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Belfast City Council
Content Analysis Report

Belfast Content Analysis

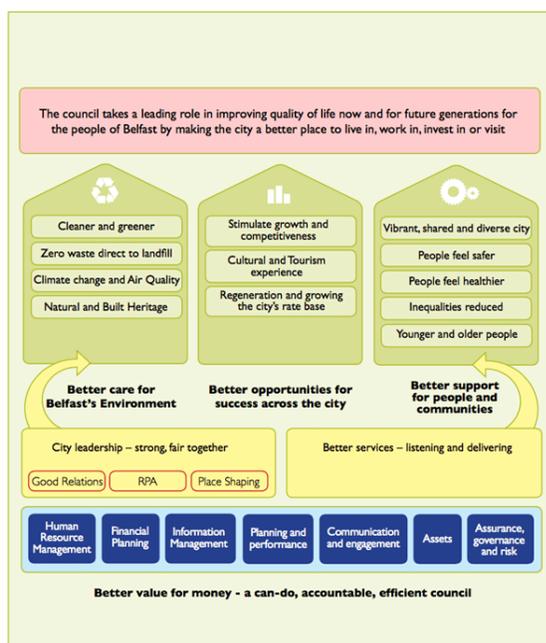
Executive Summary

Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, is undergoing heavy economic growth and commercial development. To better understand how the Belfast City Council handles these challenges, I analyzed their website's current content. Overall, the site's content works together well with the council's goal. Improving citizen's quality of life is paramount and the site provides the needed features for that. Accessibility features, payment methods, and things to do all help citizens become more informed about their home. The site's content also provides help for potential politicians and city council members. By having much of the information on the city in one spot, it allows anybody to become informed.

The Problem and Strategy

Because of the large economic change over the recent years in Belfast, the city council has wanted to improve quality of life in the city. In his report on the Belfast City Council, well-known strategic advisor Bernard Marr devised a strategy for Belfast. To start, Marr presents this strategic map, which details key strategic goals using interviews from chief officers, party groups, and external stakeholders.

Over time, this strategy has become a living, breathing document. It's also evolved over different planning cycles, ensuring constant relevance. At the core of this strategy is three key deliverables, which are opportunity growth, environmental help, and better community support.



Belfast City Council's strategy map.



Belfast City Council's Agenda

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To achieve these deliverables, KPO's and KPI's were developed using this strategy, which soon evolved into the Belfast Agenda. This agenda utilizes both the fully developed strategy, as well as stakeholder interviews and citizen feedback. It discusses four core areas of focus for the city, with bullet points listed for each. These bullet points include a wide variety of different goals for the city, such as

- Create Employment and Opportunity
- Improving Neighborhoods
- Attracting more tourists
- Reduce poverty and economic inactivity

Business Goals and KPI

As an overall goal, the Belfast City Council wants to improve citizen's quality of life and manage a growing economy. In terms of business goals of the council's content, there's a few specific goals for Belfast, with corresponding KPI's (Key Performance Indicator).

One of the first main goals the content supports is making it much easier for citizens to obtain garbage bins and pay fines. This is an important aspect for the company, as with more fines and garbage bins, the city's economy keeps flowing and the environment stays clean. In terms of KPI, you can calculate how frequent the content is being used by calculating how many fines and garbage bins are paid for normally, then seeing what percentage of those payments was done through the website.

The second main business goal the City Council's content helps achieve is the ability for citizens to obtain local news access, as well as that news being accessible with features such as read aloud and print options. By having easily accessible news, the news gets spread easier and further, as well as keeping citizens informed. The KPI used for this goal is both calculating how much traffic the news stories get, as well as how frequently accessibility features are used, to determine if the content is enhancing the spread of news.

The other main goal this content helps the site achieve is the ability to lodge complaints to higher ups such as council leaders and business owners. This helps make some issues more obvious, as well as gives citizen's in the city a voice, improving quality of life. The KPI associated with this goal would be to see how frequently those features are being used. For example, you can compare the amount of things such as noise complaints and dog licenses to what they were like before the easy access options on the site were available, showing how much impact that site feature has.

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Audience

The main audience for this site is the City of Belfast, mainly everyday citizens. Due to this, the site needs to be very accessible, as anybody who lives in Belfast will have a usage for it. To be more specific on the audience, there's most likely a few core groups. The first group is the average citizen, looking for basic information such as things to do in town and local news. Another big audience using this site is those trying to fulfill specific civic duties. With the ability to pay fines and order garbage bins, it gives people needing to pay those a much easier way to do it. The final core audience would be citizens who consider themselves more politically involved. Content such as financial reports and elections are prominent on the site, making it easy for any citizen to become politically knowledgeable and involved.

Current Content

Website

The main type of content throughout the site is text and information. Pages contain text and tables, along with large tabs to help navigate the site. There's little in terms of animations, videos, podcasts, etc. For this site, not having this type of content works. The site itself is mainly for information and as a resource for citizens of Belfast, so putting in unnecessary videos and animations would undermine the main goals of the site.

Despite this, the lack of videos or pictures for information pertaining to the things to do section hurts the value of that section. When listing locations and parks, providing pictures of how they look and where they are in relation to the city is important for getting people to go there.

Twitter

The council's twitter page has over 100k followers and is also verified. The account tweets multiple times a day, with most containing a picture or link to an article on the website. The tweets inform of important city happenings such as planning committee results, as well as opportunities throughout the city.

Twitter is used well by the council, as they have good engagement with citizens and frequently provide information and support for city members. The council also engages with citizens by replying to tweets and retweeting information and pictures.

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Instagram

The council's Instagram profile is smaller than Twitter. It has only 18.1k followers, with each post averaging around 150 likes. The posts themselves are pictures taken around the city by the citizens of Belfast. They frequently repost their pictures, as well as use the hashtag #belfastcc and DM's to fulfill most of the site's content.

The Instagram is utilized well in engaging the citizens. Due to the picture-focused format, Instagram doesn't provide a good way at spreading news. Thus, using it as a way for citizens to share their pictures of the city allows the council to diversify their content.

YouTube

YouTube is the smallest of Belfast's platforms. They have just under 1,000 subscribers and average around 60 views on most videos. In terms of content, there's an endless variety of different videos. Some types include city news, sign language guides and places to eat. Their sign language videos also had an entire series for the British language.

YouTube is one of the bigger missteps in terms of the council's content. It's a giant mess of videos, with no focus or schedule. There's no incentive for the user to subscribe, as each video is something completely different. They also never know what's coming next, which will alienate them. To improve this, the YouTube channel should get greater focus, with a set schedule and series. This will give the user of the page a much clearer picture on what content the channel has, making them more likely to subscribe.

Content and business objectives: do they match

The content and business goals of Belfast City Council match well. The core goal of the site is to improve citizen's quality of life and manage the growing economy, which its content supports. The site is easy to navigate, provides key services to its citizens, and there's a lot of content, providing all the information you would need on Belfast. There's also accessibility features throughout the site, helping any member of Belfast use the site.