

Designing Effective Google Maps for Social Change

a case study of SmartChoices



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Designing Effective Google™ Maps for Social Change
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Available for Download at
<http://www.trincoll.edu/depts/educ/css/designing.html>

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introduction to the project

This project focuses on the development of interactive, map-based websites created to benefit members of a community. Beginning with a look at earlier examples of personalized maps and the start of the online mapping revolution, this project will explore the ways in which maps, specifically Google Maps™, can be used in order to create informative and useful online tools for community members. It will provide an in depth methodology for making a website intuitive, useful, and accessible both for its specific target audience and for community members of all levels of computer and Internet literacy. Furthermore, this project will review methods for creating visually appealing pages and for increasing awareness and usage of the site, encouraging repeated usage by those it is meant to reach.

THE CASE STUDY

In addition, this project will focus on the creation and development of the Hartford SmartChoices website, a collaborative effort of Trinity College and ConnCAN (Connecticut Coalition for Achievement Now). Each chapter will follow the development of the SmartChoices site through the stages of its development, focusing on the consideration of the principles listed above, from the need addressed by the website to its usefulness, accessibility, popularity, and aesthetic qualities.

about the author

Devlin Hughes graduated from Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut in 2009 with Bachelor of Science degrees in Psychology and Data Representation, a self-designed major. She first became involved in Google™ Mapping and its uses in community and social action in the spring of 2006, and was featured on PBS, CBS, and the New York Times for the work she and her classmates did using Google™ Maps to help local nonprofits in Hartford. This project is a culmination of her studies in the Data Representation major.