NannyFinder.com
Public Site Reengineering

Project Overview

NannyFinder.com is a site that provides services for parents to find Nannies for their children. NannyFinder called us complaining that their previous developer had been taking longer and longer to complete requests, and had finally completely disappeared. They had nobody to fix the current problems in their site, nor to add features they required.

The problems they had been encountering included slow response times to serve pages, many bugs in the development that took a long time to fix, and expensive and time-consuming feature additions.

Solution

Luckily for them, they had a current copy of the code for their site that we were able to analyze. (When working with us you will ALWAYS have a current copy of your code) The first step in gaining control over the situation was to assess the state of their technology. We developed a prioritized list of problems in the current structure, and a time estimate/budget or each.

We then worked with NannyFinder to prioritize a list of feature they wanted to add, and helped them decide on the ROI provided by each feature

Since their site is geared for the consumer, we suggested they do A/B testing which compares two different designs for pages and allows them to compare the results of each before committing to either. This approach provides hard data on whether their site was attracting and retaining as many visitors as possible.

Technical Details

When we came aboard, the site was implemented using ASP Classic. We update the infrastructure to use ASP.NET with Castle Windsor Dependency Injection. This allowed us to use a Services based approach, which enables the gradual conversion of the application to .NET instead of the customer needing to invest in a full conversion up front. For each new feature added, we would convert just the necessary features to .NET, MVC, and a services architecture to minimize the financial impact.

The back end was MS SQL Server Express when we were awarded the project, and we kept that strategy. Since this site had a limited budget and small set of data, we decided that financial concerns outweighed the performance gains of a full SQL Server installation.

Benefit

Decreased Expenses due to Improved Quality – By introducing the latest quality practices in their development process, we were able to decrease their total outlay in development services because they didn't have to pay for as much rework. This had the obvious additional benefit of their customers seeing fewer errors on the site.

Additional Revenue – By testing each change before committing to it, they were able to experiment more freely with potential improvements to the site without damaging their traffic. Each potential improvement was tested for several weeks before fully implementing, allowing them to back out changes that decreased their traffic or retention.

Additional ROI – By helping NannyFinder measure the ROI on their potential feature enhancements, they were able to prioritize their projects in a way that provided the greatest ROI.