WP engine®

Case Study

xero

Industry
Accounting

Site
www.xero.com

Challenge
Xero needed a simplified, user-friendly internal communications experience to match their award winning customer software

Solution
Xero selected WP Engine to provide a customized platform that met the requirements and integrations of their intranet needs

Results
25% increase in usage and engagement across the organization

Creating a beautiful intranet solution.

Accounting solutions provider taps WP Engine to carry culture over into seamless, integrated internal blog.

Xero is a beautiful, easy-to-use global online platform for small businesses and their advisors. The company has 1.4 million subscribers in more than 180 countries and seamlessly integrates with more than 600 apps.

The challenge.

When Xero was launched in 2006, the company changed the game for small businesses around the globe. Its customers describe it as "beautiful" cloud-based accounting software that connects people with the right numbers anytime, anywhere, on any device. This means that their more than 1.4 million subscribers have a real-time view of their cash flow, can reconcile, send invoices (even set up recurring invoices) or create expense claims—from anywhere. The accounting solutions provider gained so much momentum, Forbes identified Xero as the World's Most Innovative Growth Company in 2014 and 2015.

However, with all the external momentum, Xero realized that it had not maintained that momentum internally with its intranet. "Our intranet just was not a very nice experience," said Alex Boolieris, Internal IT Solutions Architect for Xero. "There was duplication, you were prompted for authentication, and it didn't work nicely on mobile. The moment you put an extra click in someone's way, they're just not going to click it— instead, they're going to close the page."

Xero needed an intuitive, easy-to-navigate intranet that could be implemented company wide. "What we had previously was a miss in our communications tool space, and we needed to tidy up our tools in general. We were using another intranet platform and it was taking care of some of the capability and building, along with a few other pieces. We decided to scrap that platform and remove those components and put them into different products," said Boolieris.

The solution.

In their search for a streamlined solution, Xero selected WordPress. "What we wanted was quite specific and using WordPress was so easy. When we looked at other products in the market, they were too complex and would take too long to implement," said Boolieris.

"We had a strong existing relationship with WP Engine. We already worked with WP Engine for our blog, and knew they were the best platform for the job. We love the partnership between WordPress and WP Engine because of the customizable nature of both and we were able to tailor WordPress to our requirements with WP Engine as the platform," said Boolieris.

In order to get started, Xero selected a design agency to kick off the project. "We worked with NZ Digital, who came to us recommended by WP Engine. We loved that we could let the agency run with the project and that we could get customizations quite easily. One of the add-ons we required was SAML two factor authentication, which tied in with our ID provider called OKTA - which is how people log into both our applications. We wanted to make sure this was a seamless experience," said Boolieris.

Once the intranet blog was ready to go live, Xero was pleasantly surprised. "It just worked. It was really easy to get something off the shelf; the integration was done within minutes. In terms of our spinning up our actual instance with WP Engine, it was very quick. I was very impressed with the speed," said Boolieris.

Teams within Xero now have easy access to share news internally. "In order to post, staff just fill out a simple form, and then that gets posted to the appropriate location. We use Slack internally, and that is also integrated into the intranet. When there's a new post on our blog, we'll get a mention in the appropriate Slack channel. The message also gives a summary of the announcement or article, and an image, which is really useful. If you click on it, it takes you to the blog. It's fast and seamless," said Boolieris.

The results.

"We're seeing really good use of the blog. Two thirds of the organization are logging into the blog monthly, which is pretty successful. Before, we were seeing close to 50% of the organization logging on monthly," said Boolieris.

"In terms of keeping with our culture and keeping staff informed, we're also seeing a lot of beautiful UI benefits. If people don't like to look at it, they're not going to use it and you're not going to get that engagement. For an intranet, you have to have something that's nice and easy to use," said Boolieris.

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Xero also saw cost savings, time savings and peace of mind with WP Engine. "I would absolutely recommend using WP Engine. We got the agreements in front of us, and instances were spun up overnight. It was just so simple to get the whole piece done," said Boolieris.

Boolieris added, "We've taken something in our company that was a bit of a talking point and by recreating our intranet on WP Engine, we found a platform with the agility and integrations we needed. And, all of the sudden, it's not talked about, because it's working. The biggest benefit was that is was just so simple, and provided peace of mind. It's refreshing."

"I would say another main thing for me, as well as across my team, is that the team behind WP Engine is really good. They make it very easy to get things done. For a rather large company, it doesn't feel like I'm dealing with a large company," said Boolieris.

About WP Engine.

WP Engine is the world's leading WordPress digital experience platform that gives companies of all sizes the agility, performance, intelligence, and integrations they need to drive their business forward faster. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas, and has offices in San Francisco, California; San Antonio, Texas; London, England; Limerick, Ireland, and Brisbane, Australia.