

Developing a Website for Hamilton Brothers Ranch

A Senior Project

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Background

The purpose of this project is to develop a website for Hamilton Brother's Ranch purpose is to evolve Hamilton Brother's Ranch to modern times and make it easier for the customer to see where their product is coming from. The Hamilton Family has a long history in agriculture and what they think is normal is actually very unique and consumers love reading and feeling as if they are a part of where their food comes from. The overall goal of the project is to promote Hamilton Brother's operation as a whole through a website that will be able to connect the consumer the products they consume.

Growing up on her family's ranch distilled a passion for agriculture at a young age for the author. She would go to work with her father and come home to do art projects with her mother. The author's parents have been an influence in so many ways throughout her life and she treasures they engrained a mutual passion for art and agriculture. The author always wanted to mix the two passions together in a way she could promote agriculture but still add a creative twist to the more traditional agriculture world.

Keeping the ranch running for years and years to come is the author's ultimate goal in life. To obtain her goal she's aware the ranch must evolve as a company with the changing times. A website gives people a way to reach out to the Hamilton Brothers and help respond to the hundreds of calls and emails the author's family currently fields on their personal phones. Providing information differently can actually enable the family to pursue their ranch work with greater ease and focus as the communication for the ranch improves through the website.

Statement of the Problem

Hamilton Brothers does not have a current, existing website. Because of this the company is missing a marketing avenue to reach customers and tell its story (Porter, 2011). The developer will design a website to capture audiences with the story and values of Hamilton Brothers. With the rise of the farm-to-fork movement in the nation, and especially Northern California, it is vital for agriculture companies to nurture direct communications with consumers. Hamilton Brothers uses cattle, sheep and crops to match the environmental conditions of its operation and to promote the quality of products it markets. The agriculture industry is slowly evolving to modern times with marketing tactics and developing a website is vital way to push specialty markets such as lamb. The designer will give a background of Hamilton Brothers starting in 1870 and the story of coming to find gold in the form of wheat. The story needs to be shared and the easiest and first steps of doing this is through a website (Porter, 2011).

Objectives of the Project

The objectives to accomplish the purpose of this project are to develop a functional website for Hamilton Brothers Ranch along with, tell the history about their operation. The website will ultimately be a place customers can contact the ranch for purchasing of steers, lamb, wool, ewes, and rams or to purchase a variety of grain crops for processing or bales of hay.

History of marketing through websites

The modern Internet is most common and the best way to disseminate information to society. Internet advertng increased drastically in the last decade from the increasing percentage of online shoppers and it is now a multi-billion dollar industry (Lumsden, 2012).

Methods and Materials

The overall purpose of this project is to develop a website for the Hamilton Brothers Ranch in Rio Vista, California. This website will serve the purpose of telling their story and selling the ranch brand to its consumers in the various markets. The first step in this process is discussing with the ranch owners, Richard Hamilton, Anastasia Hamilton and, David Hamilton, what they would like to see in the website.

The Hamilton Family has a long history in agriculture around Rio Vista and, the Sacramento Delta. The history needing to be highlighted in the website will be collected at the Rio Vista Museum and through talking with Richard Hamilton and David Hamilton. After the core information is decided, the outline of the website design will be sketched on paper to have a more concrete idea or storyboard. Next, after collecting the history and the current operation information, feature stories for the different website page tabs will be written, edited and approved by the family. Subsequently, a collection of photos will be taken so the website will have a strong photography bank to choose from and paired with ranch information and the website as a whole.

After the website information is collected for all the different operations the ranch operations and the website idea board is put together, the material will be looked over by not only the ranch owners but also the whole Hamilton Family. They will overview all the ideas and information and provide edits. Once edits are returned, they will be applied. Lastly, the website will be designed using the Adobe program Muse and a trial link will be sent to the ranch owners. Once looked over and approved, the completed website will be uploaded under the owners' domain they previously purchased.

Consultation

The most important step in the website development is providing the consumers history about the ranch and the current ranch practices. To get accurate information, Richard Hamilton will supply all the material needed in regards to the breeding and genetics operations for both cattle and sheep. He will also explain the background on the rams in which he wishes to highlight on the website to either sell via website or make contact information more available. The family has so much history within the area and David Hamilton, the oldest family member, who is still involved in the operation, will provide historical stories about the different ranches and possibly practices that have changed over the years. The Rio Vista Museum will be another database to pull information about the family. The museum will have history about the Rio Vista land and records of the Hamilton Family's ranching operation.

Developing the Website

With all the finished feature stories for each of the pages within the website it is time to start designing on Adobe Muse. The website will have a home page with history about the Hamilton Brothers Ranch and the family. Each product page tab will provide information such pictures, history and current operation about the specific item after the user clicks on the tab. Then the last tab will be about contacting the ranch.

The order of the website will follow this order:

- **Home page:** Pictures of the ranch, the Hamilton Family, and about the operations.

- **History page:** Old pictures of the ranches and history about how the family got started.
- **Current operation and owners:** Information about an overview of the whole ranch operation and the ranch owners.
- **Cattle operation page:** Information about the cow-calf operation and imi-Globe certification along with links and dates when selling on Western Range.
- **Sheep operation page with history on the Hamilton genetics:** This page will probably be a bit bigger than the others because it has so much information and science publications. The science publications on the Hamilton Brothers Ranch genetics will be under clickable links. The page will also have basic information about the sheep operation.
- **Rams for sale page:** The ranch sells about 90 rams a year. Having this page will redirect the call to Richard Hamilton during the day to one area where he can contact them back when he is not busy.
- **Contact page:** This will be a basic contact information page.

Conclusion

With the rise of the farm-to-fork movement in the nation, and especially Northern California, it is vital for agriculture companies to nurture direct communications with consumers. For this project, the designer will produce a website for the Hamilton Brothers Ranch. The developer will rebrand the family's image to make them more approachable to the consumers eating their lamb, beef and crops. The development of a company website will share their history as it promotes the operation's story intending to create a larger and loyal customer base that cares about what they consume.

All the various steps are important to include to ensure the final website is accurate to what the ranch family wants to show case. The website is not only beneficial to the Hamilton Brother's Ranch, but to the whole agriculture industry. Agriculture has so many amazing stories for consumers to hear and hopefully outshine all the negative publicity agriculture is challenged by each day.

Work Cite

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