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Service is very important for the police and enjoys high priority. Not only in the actual world, but in the virtual online world as well. Society is changing drastically, not least as the result of explosive growth in consumer technology like smartphones and 4G internet. The website is a good step towards informing citizens and fostering interaction. Connection and service between citizens and police, digitally as well.”

Ron de Milde

Program director for Communication
IMDM, Social Media at the police



Citizens the focus of responsive website for Dutch police

In 2012, the police integrated the 362 regional and local police websites into one new national website with a separate mobile version. More than half of visitors use the site on a mobile device. That is why the police decided to merge the web and mobile versions. The result is a responsive website that presents the same content on any device, designed entirely with the end user in mind: the citizen. Real collaboration between National Police and Capgemini resulted in award winning website politie.nl.

The police website offers not only prevention information, stories from the police and police news, it also provides an important service. Many visitors go to the website to file a report or report a situation. The very popular 'Mijn buurt' section - My neighborhood - allows people to find police-related information, such as the details of their neighborhood officer, news on break-ins in the area and neighborhood initiatives. Citizens can also participate in dossiers and respond to 'Wanted & Missing' notices. Being connected with citizens is an important goal for the police. After all, citizens play an increasingly important role in fighting crime. They provide tips and information by uploading photos, videos and audio material. The citizen must therefore be able to quickly find what he or she is looking for on the site.

Overview

Customer Name: Politie (Police)

Industry: Public Sector/Government

Location: The Netherlands

Client Challenges/Business Need:
Inform and interact with public through one responsive website instead of multiple police websites.

Solution-at-a glance:
Design of interactive responsive website for Dutch police with end-user in mind.

Results/Benefits:
Clear information for public, one website for all police matters, winner of best website 2016 and 2015, and most popular government website 2015.

Identifying users' needs

In order to structure user profiles and make the site more functional, four so-called personas were first developed to embody the key user characteristics. Every age category has different needs and the site must take web guidelines into account. Card sorting was used to first identify the mental model of various users in relation to the service and information provided by police. This laid the foundation for intuitive navigation. Based on the three key functionalities (filing reports, reporting situations and My neighborhood), various prototypes and wireframes were then developed and tested with users. It emerged that the information architecture was geared to people's needs; after this the functionalities were fine-tuned on a more detailed level. "Filing a report" and "reporting a situation" were merged, because the difference between the two was often not clear enough to citizens.

Scrum approach

The development of the new website took six months. Not only were technical changes made, but a new house style was introduced and links were created to social media. The process lent itself well to a scrum approach, on account of the wishes of the many stakeholders and different responsibilities. In short two-week sprints, all the parties involved were shown a demo with the solutions chosen. This was then fine-tuned via feedback sessions in which the police took the lead in the role of client and product owner. The police were also represented on the scrum team as business analyst and functional manager. This made it easy to adjust and tweak the design as time went on. The intensive cooperation of all the stakeholders with a "One Team" approach created a great deal of support and ensured that all the teams worked together as colleagues.

Multiple channels

In the meantime, a second screen was also developed for the popular television program Opsporing Verzocht. During the broadcast, viewers can go to live.politie.nl on the second screen to have another look at the information and photos presented and give direct answers to the questions posed during the program. The police hope the new website and the second screen will involve citizens via different channels. An important starting point for contact via multiple channels is project uniformity, because this fosters recognition and trust among the target audience. In order to do this well, a UX meeting was organized involving all the different departments, during which points relating to design and interaction were attuned to each other.

Best website of 2016 and 2015

The new responsive website went live in beta version alongside the old site at the end of 2014. After two months, it emerged that the user profiles developed, were entirely in line with the actual needs. The fact that the website ties in with the Dutch public's needs was confirmed not only by our own research. These efforts were rewarded when politie.nl won at the Website of the Year Award night 2015 and 2016 as Best Website in the Netherlands, also the Most Popular Website (2015) in the category of government. With more than 890.000 people voting, this is the biggest annual online audience award in the Netherlands. The website was also nominated for the Dutch Interactive Awards 2015.

Even better and more user-friendly

An improved version of the online police report has since been completed and as of July 1st, 2016, it is now possible to view the progress of the digital report on Mijn Politie. In the future, the police hope to optimize this further and give citizens more insight into the process a police report goes through. The awards are recognition of the efforts of the police as well as an encouragement to involve citizens even more actively and make them the focus of the service provision. That is why the police continue to work on further developing and improving the website - to make it even more interactive, more user-friendly, with more information provided in a clearer and more transparent manner and with more citizen involvement.

The Collaborative Approach

- "One Team" (comprising both police and Capgemini employees) working together through Scrum approach made cooperation easy and efficient.
- UX meeting involving all participants ensured uniformity in design was achieved.
- Starting point for the project was research into end-user needs which ensured the website was perfectly tuned to what the public wants.

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About the Dutch police

The police are always there. For a safer Netherlands. The police protect democracy, enforce the law and are the authorities on the street. Where necessary the police offer a helping hand. They take imperative action in emergency situations. Where others take a step back, the police step forward. If necessary using force, putting their own lives in danger if need be. The police work actively with citizens and partners. Their eyes and ears are open to what is happening in society. The police are there for everyone. Vigilant and ready to serve.