

Project Report-Out & Lessons Learned

Document



Group F

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Business Need/Opportunity

As part of course-based learning activities, to work alongside the Community Foundation, Reach Autism Learning in exploring new and innovative web designs that allow these charities to efficiently and effectively communicate their organizations mission/vision/values, their programming/services, and calls to action. High-level guidelines, principles, constraints, & assumptions include:

- Design approach: Design Thinking (Agile)/Fast Feedback Cycle
- License: Creative Commons Share & Share Alike (CC BY-SA 4.0)
- Technology/Programming environment: StoriesOnBoard (Tim/Adam will be creating user accounts), Figma, WordPress, Local by Flywheel, GitHub (public repository required)
- Initial design notes

Basic website criteria

Home page

- Engaging and inviting
- Place to highlight relevant and timely content

Contact Page

- Includes various ways to engage with the charity (phone number, email, address, social media, etc.)

Call to Action Page

- Must have a clear call to action (to donate, or engage in other ways applicable)

About Page

- Who the charity is, their mission/vision/values, other information about the charity (how they started, who makes up their staff/board, etc.)

Programs/Services

- Should be able to communicate what programs/services the charity provides to the public

Current website pain points to solve

- Make the call to action and donate clear, easy to use, and easy to find
- Ensure the design accounts for easy maintenance and content upkeep
- Try to create designs that can scale up easily
- Explore what should be on a home page, and make the home page inviting/engaging

Project Planning, Execution, & Closing

Northstar

Parents or guardians of young children with autism who need extra resources to help them learn.

Carryover

Family donors and volunteers looking to help children with autism.

Project Assumptions

In the beginning of the semester we had made 7 assumptions about the project; 1) We would need to use Wordpress, 2) The navigation needs to be restructured, 3) Redundancy has to be removed, 4) The homepage is to be redesigned, 5) Images need to be more organized, 6) The page hierarchy is to be reshaped, 7) The site is to be user friendly and accessible.

Project Constraints

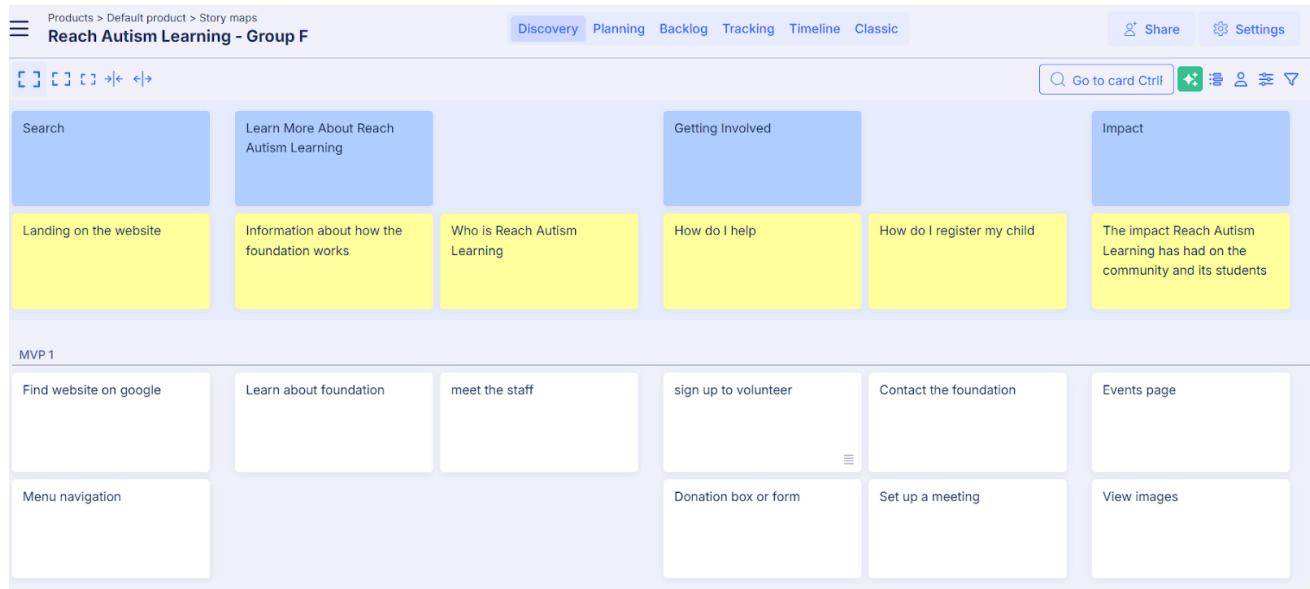
We encountered 3 major constraints: 1) Content available to us is sparse - i.e. not many assets original to the foundation, 2) Legality of donor name placements, 3) Wordpress not having the ability to fully encase our ideas that Figma could.

Summary from Affinity diagramming and empathy mapping

The website needs to be easy to navigate, clearly showing who the organization is and what they do so visitors stay engaged. It must also be simple to maintain, allowing the founder to update content without technical difficulty. Improving visibility on Google especially for keywords like “Autism Saskatchewan” is essential for broader community reach. A more professional, secure, and user-friendly donation platform is needed to replace the current manual Square system. The site should also build emotional trust and effectively attract volunteers by clearly communicating the importance of the organization’s work.

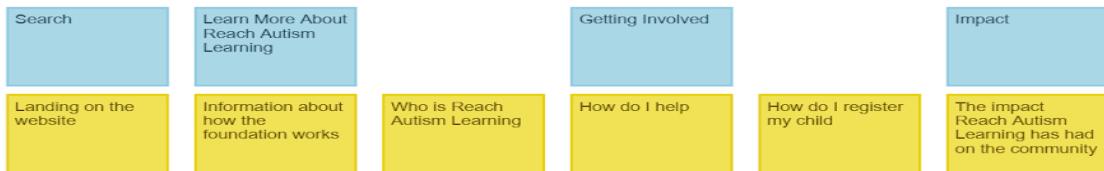
The initial & evolution of USM/MVP

Our initial MVP focused only on the core tasks users needed – finding the website, learning about the foundation, navigating pages, volunteering, donating, and contacting the organization. The updated MVP adds resources, sponsorship information, testimonials, and a founder’s message to improve trust and clarity based on user feedback. What we produced is still an MVP because it includes only the minimum set of features required to test essential user flows and validate our assumptions.



Initial USM

1 - 1



MVP 1



Unscheduled



Updated USM

Summary of prototyping activities and usability evaluation findings

Before	After

We proposed making a donation pop-up → Customers were satisfied with this proposal → So we made the donation pop-up menu.

Before	After

We felt the site needed a more organized menu structure, separating main menus from submenus. → We organized “our story”, “our staff”, “our sponsors” and “our services” into “who we are”.

Before	After

This page had so much text information, so we thought the text contents have to be more summarized and easy to read → We summarized the contents and made them more visible with polygons.

Before	After
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We thought this home page didn't represent their vision and what kind of organization it is. →
Customers wanted to show who they are and what their vision is.

Design Principles



Signifier

The message of "Do you want to Donate" helps users to find the way to donate.

Submit



Successfully Submitted!

Feedback

If users click "Submit" button, it will be change to "Successfully Submitted!" and indicate normal processing



Affordance - Users can perceive the arrows as the button to go next content or prior content.

Mapping - The right arrow means going to next content and the left arrow means going to prior content.

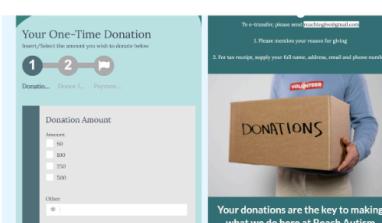
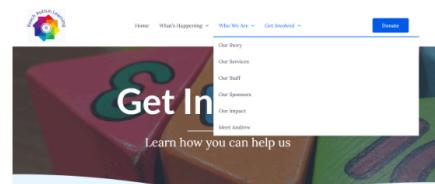


Gestalt

Similarity by using the same shapes and separating the information in coloured row blocks



Mapping - The telephone icon means telephone numbers , the letter envelope icon means email addresses and the home icon means location of the organization.



Signifier

The messages such as "Insert/Select the amount you wish to donate below", "Please mention your reason for giving" indicate what users should do.

Feedback

If users put their cursor to menu of "Who We Are" and "Get Involved", they show the sub menus and the blue text - submenu means where users put their cursor.

Summary of WordPress solution

Before	After
<p>Puzzles Designed to stimulate cognitive development, enhance fine motor skills, and encourage focus, puzzles offer a structured yet playful way for individuals with autism to grow and connect.</p> <p>Picture Books These sessions use visually rich, narrative-driven books to create a structured and engaging environment where children can explore language, emotions, and interpersonal cues at their own pace.</p> <p>Counting Card This method leverages the strengths of many autistic learners such as pattern recognition and visual processing—while gently building foundational math and language skills.</p> <p>Building Blocks This simple yet versatile activity becomes a powerful therapeutic tool when guided by a trained professional, helping children on the autism spectrum build foundational math and language skills.</p>	<p>Building Blocks Designed to stimulate cognitive development, enhance fine motor skills, and encourage focus, puzzles offer a structured yet playful way for individuals with autism to grow and connect.</p> <p>Picture Books These sessions use visually rich, narrative-driven books to create a structured and engaging environment where children can explore language, emotions, and interpersonal cues at their own pace.</p> <p>Puzzles This simple yet versatile activity becomes a powerful therapeutic tool when guided by a trained professional, helping children on the autism spectrum build foundational math and language skills.</p> <p>Counting Cards This simple yet versatile activity becomes a powerful therapeutic tool when guided by a trained professional, helping children on the autism spectrum build foundational math and language skills.</p>

Customers review: One box on the links is smaller /Add more color(Bring in more fun elements like in the HFP) → We added colorful icons and removed the rectangular frames

Before	After
<p>Main Office Contacts +1 306-737-0475 +1 306-737-4122 Monday – Friday from 7am – 5pm</p> <p>Regina, Saskatchewan Office Address 3058 Harding Street, S4V 1N6</p> <p>E-mail us angela.fink@sasktel.net glennfink2892@gmail.com</p>	<p>Contact Email, Call or Stop by</p> <p>Main Office Contacts +1 306-737-0475 +1 306-737-4122 Monday – Friday from 7am – 5pm</p> <p>Regina, Saskatchewan Office Address 3058 Harding Street, S4V 1N6 Come and stop by!</p> <p>E-mail us angela.fink@sasktel.net glennfink2892@gmail.com</p>

Customers review: Boxes are not same size, color boxes, More fun elements here
→ We made the colors of each box different and aligned the size of the boxes. Also we added more design stuff.

Before	After
<p>Reach Autism Learning is a Non-Profit Charity organization that offers support for one-on-one play based support for preschool, school age and young adults.</p> <p>DONATE</p> <p>We are here to reach families and children living with autism</p>	<p>CONTACT US</p> <p>VOLUNTEER</p> <p>DONATIONS</p>

From Questionnaire: Peers dislike sticky button/ Preferred for the entire header scroll down with the donate button/ donate button feels like a pop-up

- We made the header stick to the top of a screen, so users don't need to scroll up.
- We made the donate button move with the header
- We removed the donation pop-up

Reflections on Project Results

How we felt about this project & What we would do (same/differently) on future projects

Deran Cross	I enjoyed working on this project. I would continue having regular customer meetings and evaluations. The feedback gained from these meetings was what helped the most in figuring out how to design the site. One thing I would do differently is to either try and utilize different content management systems for future designs, or gain a better understanding of the full capabilities of WordPress. It was overall a very fun project and a great learning experience.
Jieun Jang	I learned how to make a design that makes users feel friendly and easy and how to communicate with clients and apply their feedback to our projects. I'll apply the principles when considering a design in a future project. During this project, I was so thankful to my teammates because I was worried that I might inconvenience the team as an exchange student, but they always encouraged me although I had a mistake. I learned their positive attitude and how to encourage team members so I want to do like my teammates when communicating with a team in a future project.
Ethan Langford	This project was a great working experience and a good eye-opener for how good collaboration actually looks in group projects. I would look to this project for reference when communicating in future group projects. In retrospect, I would look up and ask my lab instructor for extra help understanding software like Figma and WordPress to understand the full capabilities of the software. Our design was very well received by the clients and after each customer check-in our team implemented suggested changes and built on our previous design ideas.
Alexa Moldovan	In my career, I would schedule regular customer touchpoints to make sure the clients needs are being addressed properly. Outside of touchpoints, the team meetings we had before touchpoints were a great way to stay on track. Our team also had a group chat that was very helpful and allowed us to ask each other questions and offer support between meetings. Something I would implement more critically going forward would be focusing on accessibility. Some aspects of our design, in the beginning, were fun and aesthetically pleasing but not fully accessible (i.e. left aligned text). Wordpress created a large constraint for our design, if I was to use wordpress again, I would do more research into plug-ins to make intricate designs possible. Our navigation titles were our biggest weakness, we could have spent more time brainstorming here. These titles caused confusion within the team and with the client further down the road.

What went well/didn't go well during the project

Went Well	Didn't Go Well
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Efficient group work -Client feedback was kind and good -Regular meetings were helpful to organize our ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limitations in expressing our intended design due to a lack of resources like suitable images - Wordpress limitations (such as a fixed form) - Vague critiques like “not fun enough” - Limitations in time (10-15 minutes per client meeting)
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How successful our team was in translating prototypes into WordPress reality

Our team was largely successful in translating our prototypes into a functional WordPress site. The core structure of the reorganized menu system, the understandable pages, and the overall theme of our design, matched our prototype intentions closely. We have displayed a great working knowledge of implementing feedback, working with constraints, and pivoting ideas based on such things. Our team took diligent notes on every customer touch point and did not get discouraged in any area of our designing, allowing our ideas to be well represented in Wordpress even if not identical to our Figma prototype.

Did the HCD ideas discussed in lectures help/hinder your design explorations?

The people-centred design concepts from the lectures strongly supported our design process. Principles such as affordances, constraints, and Gestalt grouping, helped us simplify navigation, organize information more intuitively, and create clearer pathways for donors and volunteers. These concepts gave us a structured way to evaluate our choices and ensure that our decisions aligned with user needs. Rather than hindering the process, they provided clarity and direction, improving both the prototype and the final WordPress implementation

Summary of opportunities and design ideas for future work



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Our Mission

At Reach, our mission is simple; we are here to reach families and children living with autism. We provide educational services that allow autistic children to experience learning success. We offer practical support for parents—



CONTACT US



VOLUNTEER



DONATIONS

One opportunity for future improvement is to replace the placeholder images in the current demo with real photos from Reach Autism Learning’s programs and activities. Using authentic visuals that reflect the organization’s mission, community involvement, and day-to-day work would help strengthen the site’s emotional impact and better communicate its vision to users. This change would make the website feel more trustworthy, relatable, and connected to the foundation’s identity. Removing harsh lines from the site created a more fun and dynamic atmosphere, this went well with the customer, so keeping this in our back pocket as we continue our careers is useful.

Appendix

Essential Blocks:

5 ★ (based on 197 ratings)

Active Installations: 200,000+

Last Updated: 6 days ago

“Each Gutenberg block comes with a bunch of options to control every possible aspect of your website design on the block editor. You can design your page with endless customization options using this amazing Gutenberg blocks plugin.”

Multi Step Form:

4.5 ★ (based on 36 ratings)

Active Installations: 10,000+

Last Updated: 1 week ago

“Multi Step Form has a drag & drop enabled form builder for quick and intuitive creation of nice-looking multi step forms. Forms can be embedded on any page or post with shortcodes or with Gutenberg blocks.”

My Sticky Bar:

5 ★ (based on 1,188 ratings)

Active Installations: 100,000+

Last Updated: 2 days ago

“You can also use this notification bar & sticky menu plugin to make your menu or header sticky on top of page, after desired number of pixels when scrolled.”

Spectra:

4.5 ★ (based on 1,803 ratings)

Active Installations: 1+ Million

Last Updated: 3 weeks ago

“Spectra provides a wide range of unique and creative blocks on top of the default WordPress page editor, enabling you to build and design pages or posts without writing a single line of code.”

Starter Templates:

5 ★ (based on 4,705 ratings)

Last Updated: 6 days ago

Active Installations: 2+ Million

“Starter Templates is all in one solution for complete starter sites, single page templates, blocks & images. This plugin offers the premium library of ready templates & provides quick access to beautiful Pixabay images that can be imported to your website easily.”

Updraftplus:

5  (based on 8,225 ratings)

Last Updated: 3 weeks ago

Active Installations: 3+ Million

Backup to Dropbox, Google Drive, Amazon S3 (or compatible), Rackspace Cloud, FTP, DreamObjects, Openstack Swift or email.