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Great Schools

Unlimited Opportunities

Find an NHA School Near You

Select a State

OR

Zip Code

Who We Are

National Heritage Academies is a network of 80+ tuition-free public charter schools serving more than 57,000 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.



National Heritage Academies

Who We Are

BizStream



Our Approach

At National Heritage Academies, success means creating endless opportunities for children to

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL NETWORK

National Heritage Academies' site not only experienced a 30% increase in new users, it also saw an increase in average time spent on the new site, improved efficiency and user experience, and an elevated conversion rate.

New Users Increased by

30%

Background

National Heritage Academies is a network of 85+ public charter schools serving more than 58,000 students in nine states in the US.

NHA is the fourth largest for-profit education network in the US.

Goals

The goals for the site included replacing the existing website that was powered by legacy technologies with an easy-to-use CMS that would allow for many editors to make changes quickly and efficiently from both the corporate office as well as multiple individual school administrations.

Other goals include:

- replace an existing SharePoint platform which was not meeting the digital marketing team's need in terms of flexibility and performance
- provide a set of tools that support modern digital marketing tactics such as content personalization, lead scoring, and advanced analytics
- ensure that existing integrations with **NHA's CRM, Marketing Automation Platform**, and **Student Information System** applications still function
- implement a mobile-friendly, responsive design, that would allow users to easily view specialized features across multiple devices, including smartphone, tablet, desktop, and laptop

Challenges

- **WCAG 2.0 AA** compliance for website accessibility
- Multilingual support for both English and Spanish cultures
- A way to host 85+ individual school sites plus the corporate site, with unique content per site all in one website
- Support multiple development teams working in cohesion
- Complexity of multiple custom third-party integrations
- Support state-specific legal requirements for educational institution websites
- Site visitors need to easily find schools closest to their geographical location
- National Heritage Academies needed the site to be hosted in the cloud so on-premise resources, connectivity, and scalability wouldn't become an issue in the future
- The site needed to load as quickly and efficiently as possible
- Unique culture (language) specific URLs
- National Heritage Academies needed global content intermixed with school-specific content, allowing content like school-specific blog posts to be pushed up to the corporate site and mixed with corporate content
- National Heritage Academies wanted the ability to quickly create new sites for new schools as the organization continues to grow

"Like any large-scale project, there were challenges. This project was unique in that it required integration with numerous systems and technologies. BizStream and National Heritage Academies were able to tackle those challenges boldly and Kentico handled our complex solution very well. Managing content on our sites has vastly improved and mass edits and content validation has been streamlined as a result of our implementation of Kentico as our CMS."

"BizStream provided a wealth of knowledge throughout the entire development and change management process. Because of the way National Heritage Academies chooses to do business, many teams and individuals are required to know how to use Kentico. BizStream was able to successfully deliver a feature-rich product and also provided us with insight into how to use Kentico. From a development standpoint, BizStream was willing and open to discussing their process and melding it with our own. This allowed us to share technical knowledge throughout the project lifecycle."

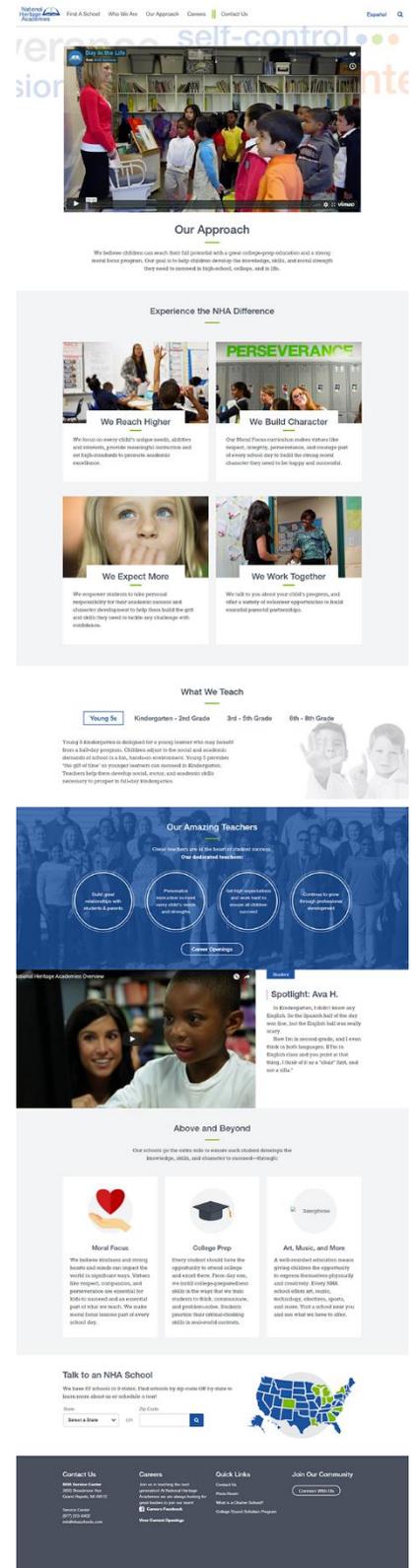


Alex Schelhaas
Digital Marketing Manager
National Heritage Academies

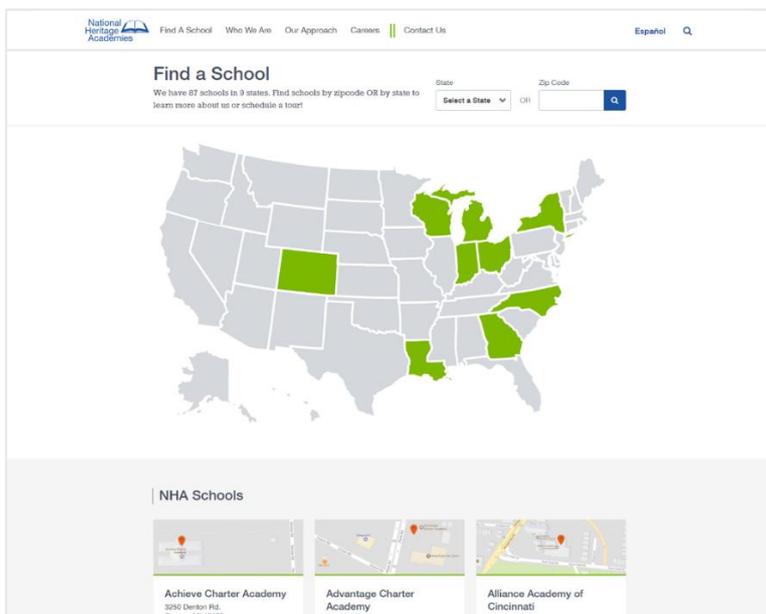
- Content on the site needed to be managed by admins within the corporate office as well as content admins from the 85+ NHA schools

Solution

- BizStream custom developed more than a dozen different page components in the **Kentico EMS MVC** development method that provided the National Heritage Academies' marketing teams the ability to easily create more than 1,000 variances of a page. The marketing team can choose from a variety of design components to build pages allowing them to easily mix and match design elements giving the ability to lay out a highly stylized page without additional developer effort
- BizStream worked seamlessly with multiple NHA developers to complete the project successfully by sharing cloud hosted source control, continuous deployment tools, and communicating on a regular basis
- The BizStream development team created custom code to integrate with software such as **Microsoft Dynamics CRM, YouTube, Vimeo, and LiveChat**
- To ensure the site met the state-specific legal requirements, BizStream leveraged the Kentico page tree system with custom page types so admins could easily customize transparency reporting based on global, local, and per school regulations
- Utilizing Geolocation and the Google Maps API, the BizStream team created a 'Find a School' feature allowing site visitors the ability to easily find nearby schools based on their location, zip code, or state
- BizStream helped integrate the NHA Student Application Process into the site to encourage more applications
- NHA utilizes the [Siteimprove Accessibility Checker](#) to evaluate the site for accessibility issues in real time
- BizStream measured the site's performance, stability, scalability, reliability, and speed under various workloads by utilizing **Apache JMeter, Visual Studio, and Kentico.Glimpse** (a debugging tool for Kentico MVC)
- To achieve fast response times, BizStream added various levels of caching which leveraged Kentico's API and its cache helper libraries
- BizStream integrated NHA's Student Information System platform to the site to provide a seamless experience for parents
- BizStream built a site template in the Kentico page tree so users could easily create a new site for new schools without the need for developers
- The new site utilizes Azure cloud technologies including an **Azure SQL database, Azure App Services (PaaS), and Azure Application Insights** to meet performance and scalability requirements



- BizStream used Kentico out-of-the-box features to seamlessly integrate with Azure Blob Storage for storing large files in the various Media Libraries
- BizStream used the Kentico Web Farm technology to achieve automatic scaling in Azure
- BizStream used the Kentico Role and Permission System to give different levels of access to admins across different schools
- Kentico Smart Search via the Kentico.Search libraries was used to provide search results to single schools or corporate content
- BizStream implemented a page preview in the MVC environment using the Kentico MVC framework
- BizStream created an API to allow access to Kentico hosted data so it could be consumed through different school portals
- BizStream developed a custom image rendition system that would output multiple renditions of a single image uploaded for display on different page types, resolutions, and devices using the Kentico Form Controls ability
- BizStream leveraged the existing Kentico Portal Engine tools, modified for MVC, to add **Accelerated Mobile Pages** (AMP) for better visibility within search engines and mobile
- BizStream developed a flexible menu building system in MVC that allows content admins to create global menus and include elements of other school-specific sites within the menu
- BizStream developed customized page types that allow content editors to fully manage all metadata for Facebook, Open Graph, Twitter, and Schema.org—allowing content managers to control how NHA content is displayed on the corresponding social media sites
- BizStream developed a URL shortening system in Kentico MVC to allow for friendly sharing of pages



National Heritage Academies

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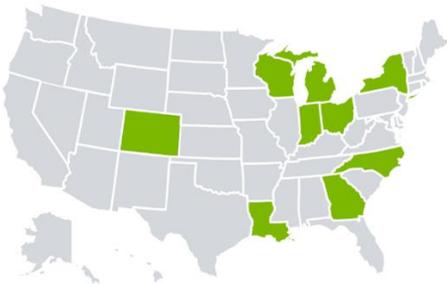
Español

Find a School

We have 87 schools in 9 states. Find schools by zipcode OR by state to learn more about us or schedule a tour!

State: Zip Code:

Select a State OR



NHA Schools

 <p>Achieve Charter Academy 3230 Denton Rd. Canton, MI 48188</p>	 <p>Advantage Charter Academy 14740 Plank Road</p>	 <p>Alliance Academy of Cincinnati 1713 Turk Creek Road</p>
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Results

In the short time that the new site has been live, National Heritage Academies has seen the following improvements:

- new users on the site have jumped 30%
- average time on National Heritage Academies' sites has increased by 10%
- time spent to fill out the Student Application Form has fallen by 23%
- conversion rate from organic search has increased by more than 20%
- The National Heritage Academies' teams are now able to manage content of the site without the need for technical expertise

Key Criteria for Choosing Kentico

Some of the specific Kentico features incorporated into the National Heritage Academies site include:

- easy-to-use content management system with intuitive interface for content authors
- ASP.NET MVC Support
- Online Forms
- localization and support for multiple languages
- heavy API usage
- Cloud-based Azure hosting
- Cloud-based Azure external storage
- responsive design

BizStream

BizStream builds web, online marketing, and software solutions.

The company specializes in ASP.NET, SQL Server, and Kentico CMS and Kentico EMS development. Alongside custom development services, BizStream has three Software as a Service (SaaS) products including YouthCenter, CaseStream, and Toolkit for Kentico. Founded in 2001, the BizStream team comprises more than 25 developers, designers, digital specialists, support staff, and contractors. BizStream is located just outside Grand Rapids, MI.



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