

Responsive Website Design for Communicating Water Conservation with Extension Clientele

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Introduction

- Adult Floridians labeled as high-water users consult websites most often when interested in finding information on water-related topics (Lamm et al., 2016).
- Adult Americans who manage a landscape or lawn with irrigation indicated visiting a website as the preferred method to learn information about water conservation (Warner et al., 2017).
- Extension should be communicating about water conservation behaviors and practices with their clientele via websites.

How it Works

There are six steps to implement a responsive website design for effectively communicating about water with Extension clientele.

- Identify a target audience
- Develop the website
- Test the website with a subset of clientele
- Analyze clientele feedback
- Modify the website based on feedback
- Publish website for Extension clientele use

A quantitative Qualtrics questionnaire was piloted with Florida Extension agents and Florida residents (n = 52).

Three website concepts were developed utilizing social- and gain-frames. Using hotspot tools within Qualtrics, participants were asked to identify five areas of the design that were most appealing to them and provide any additional feedback using written response boxes.

Results to Date

Respondents identified the following website design aspects as 'appealing':

- menu items for a blog and gallery
- images of flowers and children
- logos
- live chat features
- information about the mission
- and buttons, interaction, or navigation.

Another trend to note from the pilot data was respondents' preference for a custom domain (e.g., .com) over a freely acquired sponsored domain (e.g., Weebly, Wix, etc.).

Advice to Others

- Develop training for Extension professionals, who are typically trained in their context area (e.g., horticulture, agriculture) but not in areas such as communication, web design, or digital marketing.
- Collaborate with other local Extension personnel or local stakeholders (i.e., HOA, community groups, etc.) to cross-promote or create programs together.
- Respondents to this pilot study suggested that (if using the hotspot tool) there should be no limits on the required number of indicators.

Scan this QR code for more information on best practices for communicating about water conservation.

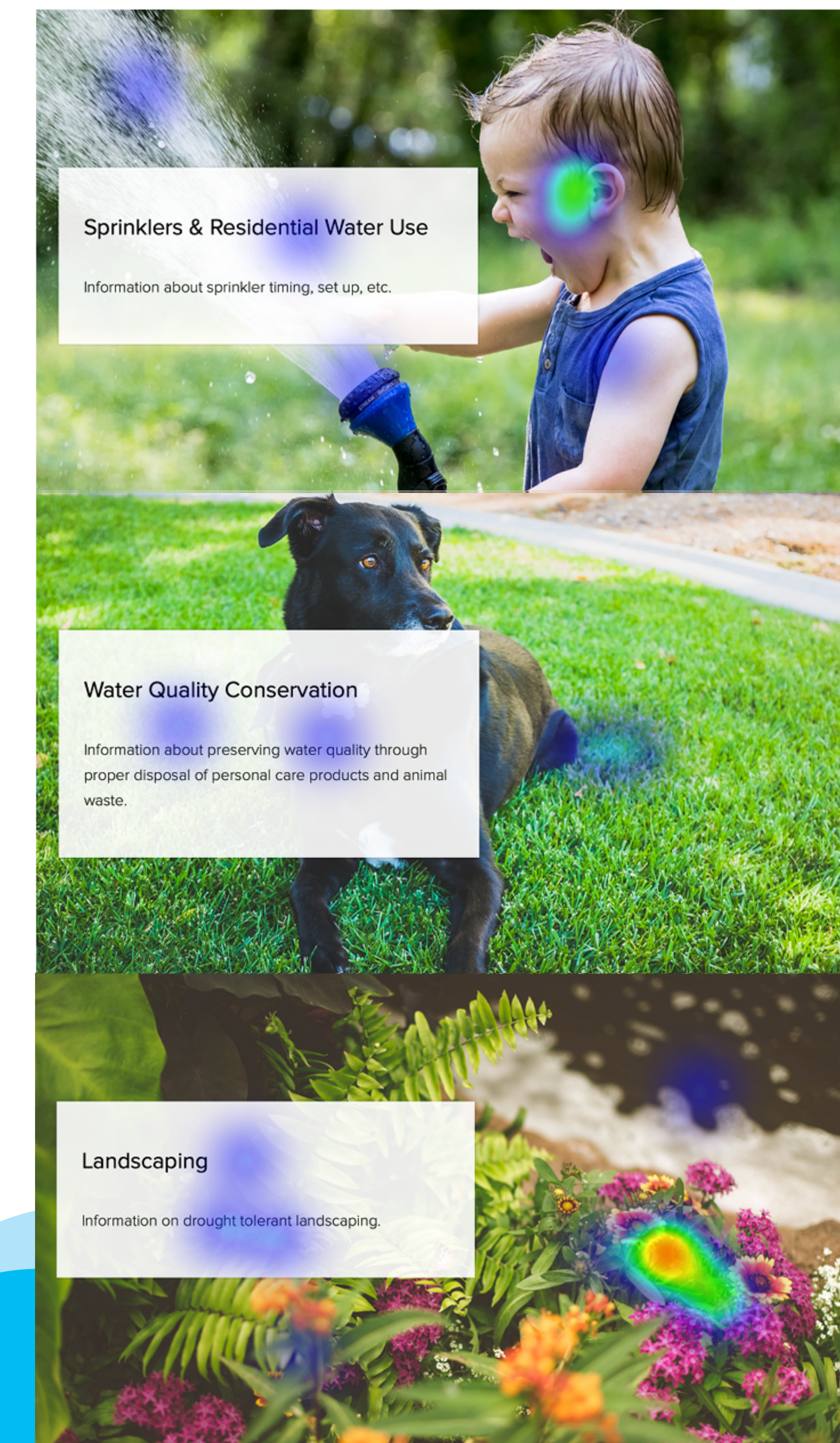


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