



## Richland County, SC

### Fewer clicks, more compliant: Richland County's award-winning website redesign

#### OVERVIEW

Richland County set out to overhaul a decade-old website that was difficult for residents to navigate and burdensome for staff to maintain. The county launched a complete digital transformation in record time — thanks to committed leadership, data-driven planning, cross-department collaboration, and powerful government technology. Using a variety of Granicus solutions, the county delivered a mobile-friendly, resident-centered digital experience that achieved award-winning results.

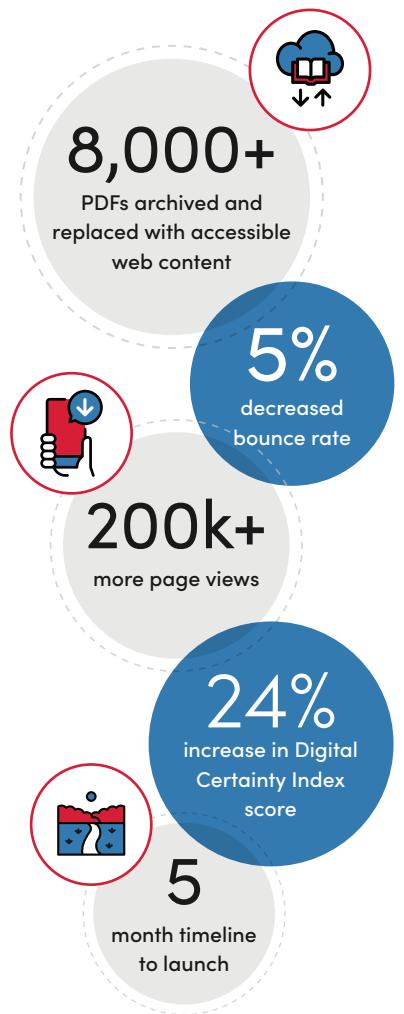
#### SITUATION | TOO MANY CLICKS FOR A GROWING COMMUNITY

Richland County's 2013-built website was showing its age; the site was organized by internal work groups, was not mobile-friendly, and required multiple steps for citizens to locate basic services. The Information Technology team faced rising maintenance costs, an on-premise system to constantly patch, and inconsistent content created by more than 100 departmental editors.

Residents also reported frustration: too many clicks, unclear terminology, and difficulty completing tasks online. Meanwhile, accessibility standards and new ADA expectations added urgency to the need for modernization.

#### MUST HAVE SOLUTIONS

##### Service Cloud



“People want to engage with the county digitally. Having online service delivery goes a long way toward empowering our citizens.”

Brian Fitzgerald | Deputy Chief Information Officer | Richland County



## SOLUTION | DEEPER, DATA-DRIVEN UNDERSTANDING

Over just five months, the county partnered with Granicus to rebuild the website from the ground up, starting with extensive data gathering. Surveys, interviews, heatmaps, and analytics helped the county understand exactly where residents struggled. This insight guided a complete reorganization of the site structure: language was rewritten in plain terms, content was grouped around user-friendly categories, and the most-used services were elevated to the top of the homepage through a simplified menu.

**“We looked at all the metrics and worked with Granicus to get people exactly where they want to go online in as few clicks as possible,”** said Kyle Holsclaw, chief information officer at Richland County. **“We are now getting end users exactly where they want to go quicker. We’re making it easy; they don’t need a roadmap or a spreadsheet or somebody to tell them where to find information online.”**

At the same time, Richland County expanded its service capabilities by adopting Granicus’ Forms & Workflow solution (OpenForms) to digitize workflows previously reliant on paper. They also transitioned away from MailChimp to Granicus’ Communications capability (govDelivery), moved FOIA processing to Granicus’ Records Request Management tool (GovQA), and are currently implementing Granicus’ Service Request Management (SRM) solution.

A major accelerator of the project’s success was the steering committee. Composed only of decision-makers, the group was empowered to make real-time approvals during the redesign process. This eliminated bottlenecks and allowed the team to move from development to launch in just five months.

## RESULTS | SERVICE-FOCUSED PATHWAYS

Following the launch of the new website, the county saw immediate improvements in both resident engagement and operational efficiency. With clearer navigation and service-focused pathways, residents can now reach essential services in one or two clicks instead of navigating a maze of department-specific pages. **This ease of use contributed to dramatic improvements in the following areas:**

- ✔ **220,000+** additional quarterly pageviews.
- ✔ Digital Certainty Index score **increased from 72 to 89** (well above industry benchmark of 80).
- ✔ **5%** decreased bounce rate.
- ✔ **8,000+** PDFs archived and replaced with accessible web content.
- ✔ Help Desk tickets from the public related to the website **have fallen to nearly zero.**



One of the most intensive undertakings was a review of more than 8,000 PDFs. The team categorized, evaluated, archived, or converted documents into accessible live text, modernizing the content and improving accessibility and searchability. Also, instead of more than 100 editors publishing independently, web updates are now routed through IT staff trained in accessibility.

**Other results from the redesign project include:**

- **IT professionals have gained time to focus on new projects.** Moving away from an on-premise system eliminated frequent patches, version upgrades, database work, and security concerns.
- **Staff can now swiftly post and adjust notices from any location.** This flexibility improved the county's responsiveness during closures, storms, and rapidly evolving situations.
- **The project fostered greater collaboration and alignment.** Departments across the county appreciated participating in listening sessions on how a redesigned website could alleviate their unique pain points, improve efficiency, and reduce workloads.

**Richland County emerged (in record time) with a modern digital infrastructure that set the stage for continued innovation – and won a Granicus Digital Government Award for “Website of the Year,” to boot.**

*This story highlights the hard work and innovation that earned Richland County recognition as a winner in the 15th Annual **Granicus Digital Government Awards**, honoring exceptional achievements in digital government.*

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