DEXI: PERSONALIZED SEARCH FOR GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

TRANSFORMING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ON BENEFITS.GOV

For 16 years, Booz Allen has developed innovative solutions for Benefits.gov, a digital initiative led by the Department of Labor (DOL) and supported by 17 partner agencies. The website was founded to help citizens connect with government programs more easily. Developed and launched by Booz Allen in only 96 business days, Benefits.gov provides citizens with access to information on more than 1,200 benefits.

THE CHALLENGE

In 2002, Booz Allen developed the Benefit Finder, a prescreening questionnaire that evaluates a citizen's situation and compares it with eligibility criteria of all the offerings on the site. The Benefit Finder became the site's primary tool to help citizens identify relevant offerings and services.

In 2015, the Benefits.gov team analyzed user feedback to identify a common theme: Citizens wanted site functionality that would help them locate benefits related to their specific needs. As sites like Amazon and eBay raised customer expectations by offering personalized suggestions and self-service, it was evident that Benefits.gov needed to adapt.

"Prior to the site, citizens seeking government benefit information had to search through a maze of webpages. There was no easy-to-use, single source of information to help citizens understand which benefits they may be eligible for, or how to apply,"

- Sean McDonald, Booz Allen's lead for DOL engagements

THE APPROACH

Seeing the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to improve websites, apps, and call centers, Booz Allen had just created DEXi that same year—an agile solution for integrating intelligence into existing applications. Benefits.gov chose DEXi to help personalize the user experience and broaden the citizen's knowledge of potential benefits.

Leveraging our agile workflow, the Booz Allen digital team integrated location-based personalization features into the site in just 2 months. Visitors to Benefits.gov can now click on the type of benefit they're interested in to view and filter benefits by location and subcategory. They can also change their location to see popular benefits in a different state or to help others identify resources in their area.

Each benefits detail page also features similar benefits to help users find additional assistance if needed. "Using the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program as an example, if a citizen lands on that page, they could also see resources like the Summer Food Service Program and Head Start Program. It is lean personalization, where the user remains anonymous, yet receives information tailored to their preferences," explains Scot McGinn, one of Booz Allen's Digital Citizen innovators.

THE SOLUTION

Since implementing auto-suggest personalization features, Benefits.gov has seen a 15 percent decrease in bounce rate, showing that visitors are more engaged with the service offerings. In addition, benefits detail pageviews have increased 62 percent per month, demonstrating the value of personalized recommendations.

Today, more than one million users access the site monthly to learn and gather information on employment, education and training, social security, disaster assistance, and health insurance. To keep the recommendations fresh, the solution analyzes aggregated user search behavior, identifying popular benefits by state to offer as suggestions.

"New innovations like digital personalization will help keep Benefits.gov as one of the premier standards for how government interacts online with citizens for years to come," says Myung Moon, federal manager of the Benefits.gov website. Terence Mandable, Booz Allen vice president who leads digital technology transformation, added, "This team is dedicated to solving problems facing citizens and the government—directly supporting DOL's mission to improve the lives of American citizens in need of assistance."

CONSULTING | ANALYTICS | DIGITAL SOLUTIONS | ENGINEERING | CYBER