

For Immediate Release on November 18, 2020

Request for Proposal – AUSU Website Redesign and E-Commerce Store Launch

About AUSU

The Algoma University Students' Union (AUSU) is a non-for-profit advocacy-based corporation committed to delivering crucial social services and ensuring that students' university experience is fulfilling and enjoyable. AUSU exists to provide students representation and a variety of services to build a stronger Algoma University Community. AUSU is an organization run by students for students, and works to ensure that students' voices are recognized.

Project Overview

The purpose of this project is to create a new and innovative design remodel to improve the overall function and attraction to the existing website domain ausu82.ca. We are aiming to create an interactive, dynamic and accurate information source for Algoma University Students to seek out and use on a daily basis, while also acting as a primary tool to attract and promote potential sponsor partnerships and revenue streams using our online platform.

Target Audience

Our target website audience is first and foremost students of all stages; Prospective, New / Incoming, Existing, and Alumni. As student leaders and representatives, they are our highest priority for outreach and are our main consumer base. Their user ship experience with our website will directly affect the success of its redesign. With this new design it is also our goal to attract local community members who may want to advertise in addition to local businesses and individuals who wish to show their support, lend a hand in aiding students, or businesses which provide services attractive and/or beneficial to our students.

Objectives

The primary objective of this remodel is to create a more user friendly experience.

What this website need is uniformity and organization, creating an easily navigable webpage with a seamless look that ties every page, primary services, events, official administrative and promotional documents and features for our partners and sub-associations (campus clubs) offered together. So students can easily access any and all information needed in one place with ease.

The Secondary Objective of this remodel is to create an ample platform for our new launch of products, through the use of our pre-existing online store. The online store needs to fit the image and branding of the rest of the website, while also functioning as an easily and efficiently working online shop for merchandise and events ticket sales.

The Tertiary Objective of this remodel is to increase our page views, user ship and unique visitors. As we move to a heavier reliance on online resources, and online means of communication, we need an active platform that can provide in-depth, consistent information to students and community members. At this present time the majority of our online fellowship lies with our Instagram which averages almost

300 daily views on stories alone; we would love to see similar numbers reflected on our website with the remodel.

Current State of Website

We currently use Weebly as our website hosting service. In its current state the website is next to impossible to navigate without prior knowledge of the website's content. Much of the information is scattered, condensed, or repeated in various tones across the platform in its various 27 + pages. Not to mention the website is lacking uniformity and creativity when it comes to over 50+ graphics, and individualized layouts of each page of the platform. Overall it is not the most efficient or organized for an easy flow of information, or for implementing online revenue streams. Its lack of organization and functionality is turning away users, which could potentially mean a loss of customers and partnerships as we attempt to expand our online presence and online store.

We also have a number of third party editors that manage their individual campus clubs and associations. We are looking for a better solution that can give them the autonomy to design their brand, edit and update contents for their membership on an as needed basis without compromising the security of the primary AUSU website and content.

In addition, our current online store is operated through Square, and only hosts 2 items. The major issues with our store are functionality, uniformity and graphics, and at first glance the store page almost appears to be a pop-up or accidental redirected page for spam. The store's page is completely different from the rest of the site, not just in layout but in colour scheme and design; many users find it off-putting and confusing to navigate and use. As we hope to expand our online store, some major changes are needed to make the store uniform, easy to navigate and user friendly.

Additional Ecommerce Expansion Details

As the expansion of our online store is a new profit venture, we are anticipating 5-10 new product releases with approximately 100 units of each item at initial launch. We hope to continue to use Square as our Point of sale transaction platform for the time being, but would like to consider other secure ecommerce payment options such as PayPal.

New Website Functionality Requirements

- Feature current Board Representative and staff in a more visually appealing way and in the form of an interactive directory
- Feature an easy to use document repository
- Feature AUSU main services and schedule of events
- Integrate working hyper-links to alternative online partners' platforms
- Integrate email and social media capabilities on page directories (click on address, redirects to Gmail, send email)
- Redesign attractive and user friendly online store (photo directory, similar to online shops from private / major retailers)
- Redesign feature page for Campus Clubs and Societies that allows club administrator/editors access to their respective page content for easy upkeep and maintenance. Offer initial design for clubs and associations
- Ensure all content and layouts are consistent and unified**
- Ensure all content and pages reflects AUSU branding
- Incorporate accommodations for sponsorships, donors and advertisements

- Integrate live Streaming Capabilities (able to link to FB / Instagram / Zoom directly to webpage)

Website Budget Details

Currently requesting quotation to be included in your proposal that outlines, hours for meeting consultations, design proposal, hosting service fees, graphic vector and image costs and other changes as needed.

Proposal Requirements

Please include the following in your proposal:

- Overview of your company, years of experience and area of expertise
- Previous Relevant Work Experience as it relates to website Layouts / Graphic Design / Coding, E-Commerce Design and Change Management Skills
- Information about Project Lead and supporting Team members, skill sets and responsibilities
- Initial cost and project hours estimate with contingencies
- Schedule for planning, consultations, and implementation
- Portfolio of design concepts (can include prior projects as well as ideas, color schemes, layouts and themes for the AUSU website)
- Contact Information for your organization and project lead.

Important Dates

The deadline to respond to this RFP is no later than **Monday, November 30, 2020 at 4:00pm EST**. A decision will be made on the proposal that best meets the criteria, goals and vision for our organization will be made by Friday December 4th, 2020.

If you are the successful chosen candidate, we aim get this project started as soon as possible following acceptance, with the expectation that the project can reach a soft launch Friday January 15th, 2021 for official relaunch and project completion no later than **Monday February 1st 2021**.

We want to thank the public for their interest in this project. Please contact Chardon Kozak at communicationsofficer@ausu.algoma.ca for inquiries, questions or concerns.