EngagementHQ

GRANICUS

# Site Review and Benchmarking Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake
Site Review and Benchmarking Report
Reporting Period: **15 October 2022 to
14 October 2023**

# EngagementHQ

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## EngagementHQ

# Executive Summary

*For the reporting period* **15 October 2022 to 14 October 2023**, *Niagara-on-the-Lake has recorded 11,382 unique site visits and has engaged 1,174 participants.*

During the last 12 months the site has seen an incremental increase in the database size, from around 2,700 registered participants to over 3,200. The homepage is updated frequently using 'Appearance Editor' and there is a diverse mix of projects, indicating strong organizational cooperation.

As this is your first annual benchmarking report, it will serve as a starting point for future comparison.

## Visitor Summary Observations

For the reporting period:

**11,382** Unique Visitors

to the site.

**14,451** Total Visits

to the site.

**1,410** Total Contributors

to the site.

**531** New Registrations

to the site.

## Engagement Summary Observations

### Aware

There are 9,535 aware participants.

### Informed

There are 5,184 informed participants.

### Engaged

There are 1,174 engaged participants.

# 1.0 Site Observations

## Homepage Observations

- The homepage is attractive, well laid out and the shared information is clear.
- Besides a welcome message there are only four projects displayed.

## Homepage Recommendations

- Consider using sections like "Open for feedback" "Ongoing project" and "Archived project" to allow visitors to access projects of interest easily. Using a "Project Showcase" section might also help visitors find projects they are interested in.
- Consider top-level navigation links. An "All Projects" link would take people to a page that allows them to sort through current and closed projects.

## Project Page Observations

- The pages have a solid consistency in design elements and presentation of information, demonstrating strong internal governance.
- Learning widgets (such as the Document Library and Lifecycle) are well used but could benefit from features meant to decrease scrolling.
- Some project pages have not been updated, even if the project seems to have progressed and reached another stage.

## Project Page Recommendations

- Updating project pages is very important for your relationship with residents. Consider scheduling the closing dates of surveys, to avoid them remaining open after the closing dates or needing to set them back in draft mode.
- Closing the loop with participants is very important to nurture trust and good relationships. Consider updating the project pages by adding a newsfeed or a "What we've heard" report.
- Continue to strive for accessible and engaging language in your

project introductions.
- Consider using more than one tool to engage on your different projects and topics.

## Registration Form Observations

- The registration form questions allow to gather enough information about the participants with both required and optional fields.
- Good use of the introductory space to indicate the "why" of registration and give additional information.

## Registration Form Recommendations

*Note: Any changes to the registration form should be done in partnership with your Granicus Engagement Consultant.*

- Consider changing the age question into a question about the year of birth. Age changes each year and over time, your data won't be accurate anymore.
- Run a periodic interrogation of the demographics report in order to keep track of your community segments and identify opportunities for further participation.

# 2.0 Participant Database

## Database Information Observations

- Your data set continued to grow this reporting year reaching a total of 3,217 active participants.
- Over the reporting period, there were 531 new registrants.
- Even if registration is not required for all activities on your site, your database size is the largest compared with three other peer comparison clients.
- Of those interested in registering, 95.5% completed the process as intended, with only 4.4% falling off and remaining as pending participants.

## Database Recommendations

- Even if registration is not mandatory across the site, you are doing a

great job.

- Consider reaching out to participants that did not complete their registration process and ask them if they need any help. This will increase the number of residents you can engage with.
- If you would like to reprioritize database growth, use the numbers in this report, as well as numbers that come from in-person events and input taken in other channels (by email or by phone), to set a goal for growth over the next year. What can you realistically expect and how can you get there?

## Demographic Information Observations

*Note: some registration questions are optional, therefore blank responses are included as 'unknown'.*

- Waiting for data.

## Demographics Recommendations

- Waiting for data.

## Postal codes Information Observations

- Waiting for data.

## Postal codes Recommendations

- Waiting for data.

# 3.0 Projects

## Projects Observations

- 6 projects were published in this reporting period with a long period (June 2022 – March 2023) without any new projects.
- In comparison to peer clients, your average monthly project's published rate (0.5) was the second lowest.

## Projects Recommendations

- Where possible, coordinate an annual calendar to manage new projects/phases being launched throughout the year. This will also help to give priority to key/strategic engagements, and help you give priority to phases that are accepting feedback as opposed to just updating.
- Capture the attention of visitors on the site with the online engagement opportunities available. Keep letting them know how they can get involved in person but create parallel or complementary paths online whenever possible.
- Aim to at least sustain your average new projects per month in the coming year, as variety and frequency of projects will be your biggest driver to participation and registration on the site.

# 4.0 Engagement Rates

## Engagement Rates Observations

- The Tourism Strategy had the highest number of engaged participants (399) followed by Patio Program (394) and customer Experience Survey – Tell us how we're doing! (259). The remaining 4 top projects had 137 or fewer engaged participants but showed solid interest in a variety of topics.
- Your top 7 engagement projects showed a high conversion rate from aware to engaged participants: from 35% for the Youth and Family Programming down to 17.2% on the Tourism Strategy.
- Your average engagement rate of the top 7 projects was the highest of the peer comparison at 27.8%. This is excellent work!

## Engagement Rates Recommendations

- Consider deploying a variety of tools on each project for increased engagement (e.g. Quick poll, Guestbook, Q&A) to give people who have limited time or attention, opportunities for quick-hit participation. Strategically asked questions via Quick Polls in the widget space can tell you a lot in a little bit of time!
- Visitors to your site will browse. Take advantage of their attention on

any one project by encouraging them to get involved in other projects. Use a widget (for example, the Related Projects widget) on your projects to invite people to other open projects.

- Encourage visitors to visit another project page with cross promotion, by using the URL from a project and place it into the Thank you message from another related or unrelated project to drive more traffic to them.
- Close the loop with your participants to build trust and keep them engaging with you! You can do so using the Newsletter or sharing updates on the project pages.

# 5.0 Tool Performance

## Tool Performance Observations

- The survey had the most participants in the last 12 months with 1,171.
- The question tool comes second with 2 contributions.
- When looking at all time tool performance, Ideas, Surveys and Forums are the top contribution gatherers. Each time you launch Ideas, you received an average of 136 contributions. For forums, 185 per instance and for Surveys, 75 per instance.

## Tool Performance Recommendations

- When selecting engagement tools, use a fit-for-purpose approach, rather than defaulting to using a survey.
- Add quick polls in the widget space to ask overarching questions about priorities, communication preferences, or effectiveness of the site. That data coupled with what you're collecting more thoughtfully in tools, can help tell a more complete story.
- Consider the Newsfeed tool to share updates about your projects. You can publish a single or an unlimited number of "articles," open them to comments—or not, and provide a category key (Categories widget) if you'd like.
- If you have projects for which you need data, continue to give the community options. Encourage more people to have their say by appealing to a variety of preferences by using several tools.

# 6.0 Newsletters and Emails

## Newsletter and Email Observations

- You sent 2 newsletters during this reporting period.
- In comparison to peer clients, your monthly email rate (0.17) was the second lowest.
- Your open rate across for the 2 newsletters was between 84.4%-85.5%.
- The highest number of clicks (424) was for "Current Engagement Opportunities" newsletter.

## Newsletter and Email Recommendations

- Consider a quarterly newsletter to your entire database, giving them a snapshot of engagement projects and inviting their participation.
- Use the newsletter to welcome new registrants to the site/conversation and give them some tips on how to get engaged.
- Continue using emails to 'engaged recipients' to close the loop and report back engagement outcomes and/or to invite engagement on other projects of a similar topic/theme.

# 7.0 Traffic Channels

## Traffic Channel Observations

- The highest traffic channel is Search (43%), this indicates that there is awareness about your site and residents are looking it up.
- The second highest channel is Direct (33.8%) followed by Social (8.5%), Referrals (7.6%) and Email (7%).
- Email was the most effective way to engage participants with an engagement rate (conversion rate from aware to engaged participants) of 22.6% followed by social (19.8%) and direct (14.2%).

## Traffic Channel Recommendations

- Keep using the social and direct channels and consider using the emails more as those three channels bring most of participation to your site.
- Use the traffic data in the EngagementHQ reporting to determine which campaigns, communications, and services are proving most beneficial for your social promotions. Some "social" sites may be categorized as "referral," but you can see precisely where people are coming from in your Summary or Detailed (Excel) reports.

*For more detailed information on how 'traffic sources are calculated/categorized –* [*please read this helpdesk article*](#)