

Pratt Center for Community Development

Leadership for Urban Equality Policy and Practices

The Pratt Center for Community Development is a unique public policy and community development nonprofit, working in NYC's 5 boroughs and with local government promoting research, policies, and practices that create more sustainable, equitable urban communities. Unfortunately, after 50 years of tireless work on behalf of New York's communities, Pratt Center's brand had become confused, and a dated website failed to properly reflect their efforts and impact. In an increasingly crowded Community Development Organization landscape, Pratt Center found itself falling short of their reputation as the pioneer in ensuring a more equitable and sustainable New York City for all. They tasked MSDS with developing brand strategy, visual identity, and a website to better focus their mission and bring their values, research, and impact back to the forefront.



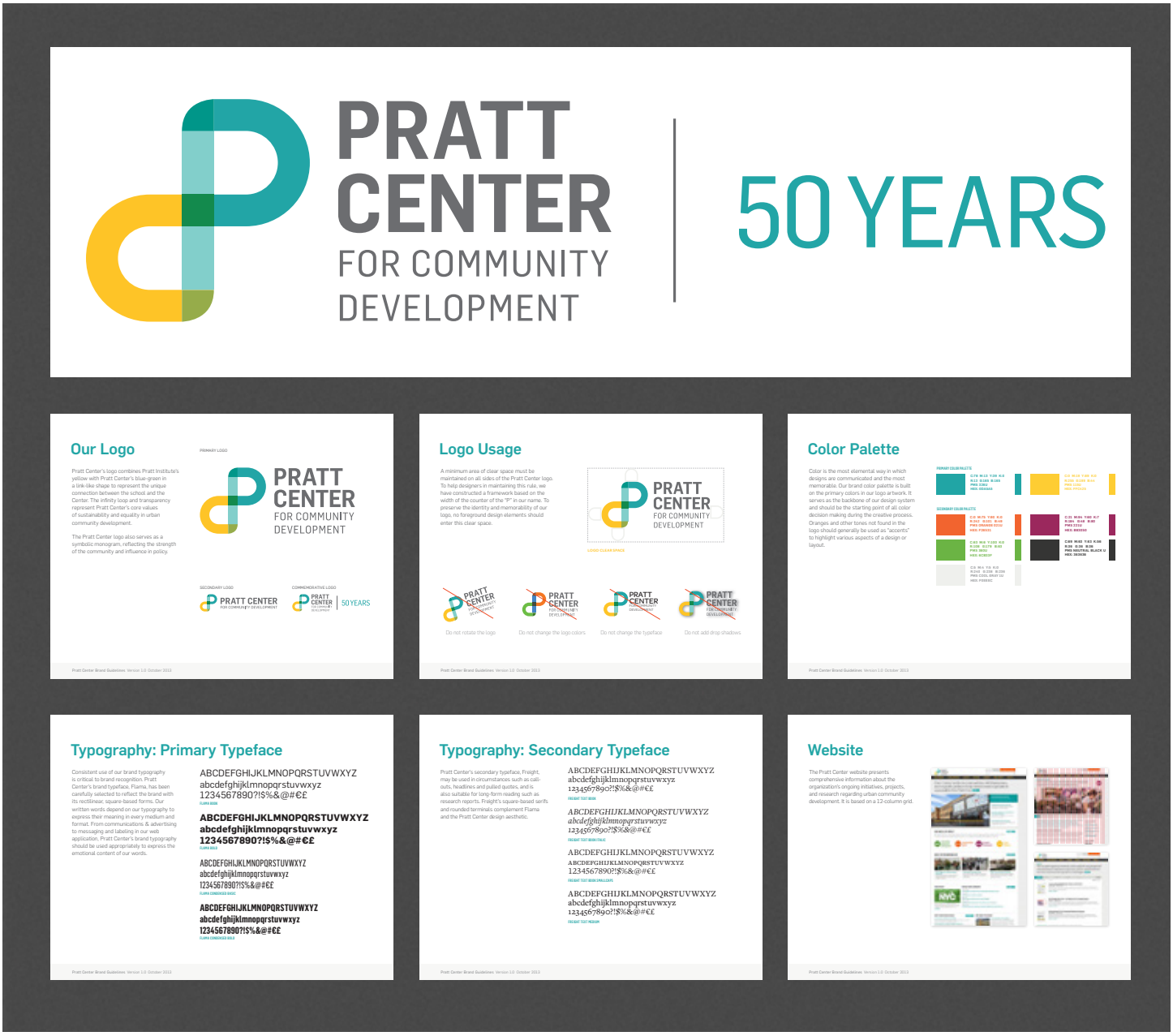
Pratt Center.net: Before Redesign

The Pratt Center's existing website was disorganized, confusing, and text-heavy, failing to clearly communicate the organization's core positions and mission. Pratt Center's areas of expertise, programs, and research were heavily disconnected from the issues and challenges they worked to address. The site also suffered from a limited set of simplistic page templates, a difficult-to-use CMS and limited typographic controls that made engaging audiences near-impossible. Aesthetically, a dated design failed to embrace Pratt Center's New York roots or create a connection with the NYC communities they've partnered with for 50 years to create positive, sustainable change.



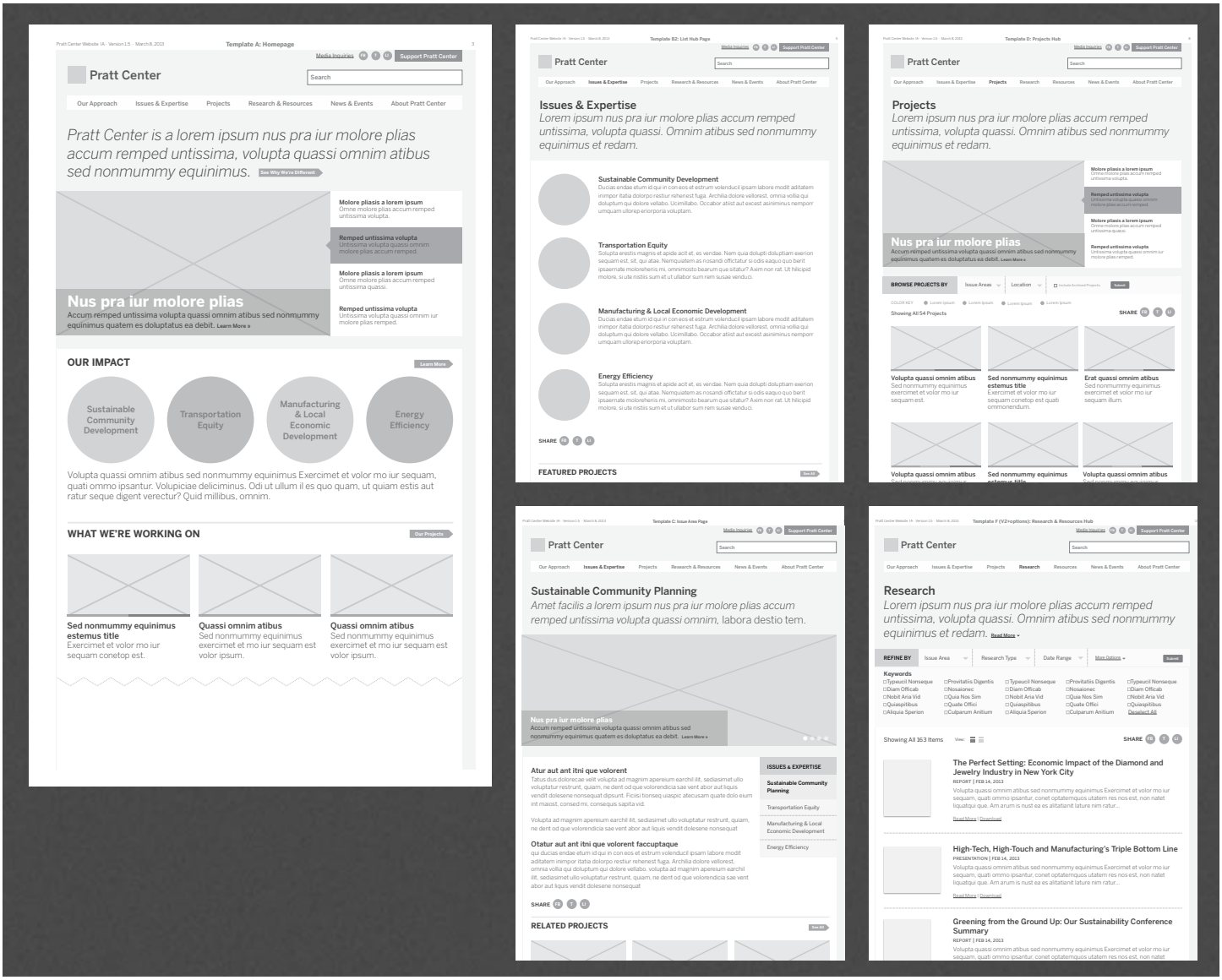
Brand Strategy, Messaging

We partnered with Pratt Center, leading collaborative workshops to sharpen focus on how their history, values and expertise differentiated them from others in their market space. We then helped better align their programs to reflect this brand value, developing a core messaging platform and Brand Handbook to provide a strategic foundation for all creative development.



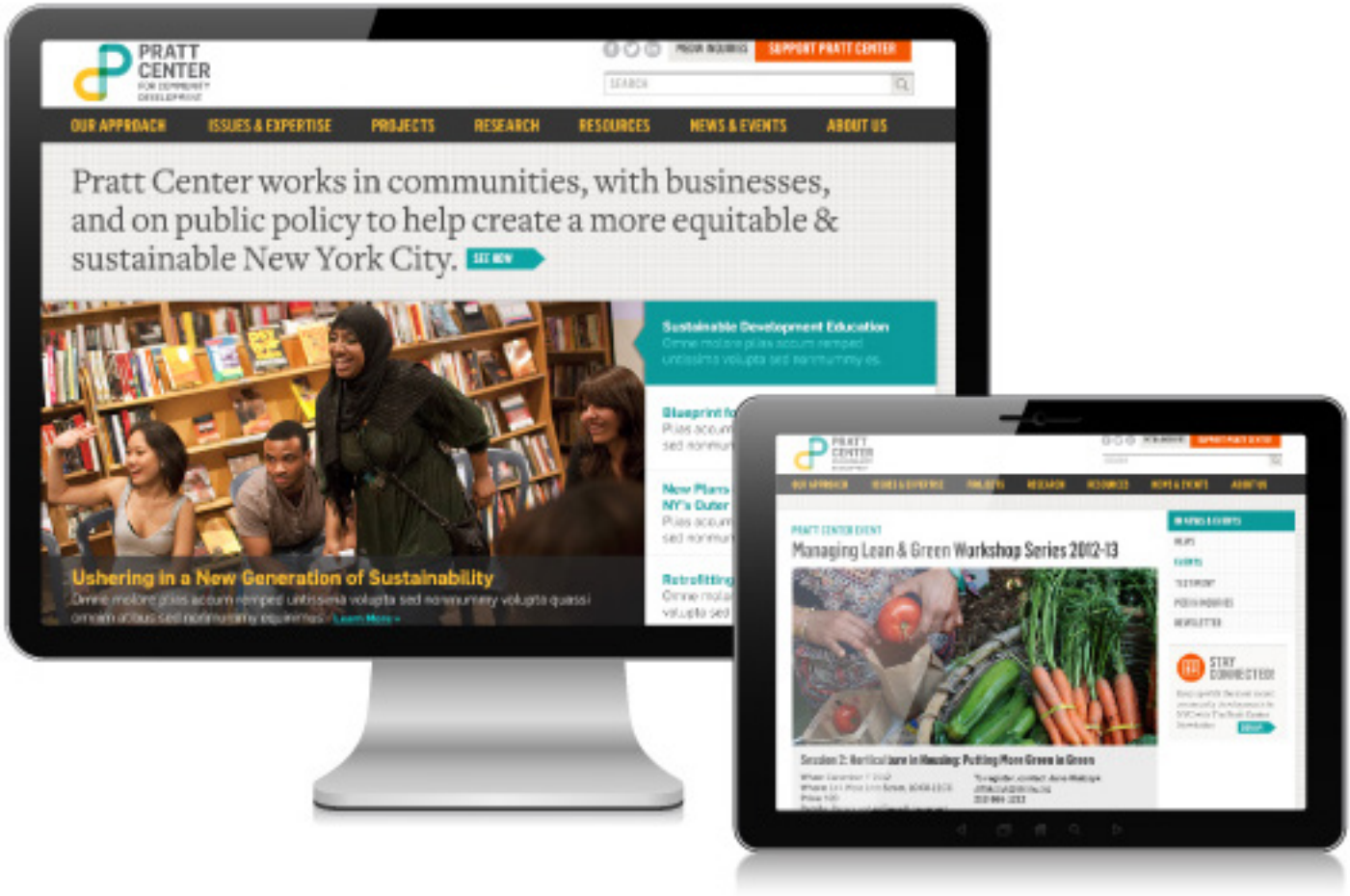
The Pratt Center: Visual Branding

After defining new brand strategy and positioning, we designed new visual branding that embodies Pratt Center's values and help them stand apart as an innovative leader in sustainable community development. The mark combines the letters "P," "C," and "D," using color overlays to represent Pratt Center's commitment to transparency with community and government partners, as well as their overlapping, shared interests. The balanced infinity loop suggests sustainability and equality, while collaboration between business, government and people is represented by the logo's 2 central loops coming together.



Content Strategy & User Experience

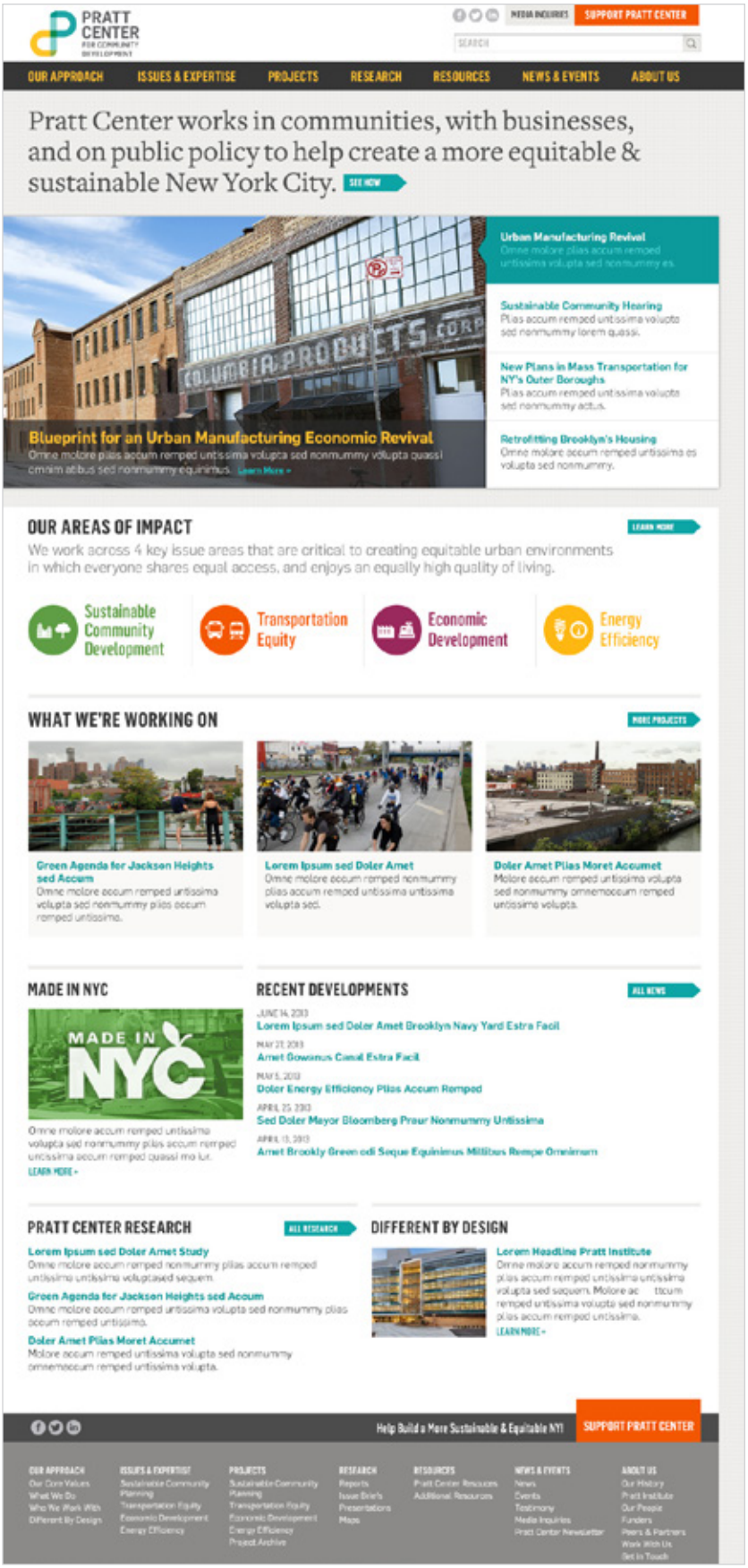
With clarity on their mission, goals, and the needs of their audience, we developed content strategy that aligns the key issues with Pratt Center's areas of expertise and their research, policy work, programs, and events. Rich content taxonomies structure information to support dynamic relationships by topic, region, keyword, and expert. Content strategy is united with information architecture, resulting in a comprehensive system of content-driven pages that deliver a user-centric experience. Technical strategy supports the user experience, making site management easy with a CMS that supports both featured content curation and automating, dynamic site publishing. The result helps users explore based on their needs and interests, while Pratt Center elevates things they'd like to make sure get noticed along the way.

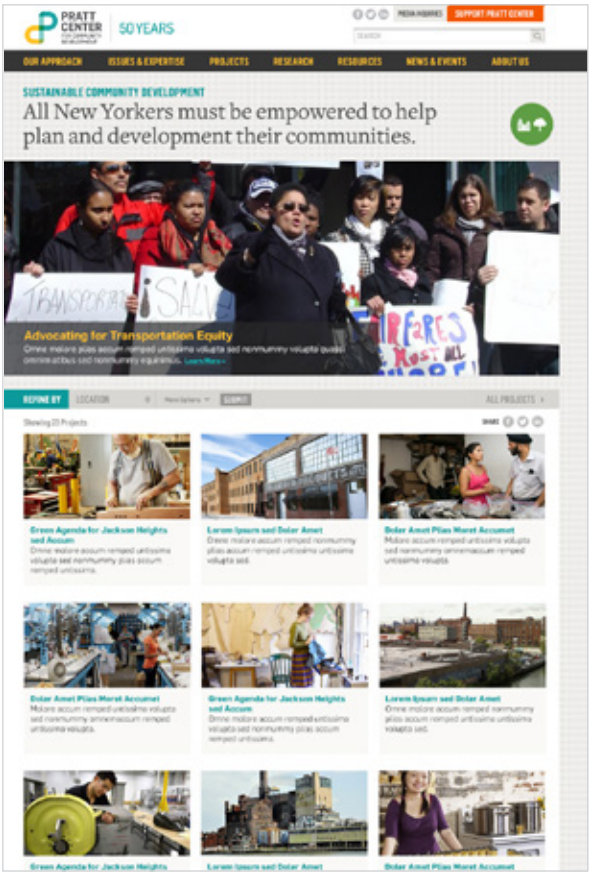


Website Design & Development

With everything in place, we set out on transforming Pratt Center's previously confusing website into the centerpiece of their organizational and communications strategies. Applying Pratt Center's new visual branding, our design team united brand, content, and technology to deliver an user experience that presents Pratt Center as a vibrant community advocate and thought-leader for a more sustainable and equitable New York City. Pratt Center's new system of brand colors, typography, and iconography give life to the site's interface while structuring the user experience and content by 4 core issue areas. Combined with photos from the field, the new site delivers a warm, urban aesthetic that reflects the organization's progressive NYC roots.

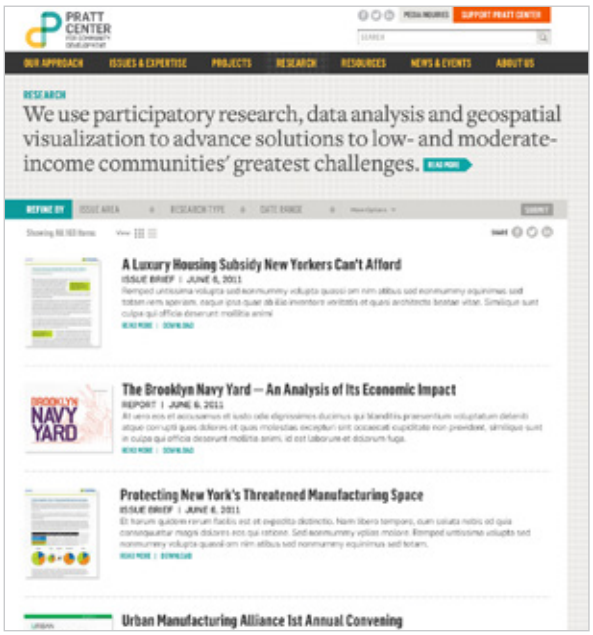
On the back-end, Pratt Center's custom Drupal CMS gives staff full control over all of their site's structured content, with admin tools that make it easy to create and move pages, add and edit, maintaining global templates and styles, and a host of other features that make site management more efficient.


PRATT CENTER
SUPPORT PRATT CENTER
OUR APPROACH
ISSUES & EXPERTISE
PROJECTS
RESEARCH
RESOURCES
NEWS & EVENTS
ABOUT US
Pratt Center works in communities, with businesses, and on public policy to help create a more equitable & sustainable New York City.
Blueprint for an Urban Manufacturing Economic Revival
OUR AREAS OF IMPACT
We work across 4 key issue areas that are critical to creating equitable urban environments in which everyone shares equal access, and enjoys an equally high quality of living.
Sustainable Community Development
Transportation Equity
Economic Development
Energy Efficiency
WHAT WE'RE WORKING ON
MADE IN NYC
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
PRATT CENTER RESEARCH
DIFFERENT BY DESIGN
Help Build a More Sustainable & Equitable NY!
SUPPORT PRATT CENTER


PRATT CENTER
50 YEARS
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
All New Yorkers must be empowered to help plan and development their communities.
Advocating for Transportation Equity


PRATT CENTER
ISSUES & EXPERTISE
Pratt Center works for a more just, equitable and sustainable city for all New Yorkers, with a cross-disciplinary focus on four issue areas.
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PLANNING
TRANSPORTATION EQUITY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ENERGY EFFICIENCY
FEATURED PROJECTS







Our Client's Take

"Working with MSDS was a bit like suddenly having our own in-house branding department. They really understand non-profits, took the time to understand us and acted creative experts and organizational advocates. We started with brand strategy and positioning; time well spent. MSDS pushed us to verbalize the strategy and theory behind our work, encouraged us talk about our projects and research; then developed messaging and a website that reflect it all. Their team was friendly, accessible and responsive throughout, from management to technical developers. It's been a challenging, yet immensely rewarding experience."

Janelle Farris, Director of Operations