

SECU & Deque:

An Accessibility Journey (In the Making)

**Accelerating Accessibility
Transformation through a
Complete Understanding of
your Toolkit**

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Who am I?

Hey there!



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Disclaimer!



Not an expert.

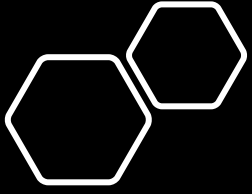


Who are we?

State Employees' Credit Union of North Carolina

- Not-for-profit cooperative financial institution owned by our members: employees of the State of North Carolina, public boards of education, entities that operate for the benefit of state employees, and immediate family members.
 - Founded June 4, 1937, with 17 members and \$437 in assets – in the basement of the NC Agricultural building.
 - SECU is now the second largest credit union in the country. With \$50 billion in assets, we serve over 2.6 million members through more than 270 branch locations, 1,100 ATMs, 24/7 Member Services, and the digital channels.
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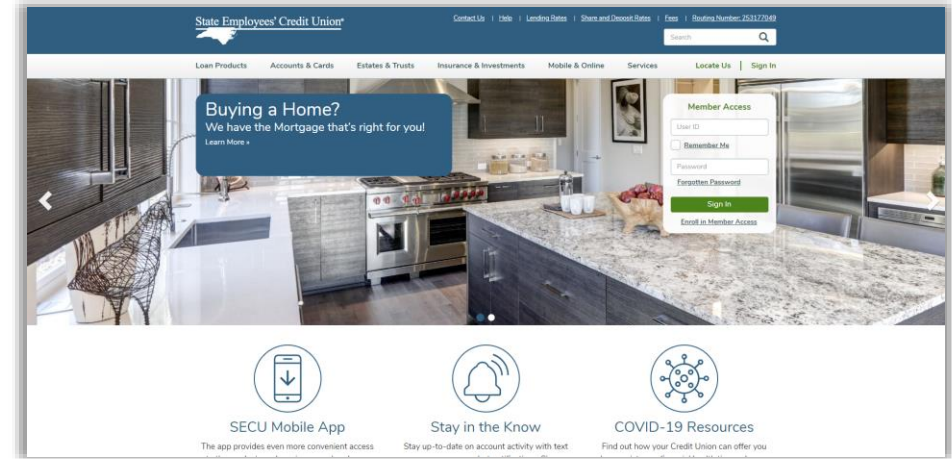




Who are we?... continued

Digital Strategy & Delivery

- .coms
- Native mobile applications
- Interactive voice response
- Branch locator and pages
- Online Account Opening
- Much more!



What is our purpose?

- To serve our members – big advantage for prioritization
- Member-first approach to user experience and enhancement
- “People helping people”, translated into a digital experience
- Ease of use
- Self-service
- Remote access to banking services
- Security and reliability
- Iterative and justifiable roadmap (table stakes + differentiation = competitive)

Genesis

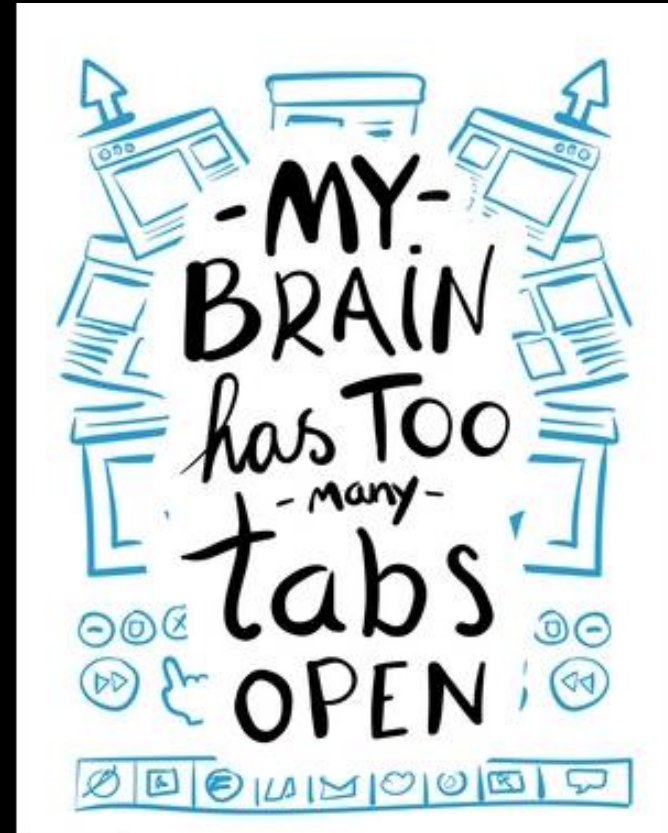
- Multiple input realization: member-users, development staff, etc.
- State of accessibility
- Dwindling conformance, lackluster manual validation
- Exponential growth ahead, needed to clean & build for scale
- Compliance lens



What was our objective?

- Remediation of existing issues and forming a short-term plan
 - WCAG 2.1 A & AA
 - PDF and document compliance
 - Assistive technology & usability
- Gain organizational support for long-term plan & resources
- Reach out to existing partners
- Educate internally
- Create our own acceptance criteria for conformance – VERY strict
- Put the tools we already had licensed to work – ALL of them
- Tackle everything at once

“Wow, this is a lot.”



Everyone remain calm!

- Too much uncertainty
- No confidence in what we were aiming at
- Development became tedious – one step forward, two steps backward
- Needed formal training
- Needed guidance (external and internal)
- Over-complicated everything
- Needed a streamlined, ground-up approach
- Technology overkill

What did we do?

- An exercise in introspection
- Asked for help – nothing shameful in that
- Evaluated partnership opportunities
- Deque
- Had conversations!
- Created a plan
- Sent people to “school”
- CONSOLIDATED OUR TOOLKIT
- Created efficiencies
- Changed our approach: address accessibility at the design and development process



How do we guide others?

- Digital Strategy is one of many arms of the Credit Union with a digital presence
- Other groups are undertaking efforts in the web & mobile spaces, and they are not experts
- TEACH!
- Centralize our goals
- Prove the return on investment
- Understand accountability and where it begins
- Drive the importance of accessibility from day 1 of a project and day 1 of continuous development

What does our ecosystem look like today?

- Full access to training for product, development, QA and design staffs
- APO
- Integrated technology
- Top-down support
- Transparency in goals and milestones – continuous process!
- Still learning (“in the making”)



Considerations for the future of banking

- Accessibility is a large topic and still growing
- Mobile-first, it just makes sense
- Evolving technologies
 - Smart-wear
 - Chat/AI/Virtual Bot
 - Video Conferencing
 - Interactive Tellers (ITMs)
- Covid-19 as a catalyst
- Dependence on remote access (& preference)
- Personable, but not necessarily in-person
- Understanding your users



Thank you!

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