

Case Study

SEIU 521 Enhanced Contract Impact Analysis with SpreadsheetWeb

The Challenge

The SEIU 521 is a union with a membership base of 53,000 individuals dispersed across 17 counties in California. The union's primary focus lies in representing and advocating for the rights and benefits of its diverse members. Given the substantial scale of their membership, the challenge at hand was multifaceted. The union's use of spreadsheets was closely tied to computing wage modifications associated with potential contract negotiations. As the union frequently navigates new contracts that workers are on the brink of securing or actively considering, the complexity of accurately projecting the impact of these contracts on individual wages is amplified. This process requires meticulous attention to individual members and the overall implications on the union's collective workforce. The task involves the examination of general wage patterns and carefully identifying variations across different contract types. This challenge of comprehending and illustrating the potential wage adjustments across such a vast and diverse member base necessitated an innovative solution.

The decision to explore a solution for moving their Excel-based tools was driven by the need for a platform to address the multifaceted task. Victor Gamiz, Communications Director of SEIU 521, describes this need: "We needed to be able to illustrate how specific contracts will impact individuals. Rather than a challenge for our team, it's primarily about our capability to illustrate meaningful changes." As a representative union, their responsibility extended beyond conventional calculations – it required them to provide tangible and understandable illustrations of the implications of new contracts on their diverse workforce.

The choice to initially construct the model in Excel was rooted in practicality. "We wanted to accurately display the wages our members would receive following a recent contract settlement. As a result, we constructed a spreadsheet using the existing wages. Utilizing Excel felt like the most straightforward approach for achieving this." Valerie Prigent, Communications Team Lead of SEIU 521. However, the limitations of Excel in presenting these complex wage adjustments in a user-friendly, web-based format became evident. The union recognized that giving these changes dynamically and interactively required a different approach. This recognition led them to explore options beyond traditional spreadsheet software. It ultimately brought them to SpreadsheetWeb as a potential solution that could bridge the gap between intricate calculations and accessible presentation.

The combination of SEIU 521's substantial member base, the diversity of contracts, and the need for transparent communication magnify the complexity that made them seek innovative platforms. SEIU 521 displayed a proactive approach to addressing this multifaceted challenge and ensuring that its members are well-informed about the potential impact of new contracts on their wages.

The Solution

When confronted with illustrating the potential impact of contract adjustments on individuals, SEIU 521 embarked on a journey to find a solution. Their initial exploration led them to consider alternative approaches such as HTML, which, despite its potential, presented challenges due to a need for more expertise in data transfer to the web within their organizational context. The complexities of efficiently transforming data for such a vast membership underscored the need for an effective and user-friendly solution. Tyler Woodard, Campaign Researcher of SEIU 521, describes their experiences with other solutions they have tried: "We were interested in HTML, but found it unusable. I'm still learning to be an expert in efficiently transferring data to the Internet within the organizational context. Ultimately, we tried a plugin. I remember it being necessary because, to the best of my knowledge, running HTML code directly from a dedicated website wasn't feasible."

Valerie describes their journey of founding SpreadsheetWeb as "I think it was 2018. We needed it for a big contract with the county of Santa Clara, and we needed a way to show online what their wages would be after signing the contract, so I researched it on the Internet and found SpreadsheetWeb." Their need to display potential wage adjustments online post-contract signing prompted a comprehensive search for a solution to fulfill this demand.

In their evaluation of solutions, the union acknowledged that while exploring other options, they needed to meet the specific requirements for their diverse membership. SpreadsheetWeb stood out for its unique blend of features and advantages. The capability to seamlessly upload Google Sheets or Excel spreadsheets onto the application and its potential for dynamic presentation aligned well with the union's objectives.

The SEIU 521's decision to embrace SpreadsheetWeb as its solution underscores its commitment to effective communication with its extensive membership base. The product's potential to bridge the gap between intricate wage calculations and accessible web-based presentation

Case Study

resonated with the union's need to empower its members with clear and meaningful insights. This journey showcases how a comprehensive search led them to a solution that catered to the diverse requirements of their membership, transforming their challenge into an opportunity for enhanced communication and transparency.

The Results

Because of their resource constraints, SEIU 521 recognized that the endeavor to custom code an application needed to be more manageable. SpreadsheetWeb emerged as the pragmatic solution, offering a bridge between the complexities of custom coding and the accessibility required to communicate with their extensive membership base effectively.

Upon implementing SpreadsheetWeb to address the unique challenge of illustrating contract impacts on individuals, SEIU 521 witnessed notable outcomes that streamlined their communication efforts and provided a platform for enhanced autonomy. While the transition from Excel files to web applications was a bit complicated for them, the dedicated support received from SpreadsheetWeb during this crucial phase proved invaluable.

The expeditious journey to going live on SpreadsheetWeb in just a matter of days, notably in 2023, marked a significant milestone for the SEIU 521. The presence of dedicated support played a pivotal role in ensuring a swift

and seamless transition. Using an iframe to share the web interface while presenting minor compatibility issues on mobile devices did not deter the union's resolve. They directed users to the mobile version through careful guidance, underscoring their commitment to providing accessible information to their members.

While acknowledging the invaluable responsive assistance provided by the SpreadsheetWeb team, Victor Gamiz expressed SEIU 521's commitment to gradually developing the capability to manage specific updates independently: "We've received comprehensive guidance from your team on how to manage updates ourselves. While the instructions were thorough, we encountered some challenges when implementing them. We were cautious not to disrupt the integrity of our dataset. Overall, we intend to balance leveraging your exceptional support and developing the capability to manage certain updates autonomously."

The SEIU 521's experience with SpreadsheetWeb elucidates a transformation journey – from grappling with intricate wage calculations to providing clear and interactive online representations to their members. The results reflect a strategic transition driven by the union's commitment to their members' well-being and mission to ensure transparent and accessible communication, ultimately highlighting their ability to navigate challenges while embracing innovation.

For more information, please contact:



Pagos, Inc.
75 2nd Ave. Suite 605
Needham, MA 02494, USA
Tel: (860) 674-9100
Fax: (860) 674-8430
info@pagos.com
www.pagos.com