# College Best Practices

A Customization Guide for Your WebsiteAlive Account

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# What is the Best Way To Customize Live Chat And Set It Up For Maximum Effectiveness?

Customization options for your chat look are nearly limitless with WebsiteAlive. Bold designs, prominent placement and proactive pop-ups will attract attention and increase chat rates. More chats means more immediate communications with future and current students - and even parents!

A few key phrases we will be covering in this section:

**Call-to-Action** - Call-to-Action is the button or link used to call attention and direct your website's traffic to initiating a chat.

**Location** - the location of the Call-to-Action is as important as the call to action itself.

**Invitations and Proactive Pop-ups** - target and invite website visitors to chat.

**Presentation** - present your live chat as a comfortable experience for your website visitors.

# Call-to-Action: Location, Invitation and Presentation

Customizing your call-to-action has a little more depth than simply making buttons or images reflect your website's look and feel. In fact, there is an actual science to it and statistics to back it up.

Standards are beginning to emerge in the Live Communication industry. Not surprisingly these standards aren't defined solely by the technology creators. Instead, backed by research and experience. It works closely with users of this technology to create a seamless student experience across various websites.

Here are a few select Live Chat call-to-action buttons that are most inviting either as a static call-to-action or a proactive pop-up.
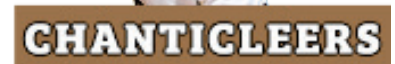


Blake Austin College



Coastal Carolina

Chanticleers



UTSA Roadrunners

# Locations

Placement of the call-to-action is becoming quite standard as more and more college websites are embracing Live Communication technology.

Similar to a "like" or "follow" button by our friends in social media industry, call-to-action location is expected to be in one of three places, if not all the three.

1.    Within the header or main navigation menu
2.    Attached to the bottom or side of the browser in a fixed location
3.    Within the body as either a text or static image button

Note this eye-catching example of effective call-to-action position within the website.
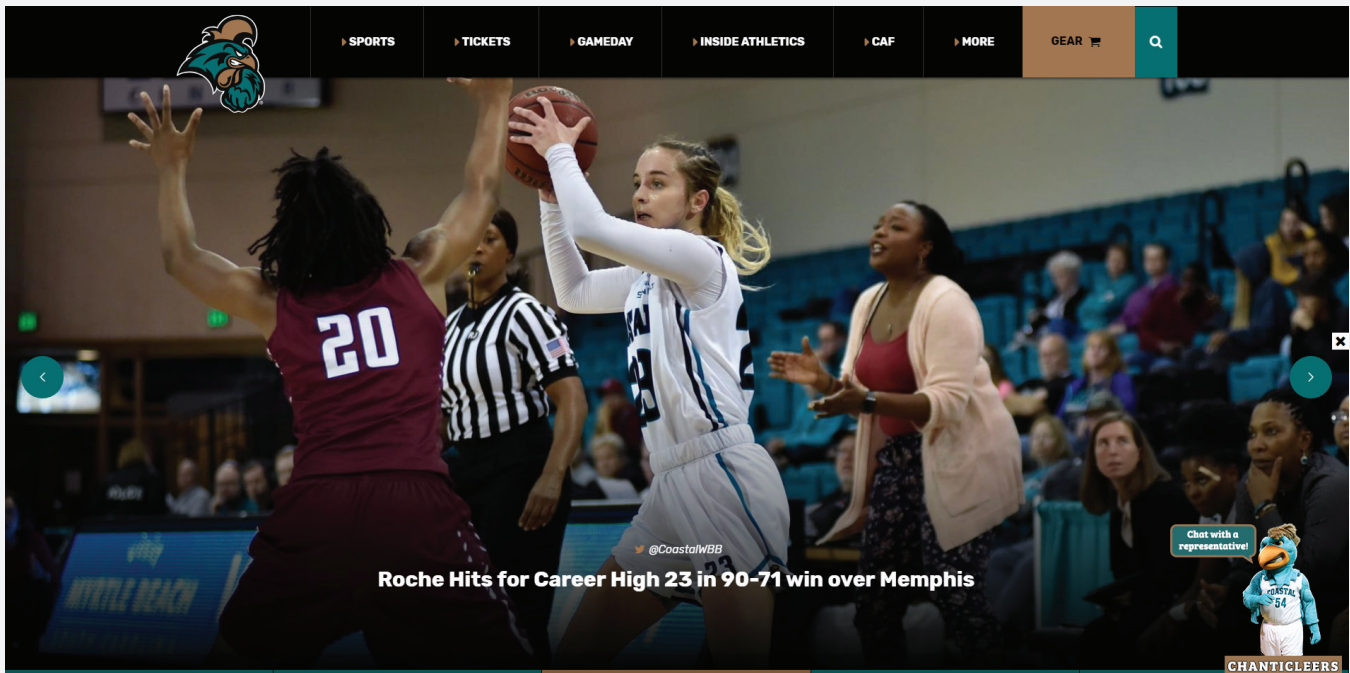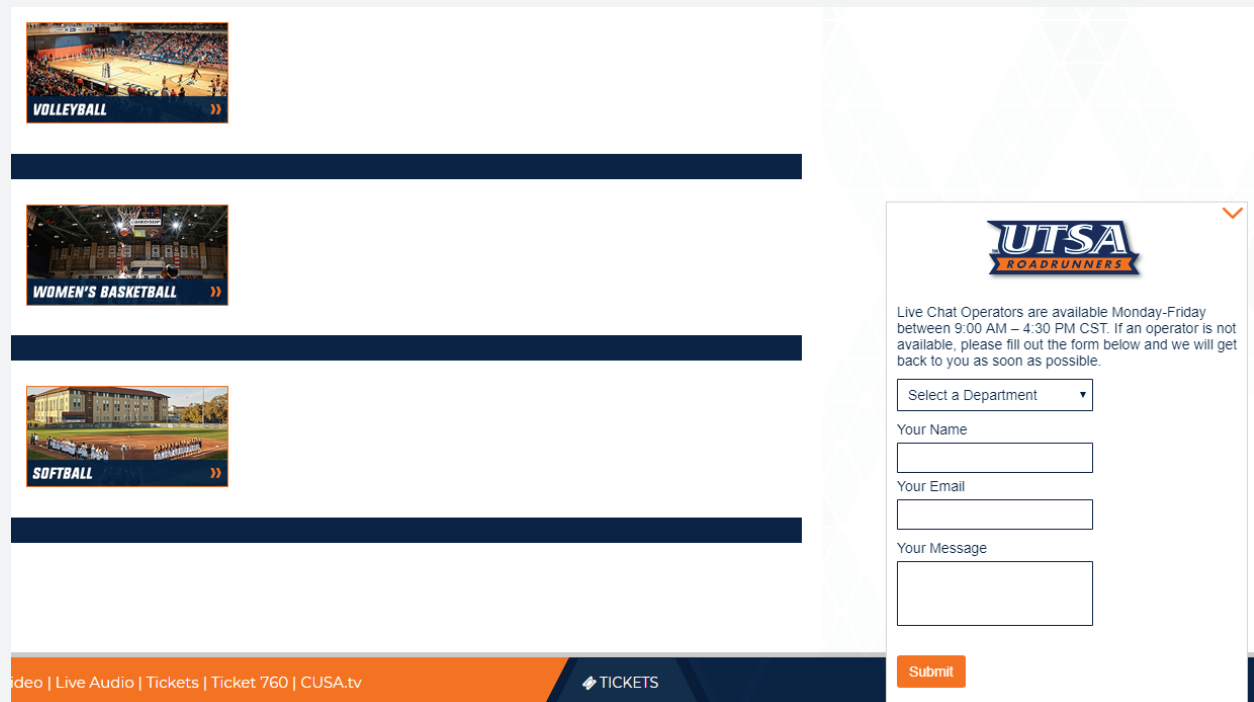
# Offline Mode

When offline, either after-hours or when stepping away from your desk, you can enable offline-mode which automatically converts your live chat form into an offline lead form. Once this form is filled out, that message is then sent to your live chat agents via email or via the live chat agent panel, or both. These options are adjustable to suit your needs and goals.

With AliveChat you also have the option to have the chat button disappear after hours.

Here we see UTSA displaying details about agent hours. If an agent is unavailable, the chat automatically becomes an offline lead form.

# Invitation - Proactive Pop-ups

Some colleges have gone a step further using call-to-action as a proactive invitation or what we at WebsiteAlive call a proactive pop-up. This call-to-action is very useful as it provides live chat agents the ability to target website visitors with at-will invitations or as a rule-based invitation, such as time or pages visited. WebsiteAlive fully supports call-to-action invitation methods. More chats often means less phone call and therefore, less overhead.

## Target Website Vistor

This proactive pop-up is triggered by a live chat agent for a website visitor that is spending a lengthy amount of time on the support page.

# Typical Proactive Pop-Up

This proactive pop-up is triggered after 45 seconds of being on the website but you can set time increments to fir your needs.

# Presentation

Once you've decided on the best course for your call-to-action location and invitation standard you can then easily plan your presentation. Some basic guidelines on presentation best practices are:

Create and style your buttons according to your website's theme, style and branding. Many colleges use mascots, for example. Using stock chat buttons for live chat can be effective but integrating customized styled buttons allows your visitors to feel as if your chat option is a full solution rather than an after thought.

Add a face. Adding a face to your call-to-action or even a stock photo can present a warm, more personal invitiation for your students and their parents to come and chat with you.

If you offer live communication for one department, consider adding it for other departments if possible. The program becomes increasingly cost-effective as you add additional departments. And remember, chats can be routed by departments to agents who cover those chats.

One common mistake is only inviting visitors to communicate on the main website or department page. If it works on the one page, place it on all the pages associated with that department in the same location or as close as possible. Don't force students and future students to search for your live chat option - make it obvious and easy to use.

# User Interface: Design Cheat Sheet

One of the greatest features within WebsiteAlive's full solution software is the ability to customize your chat box interface, not just your call-to-action buttons.

Designing and customizing your chat box interface is very similar to building your website or a piece of your website, where you match design to branding, utilize other portions of your web template for consistency, and tie the whole thing together. The result is visitors have an easy, at-a-glance understanding of where things are and how they work.

Below are a few of the ways users can customize their user interface.

**One-Piece Background and Logo Design:**
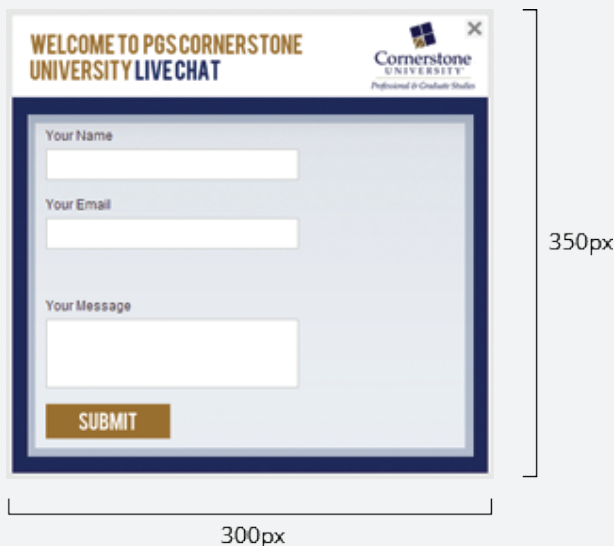


Traditionally WebsiteAlive users insert a background image, color or leave it blank, then load their logo in through the input interface within the Administrator Panel. An alternative to this is combining the logo and background into one single image and then removing the logo field from the settings. This is most useful for those users who like to have their chat on multiple websites or within an iFrame, automatically enabled when the website visitor opens the page. Again, many colleges use their mascots as part of the chat look.
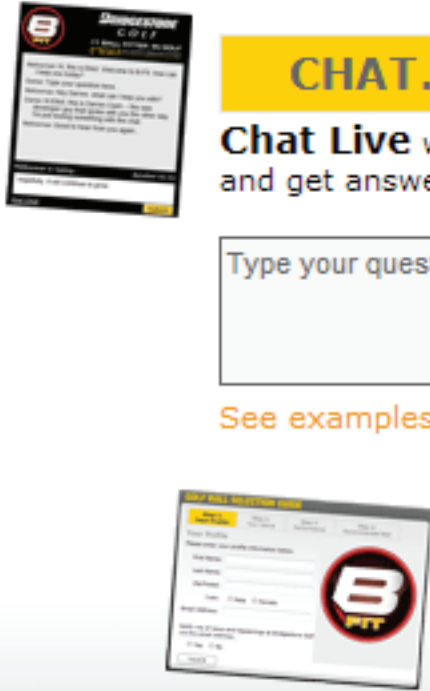
## iFrame Interface Placement:

Often users would like to weave or embed the user interface right into their website and this is possible by calling the correct WebsiteAlive Live Chat interface path into your iFrame code.

## iFrame Sample Code:

1. Place the Live Chat code on a blank page.
2. Add the following iFrame code to your website with the proper URL

```
<iframe src="http://www.yourLiveChatPage.com" width="300px" height="350px"></iframe>
```

3. Adjust the width and height to match your Live Chat user interface size.

# We're Here To Support You!

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**Troubleshooting Issues**
Should you need assistance with your AliveChat service, you have many options.

Find answers by clicking Support at www.websitealive.com
Note the keyword search option- top right of webpage; click the topic and helpful information will appear.

**General Contacts**
Call us at 888-696-4513.
Chat with us at http://ellucian-start.websitealive.com/
Sales - sales@websitealive.com
Support - support@websitealive.com

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