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Project Report-out & Lessons Learned

Project Report-out

Business need/opportunity

IABC Regina's current website is messy and outdated. It is frustrating to use and will deter their already small audience from wanting to use it. Some members from IABC Regina have come forward wanting a new revamped website. Our project and goal is to fulfill their requirements and create a sleek, streamlined website with WordPress.

From a presentation and a client meeting with them, we have gathered that their needs and wants for the update website are as follows. IABC needs: Simplistic and clean navigation, built-in events and payment, updated careers and job postings section, links to the IABC International site when possible, and an easy to use and configure backend. IABC Wants: engagement paths, news section, login/register system, and an aesthetically pleasing design

Northstar/Carryover

Every step of the design process was made with the NorthStar and carryover customers in mind. The NorthStar customers in this case are the members of IABC and carryover customers are other non-IABC business communicators.

Affinity Diagram & Empathy Mapping Takeaways

Creating an affinity diagram provided us with a sort of frame of mind that would aid us in creating a website that truly fulfills the needs of the users. The affinity diagram made us realize how important simplicity and ease-of-use are for this website. It also served as a requirement list as we knew that our solution would not be truly complete until it met everything laid out in the diagram.

User Story Map MVPs

The idea for our first Minimum Viable Product was to have the looks of the final product as finished as possible, with much less of a focus on functionality. Our first MVP had each page setup with some content from IABC and some placeholder content but the layout of each page was as created on our prototypes. This was an MVP because despite it being far from complete, it still allowed for a demo which showed off how the site will look. The next MVP involved some more functionality. Setting up the ability to add events/career postings and the ability to set timelines/deadlines for career postings. Our third and final MVP was also functionality focused. Adding the ability to apply for careers, dynamic content on the home page, Eventbrite payment links, and much more. Our design focused on the concepts of gestalt, affordances, and constraints. Gestalt is about the closeness of elements on a page. Grouping different elements together can create an association by proximity, even if similarity isn't the highest. This can be seen clearly on the home page with certification and membership sections being featured on the same "row", right beside each other which implies that they are in some way related. For affordances, we wanted to be sure that our users can intuitively tell what they can and cannot

click. For example, on the navigation bar there is a downwards arrow beside the “Get Involved” tab which indicates that there are more pages included if you click on that tab. This can also be seen on the membership page where the title of each subsection is blue, signifying that it links elsewhere. Finally, dynamic features on the home page such as the events boxes change when you hover your mouse over it indicates that it can be clicked on. An example of constraints used in the WordPress solution can be seen on events, careers, and volunteer postings. All of these features some “See More” functionality which is activated by a single click from the user. The section is automatically adjusted by the website as opposed to the user stretching the box to be as long as they desire. This ensures that once a “See More” button is pressed, all information is displayed and the user cannot miss anything.

Prototyping Takeaways

Prototyping helped us in deciding on a color scheme, choosing which content will be uploaded to each page and how we wanted to display the content. Without creating and demoing our prototypes we would not have switched our color scheme from red to greenish-blue which received much better feedback.

Lessons Learned

Likes

Considering the final product of our project, we are very satisfied with the outcome. We like how the plugins have done most of the work in terms of functionality and look. We felt that without these tools at our hand it would take more time to build and run this website.

Dislikes

What we do not like about the final outcome of our project is that we have not implemented every functionality that we have in mind at the start of this project such as a built-in payment option in the website.

What went well

While working on the project, the planning phase and creating our prototypes went very smoothly. As a group, we have different ideas in the beginning but we manage to put them together and make it work.

What didn't go well

In the beginning of our transition part of our project from prototype to WordPress, we found it difficult to work on the project because we need to work on the project both separately and locally which means that all of us are going to have different copies of the files and we need to put them together into one. One more thing that we had trouble with is during the exchanging of the files one of the most recently updated files got corrupted and that is when we decided to use Amazon LightSail to make the work collaboration easier and safer.

Prototype->WordPress

The outcome of our project looks very similar to our prototypes that we created through Adobe XD. We made slight changes on how it looks and we believe that we made it better by doing so. As a group, we did not find it difficult to translate our prototype into WordPress. The plugins that we use almost perfectly captured our prototype, which made the whole transition very smooth.

Relating to People Centered Design

Throughout our project development we use the design ideas discussed in the lectures as guides on how we would design, present, and use our website since we do not have a lot of experience. They became the pillars and backbone that supported us to accomplish and finish this project with great satisfaction for both us and IABC (based on the last presentation).

What would you do on future projects?

On our future projects we would definitely follow the steps that we did on this project. Creating different prototypes greatly helps us be more creative and it also helps us easily envision our final website. The prototyping serves as a strong backbone during the building phase of our website. It showed us what it would look like and also the things that we should change.

What would we change?

What we would change is that we would create a more concrete timeline for each step of the project. On this project we did not really set up dates and timelines for our project we just work on when we have free time. We as a team agreed that setting up time lines and due would not only increase the productivity but also the quality of work.

Future Opportunities

- built in payment option
- ability to have log-in functionality
- better UX and UI designs
- built in events upload for events and career pages