

Upstatement

One Laptop per Child Online Audit

Upstatement, LLC
490 Broadway Suite 3
Somerville, MA 02145
617 329 1316
info@upstatement.com

Executive summary

One Laptop per Child's web properties were designed during a very different time for the organization. Since the launch of laptop.org, more than one million laptops have been distributed throughout the world. As the project has grown, so has the scope of OLPC's online presence.

Today OLPC uses a variety of web sites under a variety of circumstances. Some are managed by the organization, but many more are independent efforts following a particular deployment or project.

After several weeks of analyzing these sites, we've arrived at the observations and recommendations you'll find here and during today's presentation. These findings tend to fall within three categories:

Inconsistency While OLPC has a strong and recognizable brand, the usage is sporadic and often ignored by sites under the organization's control.

Gaps in content The OLPC community has many channels of communication between active members. However, it is difficult for the general public to learn about the success and current status of the project.

Defined user paths It's difficult for users to follow a clear navigational path to their desired content. Often, searches arrive at the OLPC Wiki. Though the Wiki features a vast amount of good content, its appearance and usage can be daunting for casual users.

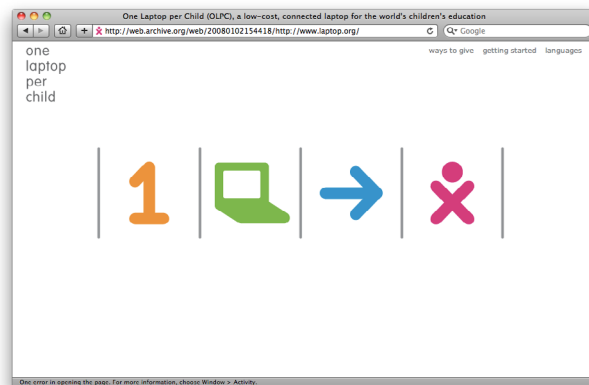
We think this is a great opportunity to discuss OLPC's web strategy and how it fits into the overall organization's goals. We hope our report and presentation lead to a productive discussion on the future of these sites and how they can assist in One Laptop per Child's mission.

Online properties

laptop.org

The official OLPC information portal was designed to be a mostly static site without a CMS. Currently, Web Manager Lynn Wang is working on transitioning the site into a Drupal installation. The site is organized using the logo as navigation, which limits the ability to easily add items. Because of the lack of a CMS, updates are sporadic and the site suffers from inconsistent information and broken links.

About 100,000 visitors each month use the site to learn more about OLPC or donate to the organization. While explaining a lot about the project's vision, it lacks updated information on the success of the deployments.



wiki.laptop.org

Serving over 300,000 visitors per month, the Wiki is OLPC's most-active web property. Users come from across the world, with traffic from both developed and developing nations. It promotes communication both within and between deployments, hosting comprehensive guides and resources. SJ Klein, social movement coordinator, reports about 1000 active editors using the site.



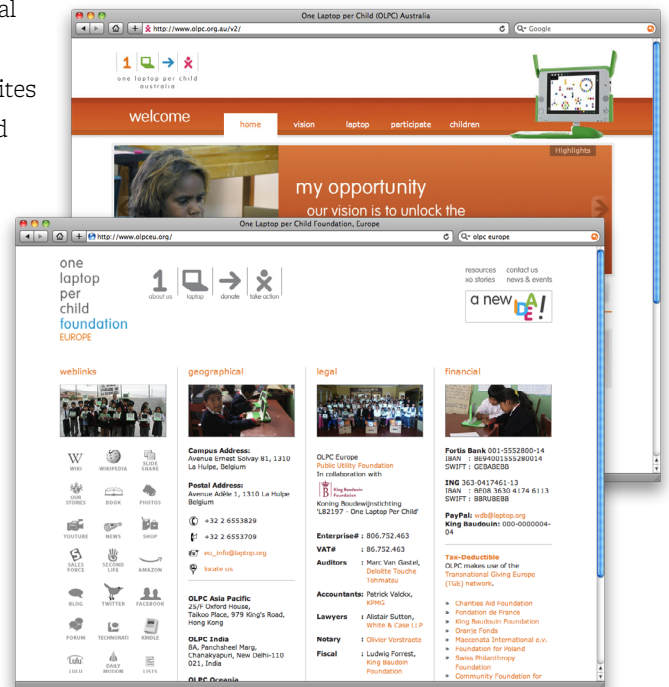
blog.laptop.org

The official blog of OLPC features about one post per week. No analytics software is installed, but based on reader participation, the number of visitors is likely quite low. The site competes with Wayan Vota's OLPCNews.com, an unofficial site for OLPC news which enjoys a larger and more active user base. Though official, the blog lacks the design and navigation to reinforce it as the Word from OLPC. Posts don't break news. Big announcements (like the recent cancellation of the XO-2) were made through other media outlets. In this example, the blog and official site never made reference to the story.



Affiliate web sites

These are organizations with a formal relationship to OLPC. Groups like OLPC India have their own official sites which mostly mirror the content and structure of OLPC. However, OLPC staff expressed concerns about how content is updated. If there is a change in the organization, inconsistent information remains until that change can be relayed. OLPC Australia very recently launched a redesign which uses a different presentation strategy, though similar content.



Deployment web sites

Many deployments maintain websites measuring the success of their efforts. However, even highly active deployments (like Uruguay) have infrequent updates and a low amount of user participation. Most of these are maintained as blogs and hosted on third-party blogging sites.

Based on examples we've seen elsewhere on the web (namely, Kiva.org) we believe many of these sites could be hosted on an official OLPC platform and integrated with donations so individuals could support and follow deployments.



Sugar

Sugar is technically an independent organization responsible for the XO software, not a part of OLPC. However, this distinction may be lost on many end users. Sugar Activities provides an easily navigable database of software for XO users to download and comment on. Based on OLPC's analytics, we believe that many XO users searching for this site erroneously arrive at the OLPC Wiki.



Developer sites

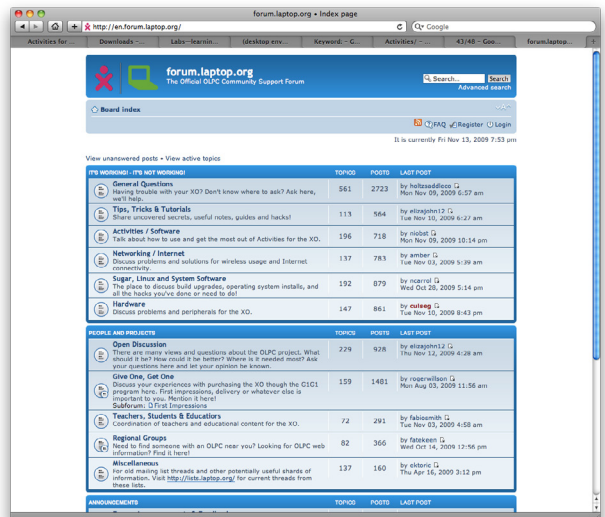
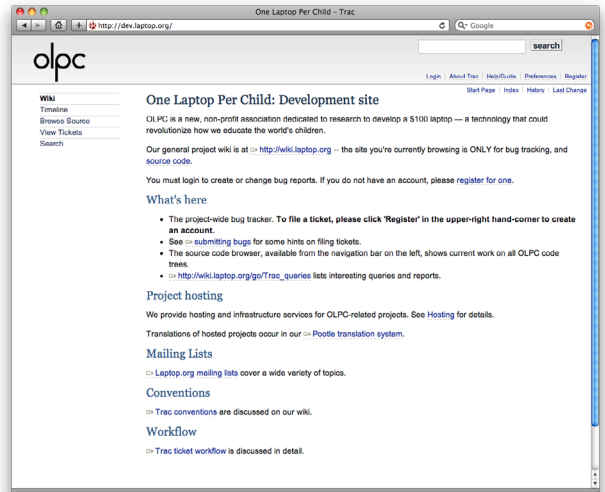
Beyond the Wiki, a variety of sites and platforms help developers communicate about their work.

planet.laptop.org aggregates blog postings from across the developer community. No analytics exist to give us a picture on its usage. While much of the content tends to focus on very specific technical issues, there are often photos or dispatches from meetings on OLPC across the globe.

dev.laptop.org is used to facilitate bug reporting and code sharing amongst the tech team, sugar developers, and users submitting bugs/patches. About 1000 active users file and track bugs.

rt.laptop.org is used for email triage by the technical support team.

forum.laptop.org is a general interest forum (though the active areas are in technical support). The forum has infrequent participation, with only a handful of posts per week across twelve different discussion boards.



User Profiles

First-time and casual users



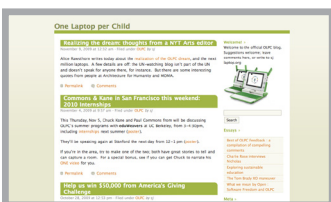
Homepage of laptop.org

These are users who may have learned about OLPC on the news or through a friend. They have some idea about the organization, but want to learn more. Laptop.org features background on the project and vision that should appeal to them and answer their questions. However, it lacks recent updates and doesn't communicate the activity in the OLPC community.

Other non-profit sites give greater focus to the recipients of the charity (young XO users, in our case) instead of the organization. This approach was recently adopted by OLPC Australia which prominently features photos of young children using their XOs.

KEY RECOMMENDATION The homepage suffers from a high bounce rate on a page without any content. This indicates that many users are confounded by the splash page's navigation and not getting into the site. A redesigned home page should prominently feature news and active campaigns, while inviting users deeper into the site.

Return and engaged users



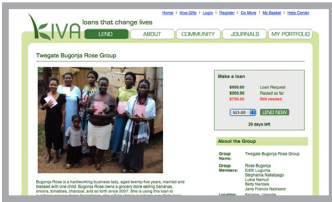
The official OLPC blog

There are many channels for hard-core members of the OLPC community to communicate, leaving some larger areas unaddressed. The official blog features only weekly updates without much of a community following. OLPC is active on many social media outlets. For example, there are very frequent contributions to Flickr by both staff and users. However, the lack of a complete social media strategy prevents mobilizing OLPC's followers to engage in certain campaigns.

KEY RECOMMENDATION The blog could be a powerful means of communicating with OLPC supporters. The organization should use this as the primary channel for big announcements and tie its look and feel closely to laptop.org.

Small donors

Without much promotion or effort, OLPC is able to raise about \$10,000 per month from visitors contributing to accounts on PayPal and Amazon. A coordinated campaign could result in a surge in small donor participation. Other successful online efforts use

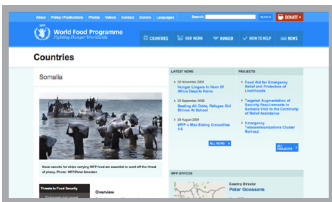


A Kiva.org loan profile page

feedback to engage the donor base. Some techniques to might include: leaderboards of donors, specific goals and indication of what contributions go to support.

KEY RECOMMENDATION Kiva.org has an excellent website that integrates donations and information. A similar system for OLPC would allow deployments to report on their success while soliciting contributions in the same interface.

Large donors / supporters

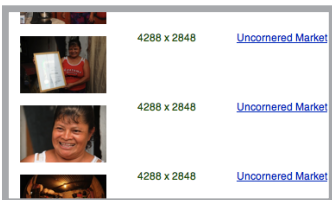


A country profile page from the World Food Program

Despite all the content in the OLPC universe of sites, there is no site or set of pages that caters specifically to governments, large donors and corporate sponsors. OLPC Europe has several reports posted online, but these are not linked through laptop.org. Corporate sponsors, though listed, are not credited with their specific donation to the project (be it in funds or other resources). Other sites, like Oxfam International, describe how each company supports their organization.

KEY RECOMMENDATION Case study pages should highlight the success of the million+ laptops distributed throughout the world. Featuring photography, personal accounts and other information — these pages would be a one-stop reference to tell the story of OLPC to important decision makers. Examples in the presentation include the World Food Program and ONE campaign.

Media



Kiva.org pre-selects the best photos and posts them as publication-ready files.

Laptop.org features a press section without much content. While an email address is provided for press inquiries, it's of little comfort for reporters on deadline. Many other non-profit sites we saw prominently featured a list of media contacts, their titles and direct phone numbers. Stories featured in this section are neglected without an update in almost six months. Flickr provides excellent photographic resources, but editing (or providing a set of publication-ready photos) would help get positive OLPC images into the media.

KEY RECOMMENDATION A successful strategy we saw on other sites was to maintain a media landing page rather than an entire media section. This landing page then links to existing content (for example, the contacts page, pre-selected Flickr photos, downloadable video) instead of building the section from scratch.

Big Picture

Information Architecture

The structure of laptop.org (both in design and technology) make it difficult to extend. Therefore, new projects tend to create a new website. This has resulted in a large universe of OLPC properties. Future efforts should include consolidating existing content areas into clear containers.

Navigation on laptop.org and affiliate sites is tied directly to the logo. This limits the ability to add new projects or guide users on clear paths through the site.

Squatters own domains like olpc.org and onelaptopperchild.com. These (and other examples) are obvious URLs that users may be attempting to directly access. We can't tell you how many times we typed in 'olpc.org' expecting to find OLPC during this project, even though we know that laptop.org is the official URL.

Design & Technology

A branding guide would help groups create logos that stay within the OLPC brand. Tools and templates could further assist in this effort and reduce the logo abuse currently taking place.

When new sites need to be created a unified framework would help enforce consistency. OLPC participants wouldn't have to deal with a new navigation scheme for each site. Instead a universal nav (or at least, uniform structure) would help users focus on the content and not re-learning site structures.

Future efforts should ensure that site display is compatible with the XO and as many mobile devices as possible.

Once a strategy is devised, an appropriate CMS should be selected to manage new and redesigned sites.