Published on *University of Colorado* (https://www.cu.edu)

CU I&E Submission: Crafting a Story with CU's Financials [1]

Team Information

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Description

The Office of University Controller is responsible for preparing CU's annual financial statements. These statements are a deep dive into CU's financials and provide an in-depth look into CU's financial position. While very valuable, this report can be very difficult to understand and many in the CU community may not fully grasp what the statements are saying. This year, we decided to take a closer look at what the financial statements are actually saying and create a website that tells that story. This is in addition to the annual report website we produce every year.

This new website incorporates a 3 minute video that features University Controller Bob Kuehler, to tell this story. We built the website so that it incorporates the same design as the video. This creates a seamless experience. Users can also navigate through the website and get the same story segmented into chunks. This segmented approach to the information has been parsed from the financial statements and incorporated into the video and website to tell the story behind CU’s financials. This approach allows all users across CU to better understand what the financial statements are actually saying.

How does this benefit the University?

By crafting a story around CU's financials we are able to help more people understand what the financial statements are saying. We are helping CU's employees better understand our financial position and what that means. It is difficult to compare the financial statements from year to year, but by continuing to apply this model to those statements, it is much easier for users to look back at previous years to make a comparison.

This narrative approach simplifies the financial report to a point that any user can quickly look at and understand what is going on at CU. This is a much more efficient approach to presenting the financial data.

Implementation/Future Plans

This was implemented in December of 2018. We plan to continue using this model for

upcoming Annual financial reports. This method of presenting information can be adapted to any content, especially content that can be difficult to understand or perceived as "dry".

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Links
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