

Competitive and Inclusive Design Analysis

Background

Our project centers around connecting volunteers to opportunities and organizations to help support social causes and local communities via an online searchable platform. I chose to conduct the competitive analysis on Justserve.org because it is considered as one of our competitors where their main goal is to link volunteers to community-based volunteer needs through the posting of community service projects on their website.

Product Effectiveness

When you go on to the website, you are prompted to enter the area of your interest to search for volunteering opportunities. It will then load the opportunities available for sign up in three ways (all of user's preferences and choices): grid view, map view, or calendar view. This specific feature is extremely useful for the users as it provides more than one way for the users to visually see and access the available opportunities. In the grid view (Figure 1), the users can easily see the title, the organization description and mission. In the map view (Figure 2), the users can use the interactive map to locate the specific volunteer opportunities sites in the area. In the calendar view (Figure 3), the users can see the weekly calendar and time of the available opportunities.

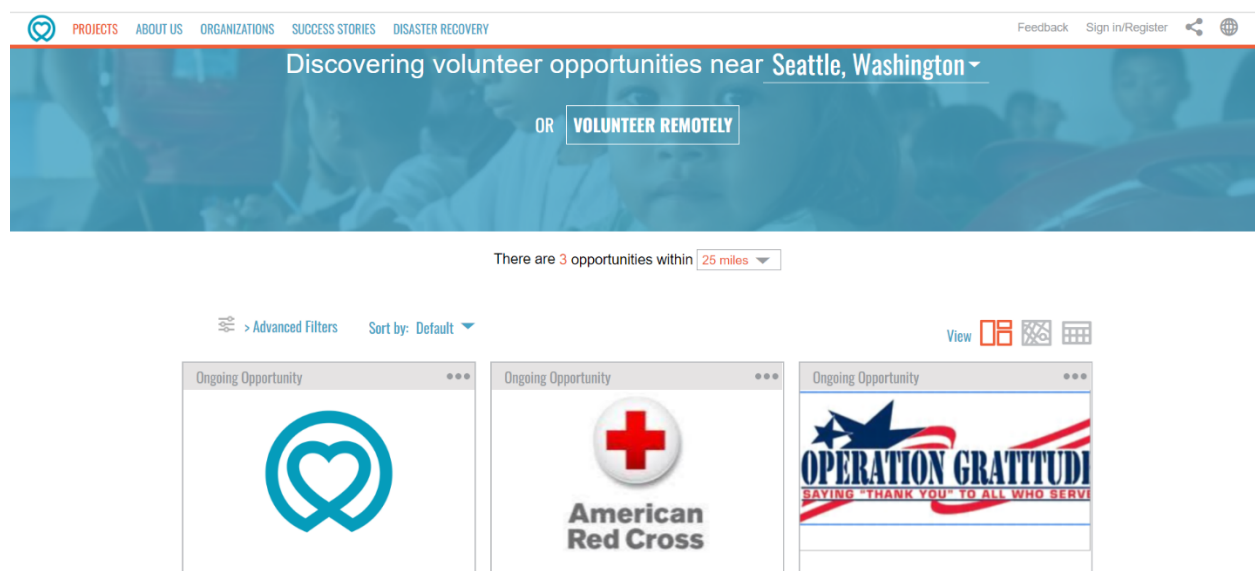


Figure 1. The projects and volunteering opportunities displayed in grid view

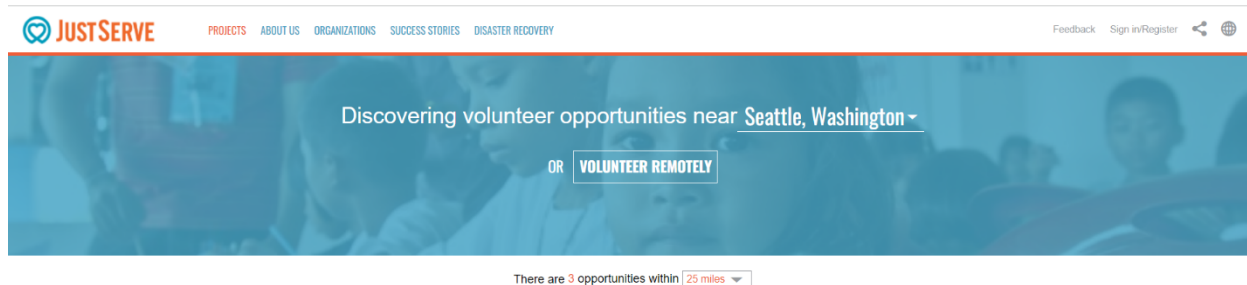


Figure 2. The projects and volunteering opportunities displayed in interactive map view

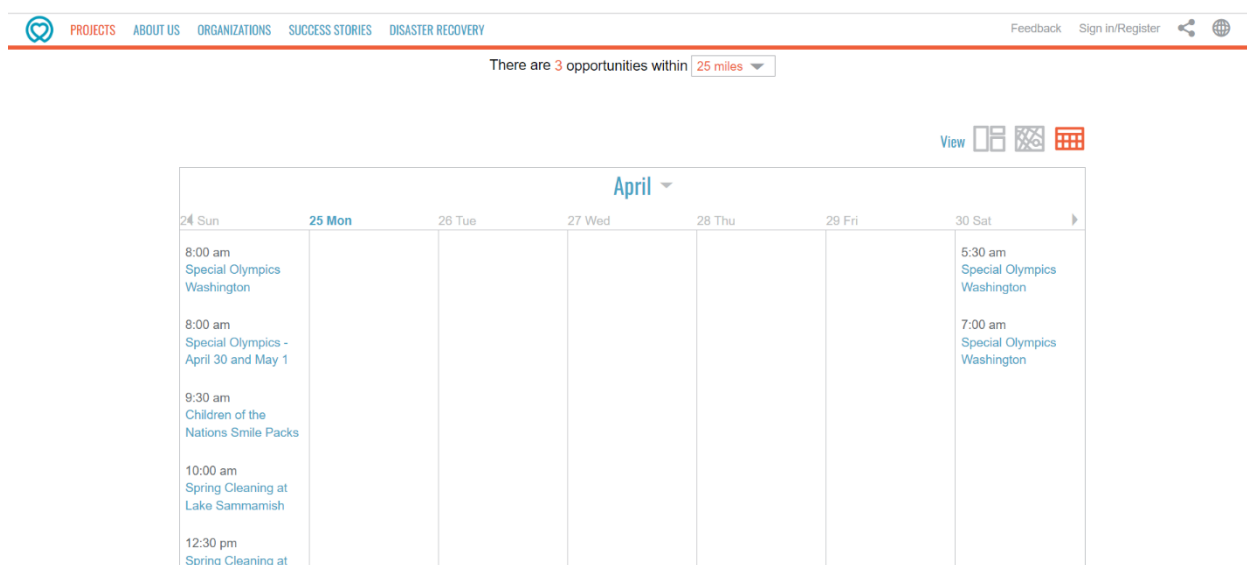


Figure 3. The projects and volunteering opportunities displayed in calendar view

Another feature that is effective for them is that not only you can search for specific opportunities in your area of choice, but there is another tab that displays all the participating organizations within the area of choice (Figure 4). This provides the users more information about the organizations' missions and goals so that they can assess if their values align with each other and if the organization will be fitting for them.

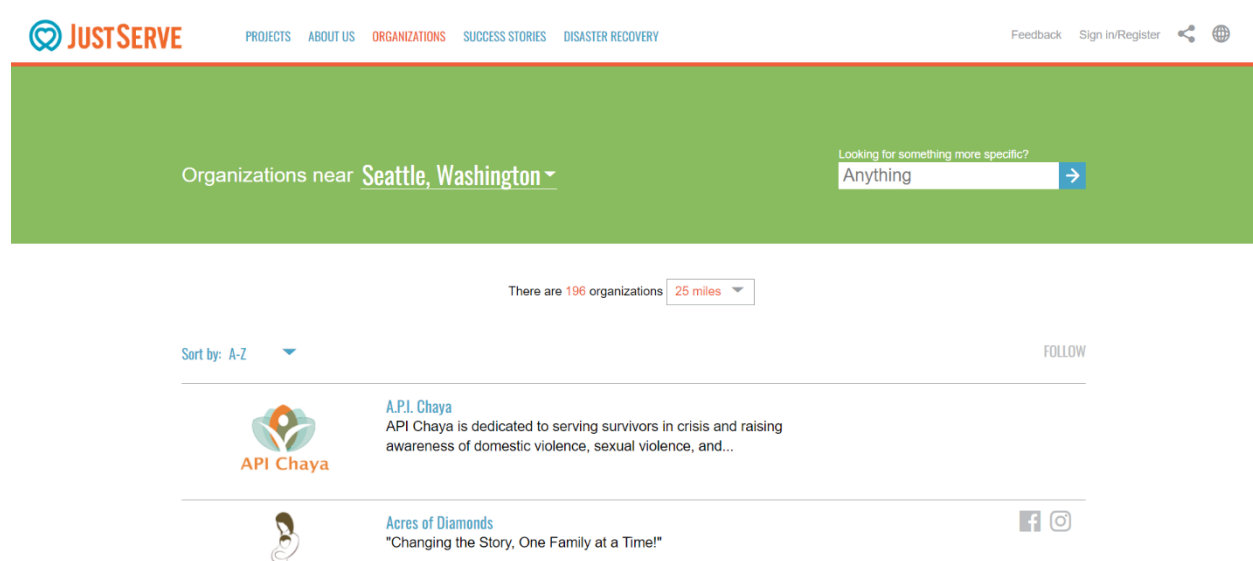


Figure 4. Display of the organizations in the areas of user interests

Product Improvement

There are a few improvements that could be done on the JustServe website. One of the common struggles that we gathered from our user interviews was that on these websites there are often no clear description of the type of duties that the volunteer will be doing in these organizations. Most of the times, the volunteers will commit to opportunities without a clue of the organization expectations. One of the improvements that the website can add or adjust is once you click into the specific volunteering opportunities tab (Figure 5), there should be another section that describes the job duties, environmental situations that the volunteers will be placed in, and if there are any volunteer perks such as shift breaks or snacks provided.

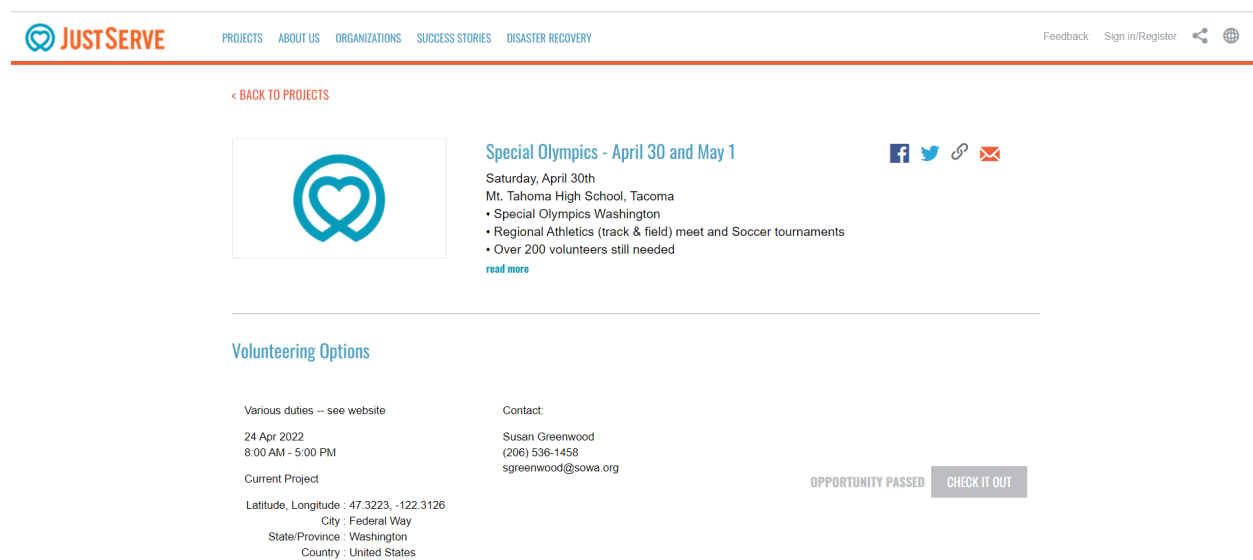


Figure 5. Volunteering opportunities specifics page

Another improvement that JustServe can implement is having a “Related Opportunities” section so that not only the volunteers can access related opportunities within their areas of interest, but it also allows for other types of organizations (especially those of smaller sizes) to have a chance to advertise and market their opportunities and needs for volunteering.

Inclusive Design Analysis

By browsing through the website and interacting with some of the features I did notice some things that could follow more of the inclusive design approaches so that it does not only apply to the “average users”. There are users who volunteer that are of the elderly population, I think it will be considerate to input a section of volunteering opportunities for elderly people or have that type of distinction somewhere in the volunteering opportunities display section. In addition, I would have liked to see the website to be considerate towards users with disabilities as not all people can perform certain tasks of requirement. For example, if a volunteer opportunity requires a lot of physical activity, people using wheelchair or crutches will have an extremely difficult time performing and completing these physical demanding tasks.

Source:

1. <https://www.justserve.org/>