



White Bird Clinic

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Hack for a Cause 2018

White Bird Clinic: HELP Book website challenge

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU ARE TRYING TO SOLVE?

We live in a community with a wide range of resources and services. With access to the Internet, most people can use Google to search for information. However, finding the right resource isn't so simple. Let's say Jane wants to find a counselor. Simply searching for "counseling in Eugene" generates a long list of results. She takes the time to figure out which agency accepts her insurance, has convenient hours and location, and is currently accepting new clients. If that information is inaccurate, Jane spends even more time pursuing resources that don't work out and must start again. Jane might be a social worker who makes many referrals each day, and she likely won't have time to do an in-depth search for every client.

Local resource lists and databases do exist, but there is room for improvement. White Bird Clinic has published a comprehensive resource guide called the HELP book since the 1980s. Many agencies use this guide, but the printed format means information is updated only once a year. More recently, United Way created a website called 211info.org. While the website is useful, its focus is mostly on the Portland area and its entries are less detailed than the HELP book.

Lane County needs a thorough, accurate, accessible resource website. The community recognizes this need is not met by existing resources, as discussed recently in a Register Guard editorial. <http://registerguard.com/rg/opinion/36405603-78/hacking-for-a-cause.html.csp>

WHY DO YOU FEEL TECHNOLOGY WILL SOLVE THIS ISSUE?

We aim to build a website based on the local, in-depth information of the HELP book. Putting this information online will facilitate access, allow for more frequent updates, and let us add useful features.

Access. While many local agencies buy the HELP book, the cost involved may mean that not all staff receive a copy, or not all copies get updated regularly. With a website, there's no concern

about the number of copies. As for the price, we will accept donations to cover maintenance costs. Provided we can keep costs low, we don't want to charge a membership fee.

Updates. We recently updated our HELP book database to publish our 2018 edition. However, information goes out of date fast. On our website, agencies will be able to submit update requests for their own information. This would allow us to list information that changes frequently, like wait list time for new client appointments. We plan to reach out to organizations like Parenting Now, who regularly contacts agencies serving families, to collaborate on updates. We will dedicate staff and volunteer time to checking on pages that are overdue for updates.

Features. Our database is currently assembled in FileMaker Pro and can be exported into .csv or .dbf format. We currently have over 700 resources listed. We envision this information will form the basis of our website. Each entry includes agency name, contact information, accessibility information, and a description of their services. The website will have individual agency pages, a search tool, and a form for submitting update requests. We have many ideas for website features:

- Mobile access. The website is formatted to work well on mobile phones.

- Adding fields. Our website will allow us to include more fields of information than are currently in our database. We could include fields like hours, languages spoken, safe spaces, how to volunteer, etc.

- Links. The agency website listed can be clicked as a link. The agency address listed is a link to Google Maps. On a smartphone, the phone number can be tapped to automatically call.

- Tags. The HELP book comes with a subject index. One agency might offer both rental assistance and prescription assistance and be listed under both subjects. This information is already part of our database and can become tags. The search tool will have an option to search by tag. The agency pages will include a list of relevant tags. Each tag on the agency page is a link to the list of agencies with that tag. Bonus: Our existing list of tags is long. We could organize them into large categories and subcategories.

- Maps. A map of the address is embedded in the agency page.

- Community map. One way to search for resources is a map of the area with pins at each agency address. Pins link to the agency pages. Bonus: user can filter to one type of resource, such as food box locations. Bonus: users can search based on their current location.

- Related agencies. Agency 1 and Agency 2 are part of the same organization. Agency 1's page includes a link to Agency 2's page and vice versa.

- Implementing updates. Agencies will submit update requests to be applied to their pages. White Bird staff will review the requests. Ideally, staff could update the agency pages themselves, rather than needing a web developer to do so. The request form will include an email address. Seeing a request come from that agency's email will be one way to confirm information accuracy.

-Last updated. Agency pages will include a field for the date the page was last updated. Bonus: this field updates itself automatically when the page content is changed. Staff can generate a list of pages that are overdue for updates.

-Update reminders. If an agency has an email address listed and hasn't updated their page in six months, a reminder email is sent automatically.

-Admin membership. No login will be required to access agency information. White Bird staff and volunteers can log in to edit website content. Community partners who agree to help us with updates will be given logins.

-Embed-able. Our search page can be embedded into other websites. Agencies who help us with updates can embed our tool in their own websites. This reward may motivate agencies to participate. There will be a cost or suggested donation for agencies who aren't helping us and want to use our tool.

-Metrics. Visitor activity would be tabulated in an evaluative reporting page. When users search for a tag, they see a list of results followed by "Did you find a resource that meets your needs?" Users can answer yes or no. This data will be useful for identifying unmet community needs and for grant writing.

-Offline use. The website database can be compiled into a PDF. Users can pay a nominal fee to download this information in a protected format. White Bird Clinic will have the option to print physical copies if there is a need.

-AIRS. Another goal for the project is to incorporate the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems guidelines. AIRS publishes standards for taxonomy, quality assurance, and best practices in I&R services.

-Social media feeds. Agencies have the option of embedding social media feeds or RSS feeds in their pages. Those who are active on social media will have up-to-date announcements on their pages with no additional labor on their part.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

White Bird Clinic will offer \$500 to their winning team.

More information at:

<http://hackforacause.io/challenges-2018/>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/240524426488909/>