THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA IMPROVES PEOPLESOFT ACCESSIBILITY & USER EXPERIENCE

With Appsian's PeopleUX

As college campuses growing in diversity, the University of Minnesota sought to improve their commitment to students and enhance the accessibility of PeopleSoft Campus solutions. Their goal was to improve the the user experience for all students, especially those relying on assisted devices, by simplifying the way information is acquired, improving engagement in all forms, and enabling students to enjoy the capabilities of Campus Solutions in any matter they see fit – all in an effective and seamless manner. With PeopleUX, the University was able to enhance PeopleSoft CS self-service beyond its standard capabilities and deliver an improved end-user experience and enrich PeopleSoft's compatibility with screen reader devices.

INDUSTRY

Education

STUDENTS

50,000+

PROFILE

The University of Minnesota is one of the nation's largest schools with over 50,000 students and five campuses across the state. Considered one of America's Public Ivy universities, the institution offers baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees in virtually every field — from medicine to business, law to liberal arts, and science and engineering to architecture.

Accessibility

User Experience

Screen Reader Compatibility

ADA & OCR Compliance

HIGHLIGHTS

Improved PeopleSoft usability for visually impaired users

Transformed existing HTML to fit screen readers

Improved page elements and layout for readability

Fast roll out of use cases across self-service functions

Established compliance with accessible technology regulations

CHALLENGE

PeopleSoft's 'definitional development architecture' has a predefined user-interface which caused layout and readability issues on accessibility devices such as screen readers. With hundreds of pages to access and dozens of elements on each page, web-forms and AJAX processing were causing screen readers to lose track of where a user is on a page, resulting in significant productivity and usability issues. The University needed to transform PeopleSoft's existing HTML into a proper semantic structure for the student, faculty, and job-applicant self-service portals.

To provide parity of access, improve readability/navigation, and simplify access for its visually impaired users, the University had to satisfy the following critical requirements:

- All functionality had to be available if the keyboard was the only means of interaction

- All functionality had to be easy to use – versus merely render-able – on accessibility devices

- Functionality could not be disabled because rendering on accessibility devices was problematic.

SOLUTION

Appsian's PeopleUX solution resolved common PeopleSoft HTML structure issues for page objects such as lightboxes, prompt dialogs, heading, subheadings, grids, tables, and forms. PeopleUX transformed the existing HTML without requiring redevelopment of business logic or customizing the underlying PeopleSoft application. The Appsian UX team worked in cadence with the Disability Resource Center's (DRC) testing team. While the UX team made configuration changes, the DRC team verified UX behavior and analyzed the output for various use cases. PeopleUX's HTML processing engine applied rules to the output and metadata to modify the existing HTML. This created a better semantic structure and simplified information layout by removing extraneous elements. PeopleUX was also used to:

- Set up Aria Roles, which allows the creation of a table of contents for screen readers to use

- Ease navigation with menus and submenus

- Add skip links to allow bypassing reading of remaining navigation

- Create Tabs and tab structure

- Set up links and buttons

RESULTS

Following the implementation of Appsian's PeopleUX, the University of Minnesota improved navigation, incorporated ease-of-use, and enhanced readability for PeopleSoft pages on accessibility devices. PeopleUX allowed users with disabilities to keep track information on various pages, thereby, improving end-user Interaction. With PeopleUX, the University was able to address PeopleSoft's accessibility issues at a fraction of the cost and effort in comparison to alternative long-term and costly custom development projects.

The University rolled out 71 Use Cases to make self-service functions for visually impaired students, faculty, and job applicants fully accessible. PeopleUX also allowed the University to fulfill their goal of 'ensuring equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of technology' – as enforced by the Resolution Agreement South Carolina Technical College System OCR Compliance Review.