Reimagined Site Welcomes Current and Future Transit Riders

The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) sought a partner to redesign and replatform their marquee website to better meet the needs of riders and visitors of all backgrounds with an engaging, accessible design that would load quickly on any device type.

Challenge

Anticipating population growth of a million+ new residents, COTA developed a five-year plan to increase public transit accessibility and ridership. Central to the plan was a rider-focused website that would be intuitive, responsive and, in the client's words, a "pleasant, delightful experience for all users."

COTA selected CapTech to set the cornerstone and build on a foundation that would position the agency to provide mobility solutions for the Central Ohio region for years to come.

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Approach

Leveraging human-centered design methodology and years of transit experience, CapTech reimagined a responsive and accessible digital experience that could better serve the needs of current riders, build community relationships, attract previously untapped audiences, and accommodate the geography's burgeoning growth.

Strategic - Informed by customer research regarding site experiences and the needs of COTA's core audiences, we redesigned the site's information architecture and navigation to prioritize the rider tools and make content easier to find—both for riders and the search engines that lead them to COTA.com. While overhauling the digital experience, COTA was also renovating its brand positioning and messaging. CapTech worked closely with COTA's marketing team to infuse the new site with "brand moments," which allowed the organization's brand voice to guide riders through the site, while prioritizing usability.

Accessible – Given COTA's commitment to being an equitable and inclusive mobility solutions provider, CapTech emphasized the essential nature of adhering to or exceeding WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines, from initial design through QA testing prior to launch. Key to the success of this effort was iterative automated testing combined with the assessment of expert reviewers during each phase of design and development.

Forward-thinking – Taking a component-based approach to responsive design, we developed a comprehensive component library for the site that was scalable, consistent, and easily modifiable, giving website authors the flexibility to put together pages with dozens of different layouts to meet the ongoing needs.
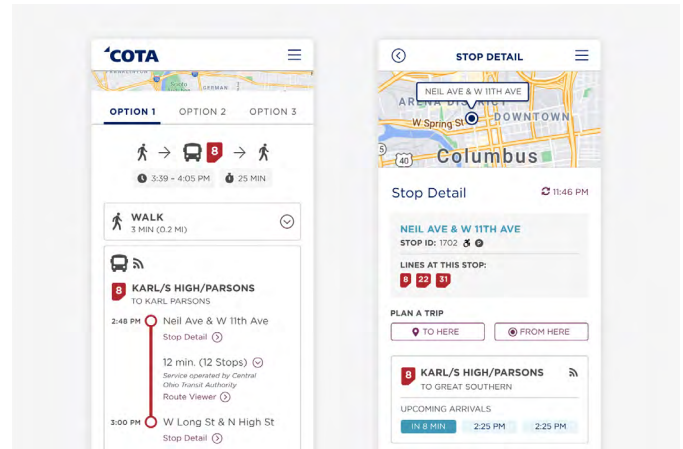
Results

Not only is COTA better positioned to inform and educate riders and newcomers alike, but its new site provides quick access to real-time tools in a mobile optimized, WCAG compliant experience.

- Expanded and enhanced digital standards reinforce and elevate the newly repositioned brand while supporting WCAG compliance.

- Clearly-defined strategy eliminates unnecessary content and optimizes the site for easier maintenance and better discoverability.

- Streamlined experience dramatically enhances usability and lowers future operational and customer service costs.

- Newly accessible and inclusive design allows riders of all backgrounds to take advantage of powerful, real-time transit planning tools, regardless of device.

Let's do next together.

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