

Team Name: Competitive Analysis

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Summary

What you did

In general, what worked and what didn't (summary of findings below)

Through this process we found common trends throughout the competitor websites. Some Sites had different organizational structures, but many have the same information. We felt that having the navigation placed at the top of the website, as opposed to our sidebar, would make the website a lot more user friendly. We also have to condense our labels for all the events we have going on. There are currently 11 labels that you can click on in the sidebar. We also really like that the home page has a large image box on the homepage with either the logo or a new featured product. It just looks a lot nicer than immediately being thrown into information. As for tone, it would be best to do a combination of the enticing fluffy language used by companies like Starbucks, who excel at marketing, and the emphasis of the company's mission statement and involvement in their local community.

Competitors Evaluated

List 5 competitors, their URLs, descriptions of their websites or businesses and how they were chosen. You may use competitors determined by the client or your own.

Starbucks: <http://www.starbucks.com>

Starbucks is, without a doubt, one of America's leading coffeehouse chains. With stores located all of the world, and a logo recognized by almost everyone, it's a no-brainer that Starbucks is one of the leading competitors in the coffee industry.

Their website is visually appealing with lots of visuals accompanying bold headlines. The page is fully responsive and often has images expanding to fit screen size. Their navigation is easy to find at the top of the page with a drop-down menu indicated by "the hamburger" or three stacked horizontal lines. When full screen on a desktop, the menu expands to the header of the page, and is no longer a drop-down option. A lot of the headers that are not necessarily looked at a lot, like the About Us page or the Career Center page, have been moved down to the bottom of the home screen to avoid clutter in the drop-down navigation menu.

Scribbles Coffee Co: <http://scribblescoffee.co/>

Scribbles coffee made the list as one of our competitors because they have a large fanbase in Kent. Bringing in both college students and locals, this unique cafe brings in a lot of customers looking for a nice coffee and pastry. Scribbles has also taken the time to invest in a third party to create their website. We found that their website held the most appeal for us.

Scribbles has a well-designed responsive website. They have a nice unity throughout their design and on additional pages. Their links are interactive and well responsive. The information architecture is well organized, and items are logically grouped.

Tree City Coffee and Pastry: <http://www.rootedinkent.com/>

Tree City Coffee and Pastry has an amazing location in downtown Kent meaning it's the go-to spot for college students to meet up and relax for a while. The popularity of the place is mainly driven by Kent State's college community and from personal observation, this is not the first choice for local families.

The Tree City website is more of a simple layout. They have a nice consistency of their logo and branding across pages. Their featured drinks page has an illustration that doesn't match their other styles. The menu is nicely responsive, and the images change size well on different display sizes.

Corner Cup Coffeehouse: <https://cornercupstow.com/>

Corner Cup Coffeehouse is a very community driven establishment. They host several events in their 'meeting room' and like to support local artists and musicians. Their menu is pretty limited with not a lot of options, but they do sell warm sandwiches and pastries.

This business's website is very simplistic in style and navigation. There are only a few items in the navigation making it very easy to find what you are looking for. Corner Cup Coffee uses an established logo and style. They use fun handwritten fonts to give an easy going feeling. The site is also responsive.

Short North Coffee House: <https://shortnorthcoffee.com/>

This Coffee House is a unique and quirky coffeehouse driven by its local community. It offers a lobby and meeting room in which you can rent out., while catering to your coffee and pastry needs. A lot of their website is dedicated to the art and events they host. While there is nothing wrong with the layout of this company's website, the design of it leaves you wanting. The home page which is supposed to be the "hook" to the website, looks under done with little to no visuals and bland colors.

Navigation and Labeling

Common labels (terms) used to navigate the sites

Common navigation designs used to navigate and different screen sizes (drop-down menus, audience-based navigation, vertical side navigation, call to action buttons, etc.)

Header/Navigation

- Home
- About
- Menu
- Events
- Catering
- Store (and cart)
- Contact
- Rewards
- Featured

Footer:

- Address
- Contact
- Social media
- Search bar

Most of the websites have their navigation list at the top of the webpage. Only Starbucks changes into a drop-down menu when the screen is reduced in size.

Content and Features

What features and types of functionality do competitors offer their users.

All the competitors have responsive websites. Some common categories the info is organized by are Home, Contact, About, and Menu.

What types of content is available on the sites.

Corner cup:

- Map
- Hours
- Links to their social medias

Tree City:

- Get directions is a link to google maps (not integrated)

- Tree city has an info and about tab which to me is confusing because I wouldn't know what I will find under those tabs and why they are different

Starbucks:

- Has same things as other websites but also has rewards, blogs, and gift cards tab
- Also has option to receive emails

Scribbles:

- Includes store where you can buy coffee online

What content is missing on the sites that would be helpful.

Every website does a pretty good job in terms on information provided. They all have pretty much the same pages on the navigation bar with the exception of those who do not sell their beans online. We feel that Short North Coffee House's website has the most content missing. If they were to stylize their website with a lot more visuals and format the way their information is presented, then the website would look a lot better.

Voice and Tone

What is the common "voice" of the competitors (friendly, serious, helpful, excited, boring)

Is there consistency in voice and tone across the sites?

Starbucks thrives on using fluffy language to entice customers to try their product. Adjectives such as "rewarding", "delicious", and "sweet" are always accompanying positive verbs like "enjoy", "embrace", and "reward". Corner Cup Coffeehouse also uses this type of language. Scribbles Coffee and Tree City Root are very focused on mission statements and showing their dedication to their community. Their initial focus is less on the coffee but rather on their mission statement and what they offer the local community in terms of events.

Design Aesthetics and Layout

What are common design choices across the sites (colors, typography, layout)

How does the design contribute to the usability of the site on various devices?

Which design pieces (patterns) could be utilized on our website?

Show side-by-side screenshots of each website evaluated.

All these websites utilize the well-known structure of placing navigation at the top of the website. It's what users are used to and comfortable with. It's also common for the websites to first have a large image and bold headliner to introduce the webpage; so you aren't assaulted with information right off the bat. Short North Coffee House website isn't very visually appealing because of the range of background colors and information being thrown at your face on the homepage.

Recommendations and Strategy

Based on the findings above, what top recommendations do you have for your client's website, based on the top goals that they've shared already.

Do not include design solutions at this point, just recommendations.

Despite Cool Beans Cafe being a unique and well-loved cafe, they failed to put time and effort into their website. The website is nothing more than a template filled in with the vital information. The cafe does have a lot to offer, however the navigation on the side bar has way too many page links. If we can condense the categories that are displayed on the menu, the website would not only look better but also have a lot more usability. The website also needs a bit of a face lift in terms of design. A new color scheme, visuals, and layout should make the site more appealing.