

# The Diff Is Making a Difference in Players' Lives, But Their Website Wasn't —

## Here's How They Fixed It.

By Dawn Siff



Trisha Kroll, The Diff

**T**risha and Alan Kroll met at The University of Kansas, where they were both collegiate athletes -- she was on the volleyball team and he was a swimmer. They both went on to coach youth sports and, after moving to Colorado -- in

2010 they started [The Diff](#), a non-profit whose mission is to “make a positive difference in the lives of athletes by equipping, training and inspiring them to excel in volleyball and in life.” Their name, The Diff, comes from their desire to make a difference in kids' lives -- they also offer mental training and a program called Water's Edge a non-denominational faith-based program aimed at helping kids conquer the challenges of teen years.

Trisha and Alan know how special their program is, but say their website wasn't reflecting it. With LeagueApps' help, they have revamped their website and will be adding more features, like a page to handle the sand tournaments they run, alongside their main team and clinic programming, which are already better served by the improved site. Here are some of the changes they've made thus far and lessons other programs can learn from The Diff's website refresh.

### **A WELL-DESIGNED SITE SHOULD SAVE EVERYONE TIME**

Years ago, websites were like billboards or brochures. They told people about a business, listed location and contact information, but

weren't particularly interactive. Now websites should do much more heavy lifting, especially for businesses and organizations. If your website is well designed, it will save you time by giving people information they need and laying it out clearly. Think of all the times players or parents call you and ask you for information that is already -- or could be on -- your site.

### **Before you begin any work on your website, ask yourself these two questions:**

1. Who is using my site?
2. How are they using it?

### **FOR PLAYERS AND PARENTS CHECKING SCHEDULING**

With four different teams attending practice, training and tournaments The Diff's calendar is a key draw to the website; players, coaches and parents access it constantly. But college coaches and recruiters are also checking in, so Trisha wanted to create different versions of the calendars. “The public one has our general information, so college coaches can see ‘Oh they're going to this tournament, I can see them there.’” And then there's a private version on a separate URL, so players and parents can log in once, then bookmark the link and check it easily and often. And the calendar set-up links to Google calendar, “So all my coaches can make changes on their phones,” which Trisha says has been a huge help for her busy coaching staff.

## FOR COLLEGE COACHES RECRUITING

Coaching elite high school players and helping them get college offers is one key focus of The Diff's program, last year 80% of their girls went on to play college ball.

Trisha wanted to make sure this information was easy to update and easy to find on her new site. "We wanted it to be a site that college coaches could come and get info about our athletes, to know that this girl is committed, where they're committed." So Trisha worked with [LeagueApps Design Shop](#) to create a custom page that highlights athletes and the schools they are attending. Once a player commits to a school, Trisha and is able to enter the player's name and easily display the school name and team mascot alongside the girl's name, providing a simple at-a-glance view. "We've had coaches that have said, 'I really appreciate going to

address. "If I'm training a boys basketball team, I wanted them to be able to go to their own website and not have to go through girls' volleyball -- that didn't make any sense," she said. This will help Trisha and Alan better market new programs as they branch out with additional offerings to the youth of their community. Across the top of the site there is a toolbar that clearly displays all their program offerings, along with a log-in button for parents, so they can bookmark the URL and quickly find the information they need each time they visit.

## FOR PEOPLE ON THE GO - ON PHONES

The Diff's coaches love being able to make updates to practice schedules from their phones, but they're not alone in relying on mobile. Sixty-percent of LeagueApps users -- organizers, coaches, parents and players across the country -- access the platform on mobile, and that group is growing every



**"We wanted it to be a site that college coaches could come and get info about our athletes, to know that this girl is committed, where they're committed."**



your website and being able to know immediately if this girls committed or not." As an added benefit, Trisha said, "I've had future players' parents say, 'It's impressive the girls that you've committed.'" Before the revamp, they had school commitments up on the site, but it wasn't as simple and clean, Trisha says.

## FOR MARKETING DIFFERENT PROGRAMS

Trisha says the website is still a work in progress, but she's excited it will have separate pages, or URLs, for people who are coming for the additional training programs The Diff offers, like Mental Toughness. The page is linked to The Diff's volleyball program, but has its own separate

day. Websites need to be mobile-optimized, meaning information will be easy to read and navigate on a cell phone or tablet. And the site needs to load quickly. According to data released by Google, half of people searching will give up if a site takes longer than three seconds to load.<sup>1</sup> The Diff's new site loads quickly and is easy to navigate from a phone.

## FOR NEW VISITORS

One glance at The Diff's homepage and it's easy to see programs they offer and the values they serve. Trisha and Alan put their mission statement across

<sup>1</sup>[Think with Google](#): 53% of websites are abandoned if a mobile site takes more than three seconds to load.

the top: "To make a positive difference in the lives of athletes by equipping, training, and inspiring them to excel both in volleyball and in life." One click away, their "About Us" page tells the story of their founding, alongside a family picture. "We wanted to show this is a family-run organization, that we care deeply about developing young adults," Trisha said. The website is dynamic, with scrolling pictures and lots of clickable images so newcomers can easily explore, and it features a "News" section with the latest from their social media channels, giving the site a dynamic and fresh feel.



**“Make sure you have a website that does your product justice”** — Trisha Kroll

### ADDING NEW FEATURES

Trisha is still adding new features to The Diff's website, exploring the ways they can save time and solve problems by accessing more capabilities with LeagueApps' help throughout the process. The Diff plans to add tournament hosting next. Once an organization uses LeagueApps it's easy to add all types of sports programs to a website, including tournament registrations and waiver collection. And Trisha says, LeagueApps technology team has been there every step of the way. "LeagueApps makes us feel like we have a personal trainer, just in charge of us. Every question we have gets answers within 4-6 hours. And all the training made us feel ownership, like we can use more of the product. We didn't know how to work our old website properly," Trisha says.

Trisha offers this advice to fellow organizers who are giving their website a second look, "Make sure you have a website that does your product justice. I feel like we have a great product, but we hadn't been able to display it the way we can now -- and to be able to grow it. Now we have the capability to do so much more." ■

**Is your website working for you?  
LeagueApps can help.**

Find out how our Design Shop can save you time and help you grow your program. [Click here.](#)