visit the website pages they’re looking for—events, community information, codes & permits, and so much more. A calendar on the homepage features upcoming events and the recent news section updates regularly with new information.

The team is also incorporating key terms to help the site show up higher in Google search results—improving accessibility for citizens who Google their city questions vs. visiting the website initially.

INCREASED ACCESSIBILITY FOR CITIZENS

“When we updated the navigation bar for the website, we focused on including the main reasons a citizen would come to our website,” said Derek. With a more citizen-focused navigation, visitors can quickly access each area of the website. Plus, phone numbers, emails, social media links, and the Montgomery Township Youtube channel are accessible from an additional, horizontal navigation menu on the right.

“We have citizens accessing our site from both mobile devices and desktop computers, so making it responsive was critical,” said Derek. The new design is built with a responsive design, adjusting to whatever device citizens use to access it—desktop computer, tablet, or mobile phone.

FAST, REAL-TIME SUPPORT

“It’s so easy to get support from the CORE team,” said Derek. “When I have a question, I can reach out to someone on the CORE support team and I get an answer within a day.” Updated support means less downtime for any website issues or questions from the Montgomery Township team.





IMPROVED NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Before the redesign, Montgomery Township used a breaking news feature to notify citizens of emergencies. “We used the breaking news feature to notify citizens of a flood in 2021 and we use it to alert people to any snow emergencies,” said Derek. “But we really try to reserve that feature for immediate emergencies.”

In the website update, CORE and Montgomery Township updated an existing page—an Emergency Management page—with free resources for people to proactively review. “This helped us add more resources that our people need to the site without abusing our notification system that we reserve for emergencies,” said Derek.

The updated notifications page includes updated news, links, and forms for citizens to fill out to contact first responders.

FASTER SEARCH FOR CITIZEN QUESTIONS

The outdated website didn’t include the option for Smart Search. Without a better search option, citizens were left to Google questions or scan through the entire website to find an answer. A Smart Search bar was a high priority in the redesign and now, citizens can access it right on the front page.

“The Smart Search option has made it so much easier for citizens to find what they’re looking for,” said Derek. “Even with an updated navigation menu, the Smart Search feature is what a lot of citizens prefer to use so we knew we needed to include it.”

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CPRP, The Public Information Coordinator

A CUSTOMIZED WEBSITE, BUILT FOR MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP

“We really appreciated that CORE offered us so many options and that we got to customize everything we wanted to customize,” said Derek. “There was so much flexibility within the parameters that CORE gave us. We got the site we wanted with CORE.”

The new website is easy-to-use, easy-to-manage, and built for both citizen engagement and staff accessibility. The Montgomery Township plans to implement a plug-in that can enable multilingual web pages, helping them improve accessibility to the large Korean population in the city. “The platform is already so easy to use, adding a plug-in will help us customize the site even more,” said Derek.



FUTURE PLANS FOR MORE INTERNAL SELF-SERVICE

While Derek currently owns the website updates for the city, plans are in progress to offer website training and content guidelines to other departments. “We’ll offer training and content guidelines in the near future so other departments can add their own content and we can still keep everything on the website consistent,” said Derek.

“I see the website as the center of all the communication channels we use for citizen messaging. We link to the website from all of those other channels—even our cable channel will put a QR code up on the screen and link to specific pages,” said Derek. “With an updated design, more accessible navigation and search options, and an easy-to-use backend platform, CORE has helped us deliver a critical asset to our community.”



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