

# Bhavana Society

Case Study | Acquia Engage 2018

**63%**

Bounce Rate:  
Reduced by 63%.

**20%**

Daily Visitor Page Views:  
Increased by 20%.

**119%**

Daily Time on Site:  
Increased by 119%.

**40%**

Web & Mobile Traffic:  
Increased by 40%



# BHĀVANĀ SOCIETY

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## About the Bhavana Society, its traditions, monastics and community

The Bhavana Society is a community of monastics and lay people living according to the precepts and practices laid down by the Buddha, Siddhattha Gotama, over 2500 years ago. The Pali word “Bhavana” means mental cultivation and Bhavana is dedicated to the practice of Theravada Buddhist meditation that refers to the oldest school of Buddhism. Located in rural West Virginia, the monastery and meditation center provides opportunities for people to come to organized retreats as well as personal retreats and personal visits of varying lengths.

## Case Study Highlights

### Situation:

Bhavana Society - a non-profit organization, is a monastery and meditation center, which seeks to connect the community of monastics and spiritual seekers to Buddhist practices through its online presence.

### Challenge:

Bhavana Society was looking to enhance its visitors’ spiritual experience by providing relevant content, seamless registration, and an easier way to contribute to the cause through their website.

### Our Solution:

Drupal 8 CMS, Acquia Cloud

### Results:

- Bounce Rate: Reduced by 63%.
- Daily Visitor Page Views: Increased by 20%.
- Daily Time on Site: Increased by 119%.
- Web & Mobile Traffic: Increased by 40%.
- Conversion Rate: Increased to 7%.
- Average Session Time: Increased to 4 minutes.
- Average Time Spent on Articles: Increased to 3 minutes.
- 400+ new users registrations within last 60 days.
- Increased attendance at events because of the new website announcement





## Our Client

Rich history, quiet environments, meditation, and knowledge about Buddhism are among the many benefits that Bhavana Society offers. Situated in a small lush green locality, Bhavana organizes meaningful retreats and events where seekers can learn about Buddhist principles while having an unforgettable experience. They can also contribute by providing donations and arranging for meals.

## Their Situation

Gurus and Guidance are the two most important pillars in attaining spiritual awareness. An individual's spiritual journey should never be limited by his/her ability to find the right direction. Digital technologies have been a pioneer in connecting people across geographies and sociocultural boundaries by bringing them closer. Easy discoverability of right content and a smooth process of contributing towards the cause facilitates spiritual migration.

Bhavana Society through its revamped website, needed to bring knowledge seekers closer to self-realization. TA Digital, a leading digital solutions provider, helped Bhavana Society in reinventing its digital reach by building a website which offers relevant content, seamless registration, an easier way to contribute, and a smoother administration for its volunteers.

*“ The Buddha’s enduring message and teachings have not changed in over 2,600 years. How they have been transmitted and shared continues to evolve: orally, etched on palm leaves, carved into stone and metal, hand lettered, printed and mass-produced, recorded on analog systems, and now digitized and available electronically around the world.*

*The Bhavana Society’s previous website enabled it to reach interested people by computer. However, as both hardware and software continued to change it became clear that we would need to change as well. Many now exclusively use smart phones and other small devices to access the Internet. TA Digital have provided the Bhavana Society with a stable, state-of-the-art website that should serve us well into the future. Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, Founder and Abbot, Bhavana Society - Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, Founder and Abbot, Bhavana Society*





## Their Challenges

To fulfil their vision of preserving the tradition of meditation, Bhavana Society needed to facilitate visitors' spiritual journey by creating seamless digital access to content and processes. However, the primitive platform and website design restricted their ability to author web-pages and manage the event and attendee portal for organized retreats. For a not-for-profit organization, which is dependent on donations, the \$40 per hour authoring cost was an additional burden. Furthermore, the absence of a structured event registration process on the earlier website made it difficult for attendees to interact further with Bhavana Society. No visit or retreat registration database or associated reports were available. Lack of email verification during account registration made it impossible to know the difference between valid and invalid accounts. Internally, adding multiple events on the old website was difficult, which was adversely affecting the traffic. At a time, only 2 to 3 events could be hosted and viewed on the website.

Donations and contributions play a key role in running a not-for-profit organization. They also provide visitors the opportunity to make a difference. It was imperative for Bhavana Society to make the donation process simple and discoverable. Smoothing the 'Becoming a Meal Sponsor' process was important for Bhavana Society to conduct its retreats effectively. Further, to add innovative and efficient ways to contribute in generating a resource pool at Bhavana Society, TA Digital recommended integrating Bhavana Society's Amazon wish-list with the website where visitors can donate the required products.

Additionally, the original website was static in design and not mobile friendly. Given the fact that many visitors access the website from mobile, Bhavana Society needed to implement a sophisticated, well designed, and intuitive website.



## Our Solution

TA Digital chose Bhavana Society as its selection for the annual pro-bono project delivered to non-profit clients. Bhavana Society's message, goals and principles inspired that selection by TA Digital to help provide their end users with a superior user experience on Acquia's enterprise platform.

TA Digital's recommendation of Acquia Drupal 8 as the CMS engine of choice was driven by the need to deliver a smooth and pleasant experience for the visitors interacting with Bhavana Society.

Drupal 8 along with the WYSIWYG editor, provides in-line and in-context editing ability on the pages. Using D8, TA Digital revamped Bhavana Society's authoring capabilities to reduce their technical dependence leading to a significant cost savings. The improved ease in adding and updating content has had the domino effect of more content being published and discovered, resulting in better SEO rankings.

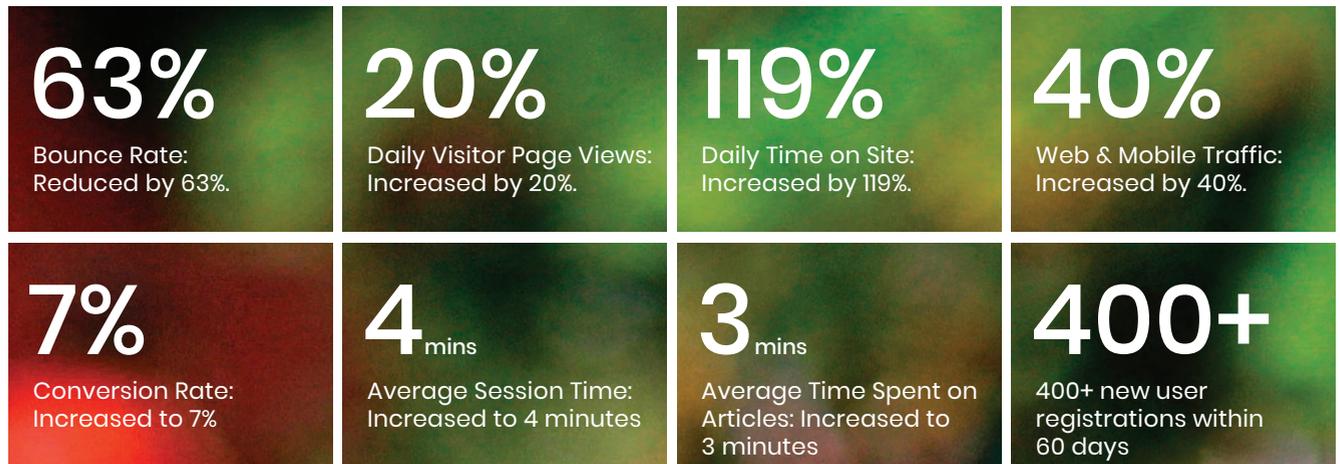
Acquia's API-first-architecture helped TA Digital develop a future-ready, flexible, and scalable event management portal for Bhavana Society. It includes the feature of checking participants' eligibility for an event, which was earlier done manually by Bhavana Society. In addition, tracking participant activity, automatic event registration turnoff flexibility, and hosting multiple or different types of events was made possible with this implementation. With D8's advanced capabilities, TA Digital redesigned the attendee reporting and management system as well. The new attendee portal helps Bhavana Society in tracking the level of the candidates, observing their activities, and providing the admin the capability to manage and download reports.

Using D8's out-of-the-box, fully responsive capability, TA Digital architected the Bhavana Society website to deliver similar experiences on web and mobile browser. Now with a mobile friendly website in place, Bhavana Society receives 40% of its traffic from mobile devices.



## Our Results

By implementing Acquia Drupal 8 CMS, TA Digital helped Bhavana Society develop a seamless digital platform to help visitors advance on the path of Theravada Buddhist meditation and mindfulness.



## The Bhavana Society Website Today



**“** It was a privilege (and learning experience!) for me to be involved with a small group from the Bhavana Society working with the developers at TA Digital to recast the Bhavana’s original website into something more engaging, media rich, and mobile-friendly. Not only is the new website more attractive and easy to navigate, it has now automated and streamlined some of the “back-office” functions such as retreat registration. Going forward it will be much easier to keep the site up-to-date and responsive to the needs of the Bhavana community and general public. Now more than ever people need what the Bhavana Society has to offer. Its new website provides a platform on which to share the gift of Dhamma (the Truth/the Buddha’s teachings) a gift that surpasses all others. - Dr. Judith Jean Larson, Secretary of the Board of Director, Bhavana Society **”**

# The Bhavana Society Website Before

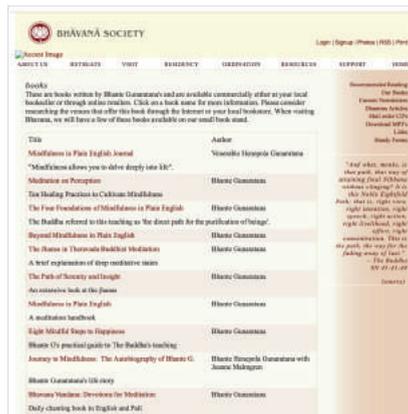
Bhavana Society's previous website was developed in 2006, on the expression engine platform. The website's focus was to provide members and visitors with information about organizations, teachers, available teachings, materials, retreat schedules, visit and retreat registration, ride sharing, and how to support organization.

Please see below the before images of the various pages of the Bhavana Society's website.

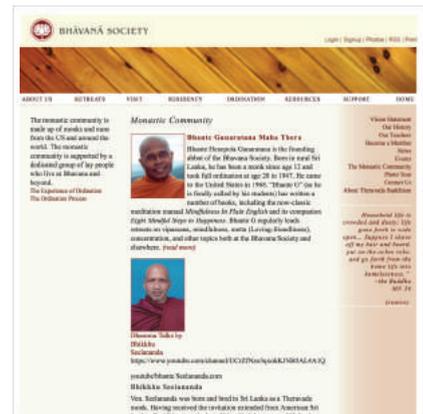
## Previous Home, Resources, About Pages,



Home Page



Resources Page



About Page

“ Beyond receiving an outstanding website from TA Digital, their project team very effectively gathered requirements and delivered tasks on time. TA Digital’s project management tools provided full transparency of their development efforts including internal communications. With the new website, the Bhavana Society has realized significant savings by automating their unique retreat and visit registration process and other back office operations. This new functionality also empowered the organization to easily recruit and train more volunteers to assist with content authoring. This has resulted in attracting new visitors and a surge in traffic coming from wide variety of devices. Post implementation, TA Digital has been a steadfast partner to address and remedy any issue as well as help plan for expansion of various areas of the website to better serve our local and global communities.

- Prashant Shah, Project Coordinator / Member of the Board of Directors, Bhavana Society





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