

Cal Poly Dairy Bull Calves Website

A Senior Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the Agricultural Education and Communication Department
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

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Bachelor of Science

By

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Introduction

Finding California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly) livestock available for purchase is difficult. While many people within the livestock industry recognize Cal Poly has animals available, dealing with Craigslist advertising, newspaper clips and advertisements in magazines can be cumbersome for the searcher and costly for the university. Furthermore, online resources can leave out detailed information about the livestock for sale.

In the past, Cal Poly Dairy has had difficulty selling some of the new born bull calves from the herd. Presently, Cal Poly does not have a standard way for the public to view and purchase the bull calves from the dairy herd. A solution for selling livestock is planning and completing a senior project to gather information, resources and create a well-informed website to market the dairy bull calves at Cal Poly.

This project will create a website located within the current Cal Poly Department of Animal Science webpage. The website will have menu tabs to gather livestock information and be updated frequently during the course of the year. The site will advertise and give information out to the public. The additional webpage will also serve as an opportunity to the public to see what kind of herds are bred at Cal Poly. The website will have specific background information of the bulls' genetics the students and faculty raise at Cal Poly. This will help the dairy expand and make tangible changes to marketing of the dairy bull calves at Cal Poly.

Background

While researching and working with the managerial staff of the Cal Poly Dairy, they helped identify the need for a webpage to market the dairy bull calves. At the present time, Cal Poly Dairy does not have a website to sell the bull calves, and uses valuable time, energy and resources to haul the bull calves to the Central Valley in California where they are being placed for a live auction, or selling to another herdsman (Silacci, 2019).

During this research, beneficial resources have been found such as; Drupal, which assists with a layout design and creating the website (Drupal, N.D.). Drupal is the third most popular solution for building websites. Cal Poly's entire university webpage is based on Drupal and individual departments manage their pages assigned to them.

Additional livestock online sales examples include the Cattle Exchange which showcases 18 animals per page (Cattle Exchange, 2019). While viewing the website it has menu tabs for information you are searching for such as; Cattle for Sale, List Cattle Free, Report Cattle Sold, and Contact Us. Under the tab Cattle for Sale there are choices of different selections such as; Cow, Bred Heifers, Cow/Calf Pairs, Bulls, Feeders and Stockers. When you select the tab, there are photos of the cattle for sale with a listing number, weight, location where they are located, the breed and the price. This is not a live auction site. Genetics are not described in their showcases. There is a contract page as well as some breeders have a phone number and email to contact them directly. The website is very user friendly and easy to navigate around the site.

Another example of a website is the Cal Poly Performance Horse Sale in the Cal Poly Animal Science Tab. This website has various tabs to seek information such as; About Us, History, Sale Horses, Stallions, Services, Directions, and Contact Us. There is a preview of events for the meet and greet, and the live auction dates. In the website there are images of the horse's for sale with a hyperlink connected to a genetic pyramid. This information introduces the Cal Poly Student trainer. The trainer conducts a YouTube video to present to the viewers (Cal Poly Performance Horse Sale, 2019).

Other livestock units on Cal Poly's campus use livestream services to broadcast sales and fundraiser events including the Cal Poly Classic Sale and the Cal Poly Bull Test. With livestreaming available, bidders not physically present or who are unable to attend in person, could add to the sale's profits and provided additional donor dollars. The Cal Poly Classic Sale had videos of each animal available prior to the actual sale, as well as a catalog for the sale event (Cowsmopolitan, 2019).

Websites needs intuitive design, with images that are pleasing to the eye to attract customers. A web design process includes collections of materials and research, planning page layouts, selection tools, production, uploading and promotion. A simple and functional navigation is another important feature. A simple design caters to the needs of people who are unfamiliar with how to navigate a webpage layout.

Methodology

The author began this project by contacting Rich Silacci, Operations Manager of the Dairy Unit at Cal Poly. During the first meeting with Rich, the author was advised to implement the website for the bull calves of the Dairy Unit. Together with Silacci, the author gathered information from Cattle Exchange, an internet site to collect ideas of how to set up and design the web page for Cal Poly's Dairy bull calves.

The author researched various agricultural webpages, along with interviewing a few professors and general readings. When determining how to design a webpage, the author had to consider all possible users, including those who are unfamiliar with technology.

The author was instructed to gain access to the Drupal account through CAFES IT. Once the author gained access to the Animal Science Department Drupal the author set up the page formatting after watching tutorials about using Drupal. The next step was capturing images of the bull calves. The Author also gathered the calves' sire, dam and birthdate information to accompany the photos from the Cal Poly Dairy calf manager.

The author shared the draft of the webpage with classmates for feedback and Morgan Bing, Administrative Support Assistant for the Animal Science Department. After the feedback from classmates and Animal Science Department, the bull calf webpage is saved as a draft version and awaits approval for publishing by the department.

Results

The author has completed designing the webpage for the Cal Poly Dairy bull calves. The results included images with different angles of the bulls for viewing of the composition of the calves. Underneath the photo images there is information with the breed, Sire and Dam, the day the bull was born with an ear tag identification number. At the tail end of the page there is a brief notation regarding to periodically check back on the webpage for updates on the bulls, with contact information. It will be the responsibility of the Animal Science Department to update the webpage with current and accurate information in a timely manner.

Conclusion

The author didn't anticipate the many hours and logistics of building and producing the webpage. During the processes the webpage needed to be approved by the Cal Poly website

Administration. Before the author could continue the work in progress for the public to be able to view and then be uploaded to the Animal Science webpage. The author gained knowledge on how to work the website software and how to upload the information about the bulls. The author advises to start thinking of your senior project during the end of your junior year. The project could have used a longer period of time seeking other resources as the author did not know how to create a webpage. More experience in software application would be beneficial in this senior project. The Author did complete creating the Cal Poly Dairy bull calf's webpage. There could have been more menu tabs added for additional information about the dairy unit. A livestream video would enhance the website, to viewers who are unable to attend the events. To complete the project the author needs to have a final review by the Animal Science Department. Once approved the website page will be uploaded to the Animal Science Website for the public to view.

Works Cited

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