The Refined Story

customer-first consulting

Microsoft

BLive Music

Emodo

GTSRI

T-Mobile

REALITYNEXT

JT NEWS THE VOICE OF JEWISH WASHINGTON

Communications Strategy . Content & Product Design . User Experience

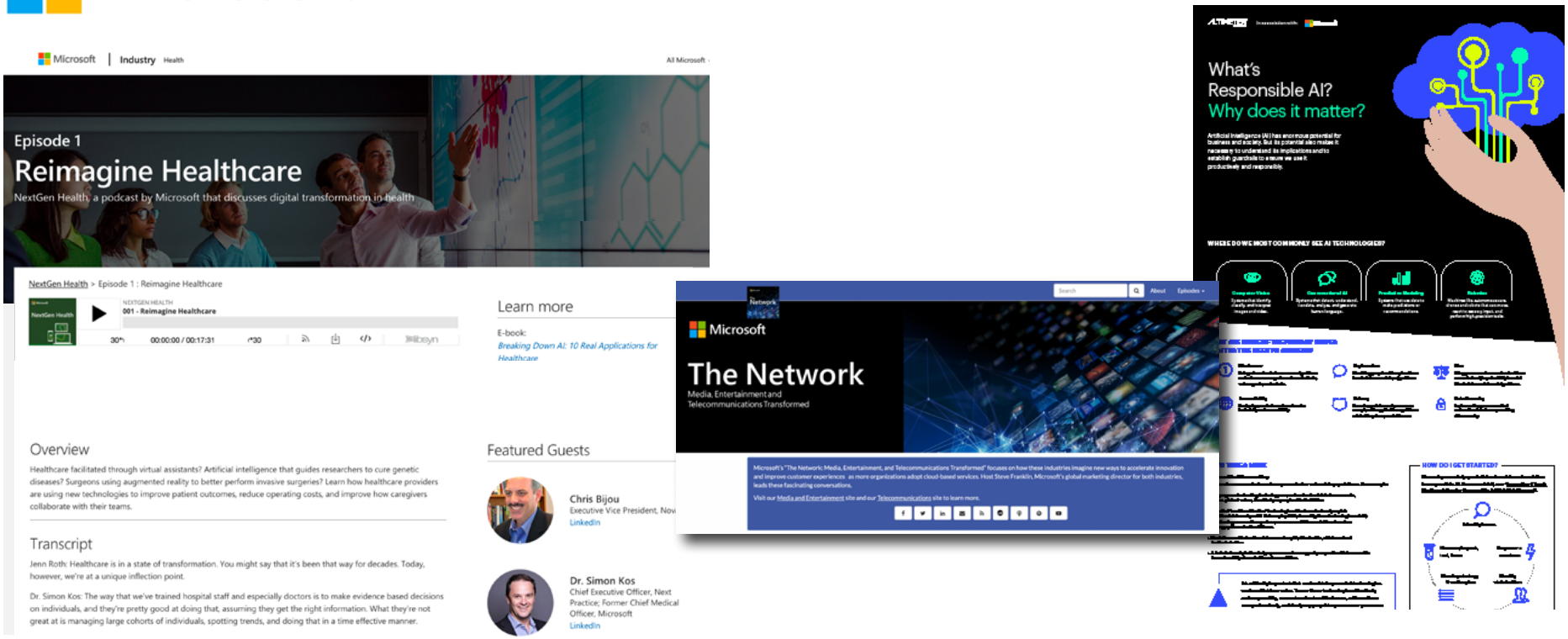
joel@refinedstory.com . www.refinedstory.com . 825.436.2035 (CA) . 206.779.2035 (US)

Joel Magalnick's innate curiosity allows him to ask critical questions and view a challenge from multiple angles when he designs digital products, develops content strategies, or coaches clients on anything from strategic planning to public speaking.

Joel's customer-first approach means every engagement is a learning experience: meeting the needs of the intended audience, collaborating across disciplines, and diving deep into subjects like design thinking, diversity & inclusion, AI, and industry-specific insights.

Microsoft

digital strategy | user experience | communications



Goals

Provide strategic direction and content-baed marketing materials for multiple Microsoft global business units, including health, government, automotive, and its AI Business School. Efforts spanned from B2B customer engagement programs to educational materials about how AI transformations can improve business processes.

Projects

Podcasting: Worked on a team to interview SMEs and develop content for multiple scripted series, then led creative direction in the studio.

Infographics: Worked with SMEs, marketing leaders, and design teams to create content that would tell the story through pictures in multiple topics.

Elevate Your Pitch: Worked with more than 50 leaders over three days to script elevator pitches to record on-screen.

Challenges

The balance of getting the right voice and tone while telling a story that met the needs of the client and the intended audience.

Finding and securing interview time with the right subject matter experts for each given topic.

Results

Six series that have driven engagement and garnered accolades all the way up to Microsoft's C-suite.

High engagement with intended audiences for infographic.

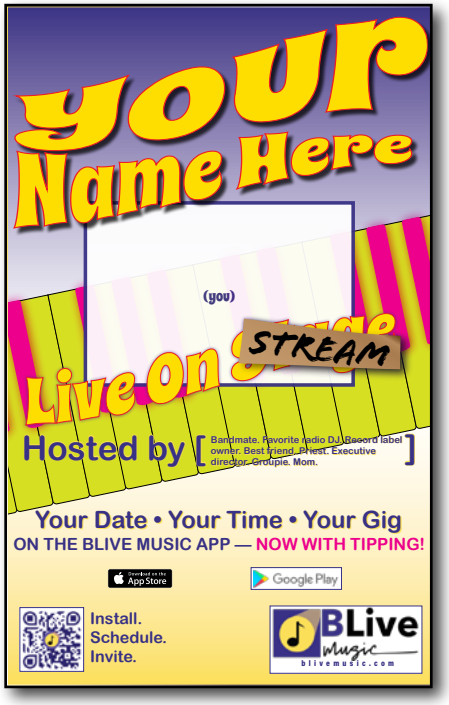
Featured leaders shared their stories on social media and corporate websites based on our scripts and coaching.

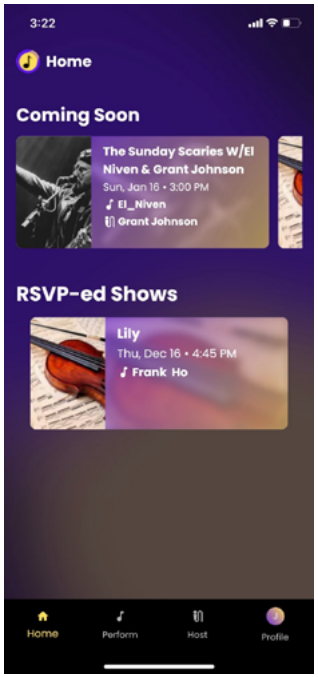
Listen:

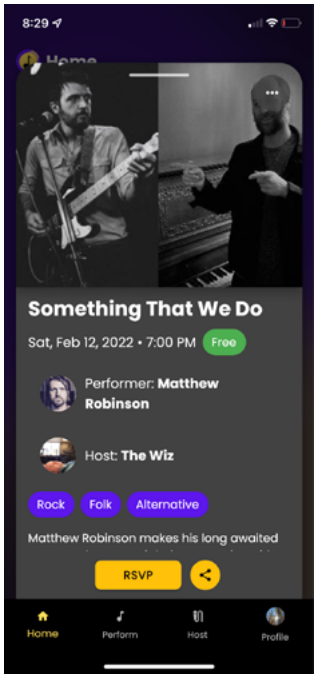
The Network • AI Business School

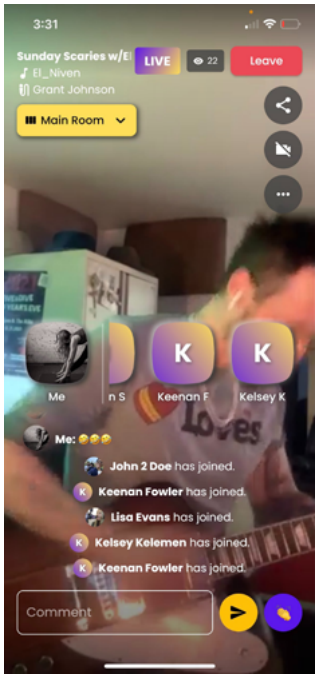
BLive Music

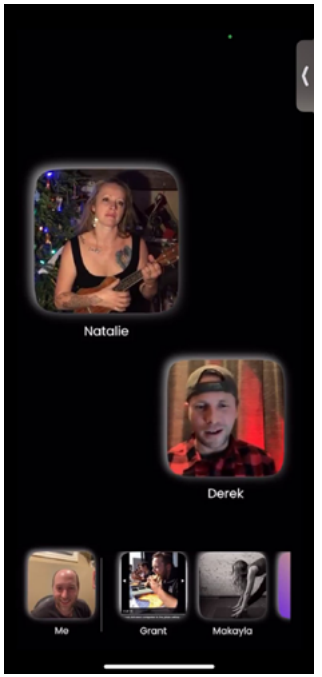
marketing strategy | user research | product design











Goals

For musicians to fill the gap between concerts, this emerging start-up developed an app that brings together musicians and audiences, with a producer hosting the show for a more dynamic experience.

Process

Conducted user interviews with dozens of musicians and audience members, many of whom could also host shows.

Developed a user flow and interface to create a simple and joyful experience.

Produced a marketing strategy and continual updates to materials that bring in performers, producers and audience to scheduled shows.

Challenges

As with any startup, product-market fit can be elusive.

With so many assets and product plans, prioritization can occasionally become overwhelming.

Telling the story in a way that attracts musicians with a promise of having a fun, easy experience.

Results

The app launched in December 2021 with support from multiple musicians and radio personalities as producers. Platform continues to grow and improve.

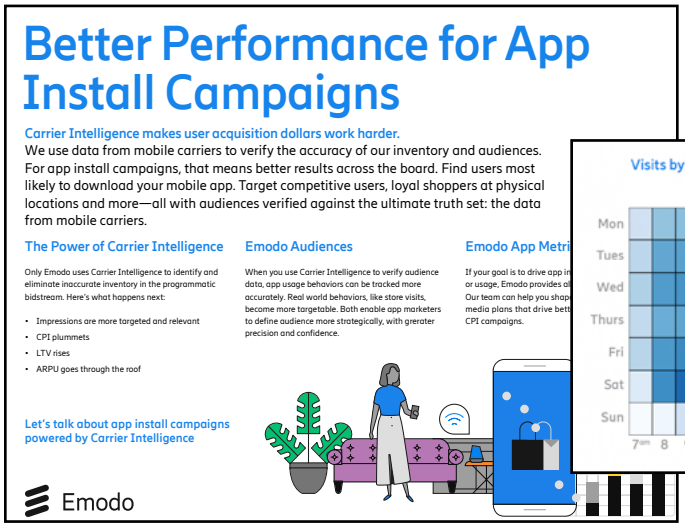
Watch:
An Introduction to BLive Music

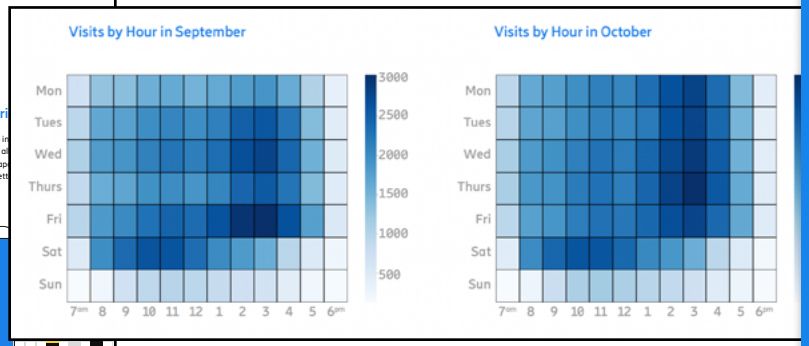
Joel helped me reach my goals for stepping into public speaking. He brought a great combination of practical tips and strategies based in neuroscience that really helped me build confidence and feel prepared, whether I was recording a podcast or moderating a panel. He's such a pleasure to work with!

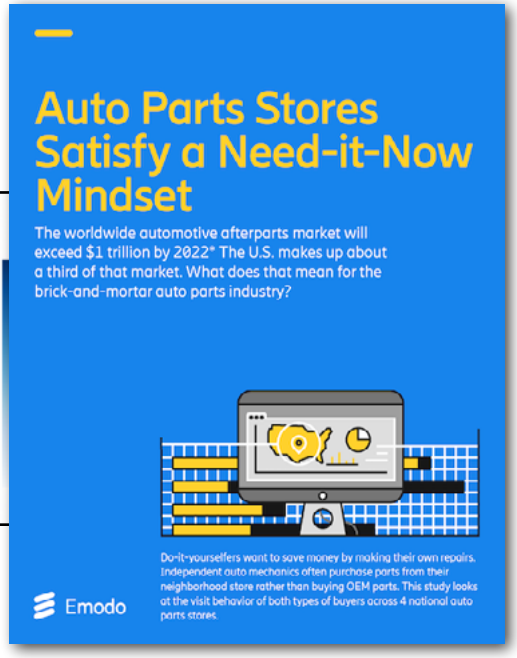
– Jill Reddish

Emodo

data modeling | data storytelling | case study development







Goals

Understand trends and consumer behavior based upon mobile ping data to direct advertising campaigns.

Tell the story of the client's unique capabilities in a B2B context to potential advertisers.

Process

Worked alongside a data scientist to assess data and researched consumer trends to understand behaviors.

Used the data and visualizations to tell stories about behavior and tie those stories to campaigns.

Challenges

Collecting data from disparate sources that could be aggregated to develop relevant, cogent stories.

Multiple priorities oftentimes made it difficult to obtain data in a timely manner.

Onset of the Covid-19 pandemic forced a change in business model as consumers remained in lockdown.

Solution

Multiple reports, case studies, and landing pages showed how the client could use the data it collected while maintaining consumer privacy.

content strategy | content marketing | coaching

Goals

Update the brand, messaging, and content strategy across the company to present a unified, cogent story to clients and partners.

Create a body of content that could be shared widely on social channels, web properties, print, and on sales calls.

Process

Client conducted multiple user research interviews to develop a set of six personas that served as client targets.

We collaborated with the client to develop materials such as case studies, blogs, videos, newsletters, and other collateral to showcase the company's unique offerings.

Challenges

Lack of previous content and digital strategy had led to a culture of inability to prioritize needs.

In 25 years, the company had never adopted a marketing strategy, so bringing people on board took longer than anticipated.

Solution

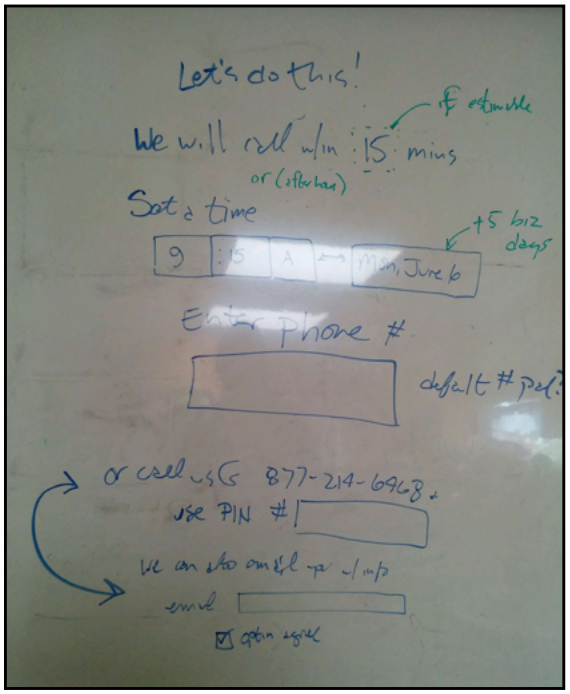
Continual updates of content, case studies and posts that explained the company's complex offerings helped to launch new client conversations in addition to preparing the sales team for a presence at major cloud conferences.

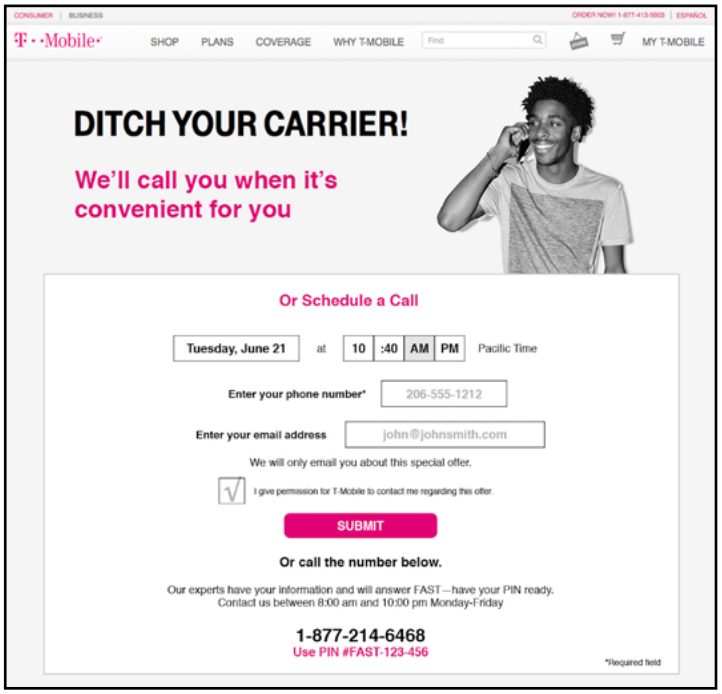
"I really appreciate that Joel listened to my goals for the team in advance of the course, reviewed our site and content, and created a session directly relevant to our skill gaps, and even highlighted our strengths! He created a collaborative atmosphere, which made the sometimes-daunting task of editing our own writing fun and interesting. I recommend working with Joel to take your team's content (no matter what level you're currently at) to a better skill level."

– Alyssa Thornley

T-Mobile

user experience | product development | digital strategy





Goals

Create product with workflow that eases process of switching to T-Mobile.

Product focused on sales conversions based on call center interactions over online shopping cart.

Process

Developed product based on use cases of on- and off-hours scenarios.

Worked with client and engineering team to iterate through solutions that resulted in a high-fidelity prototype that developers could build from with minimal disruption.

Challenges

Decision-making process as to how potential customers can interact via phone and online.

Fulfilling use cases of on-hours and off-hours call scenarios.

Not all scenarios had been thought through by client, meaning that some UX solutions had to be discarded until the technology caught up.

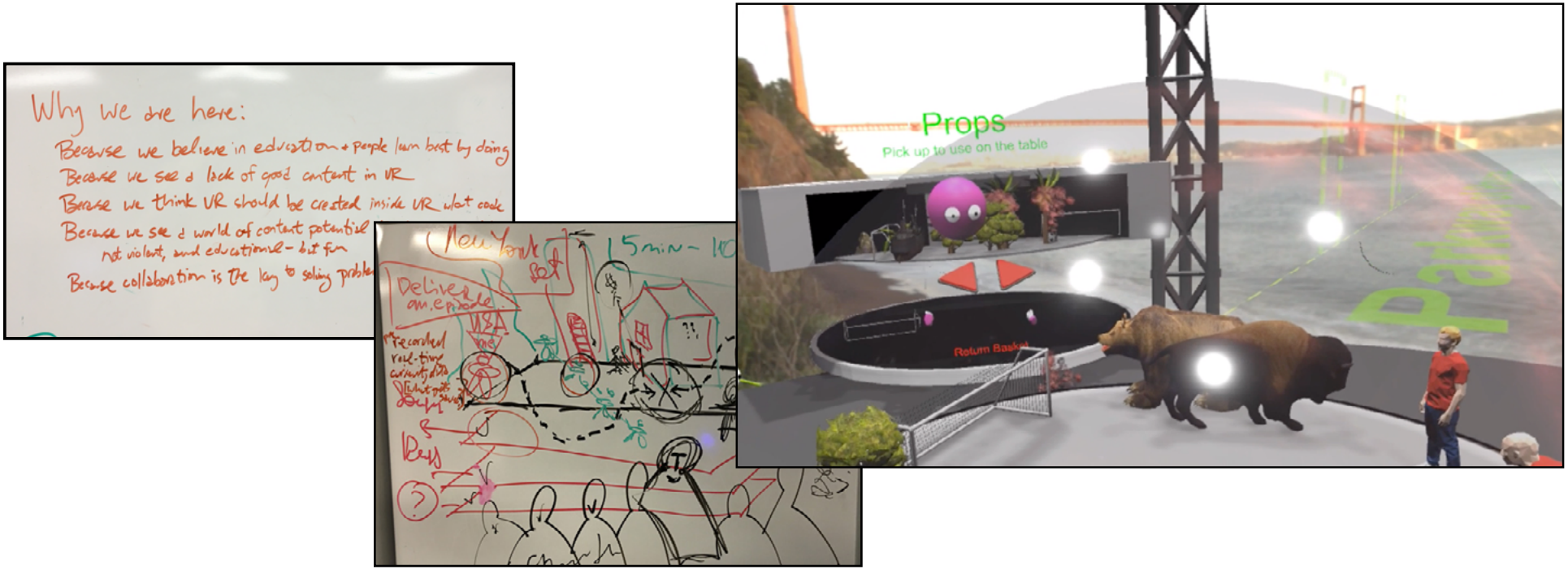
Solution

Campaign validated client assumptions that inbound calling works as viable solution.

Set a product baseline for future campaigns utilizing callbacks.

REALITYNEXT™

digital strategy | user research | product development



Goals

As co-founder of this startup, enabled students to make the subjects they learn in school relevant by bringing them together to make stories and games in virtual reality. My partner and I built the experience, methodology, and business strategy from scratch.

Process

The user experience of the VR platform we built needed to be melded with the user experience of the learning methodology.

Testing with students helped us understand challenges they had in doing the methodology and allowed us to reduce total steps.

Testing inside the VR platform showed how their play matched and challenged assumptions.

Challenges

As an innovative product, many of our assumptions had not previously been tested.

Lack of staff and full-time engineer put entirety of work on a tiny team that needed more tech expertise.

Results

Fun, innovative platform brought in students from multiple points across the world to learn, build and play. Platform is now open source for any educator to use.

JT NEWS THE VOICE OF JEWISH WASHINGTON

community leadership | digital strategy | product development

Goals

As editor-in-chief of an award-winning community news organization, I oversaw all content, brand management, template design, and product development, including establishing voice and tone to keep multiple audiences engaged.

Digital strategy, in addition to news coverage, included web products for multiple demographics and sales targets, plus a daily e-newsletter product.

Process

Worked with editorial, production and sales staff to ensure that all aspects of the operation worked in sync and met thematic needs.

Worked with reporters and columnists to ensure that content would be high quality and meet needs to publish on multiple platform types such as print, online, social, and email.

Challenges

The balance of getting the right facts, voice and tone while telling the best story possible.

Meeting the needs of multiple stakeholders—readers, advertisers, and board/owner.

Results

At a time of falling newspaper readership, I held our publication's subscriptions steady. In addition, our online readership eventually surpassed the print readership due to iterative content strategy and regular digital product updates.