

Group 5: Hops House Brewery

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Summary

What you did in general, what worked and what didn't (summary of findings below):

The competitors of Hops House Brewery all had similar layout designs and tried to emulate an attractive environment to draw in visitors and promote their beers and events. Some sites that worked had a clean layout and typefaces, clearly separated sections, and easy navigation. Ones that didn't work had large areas of text that were hard to read and one flat background running the span of the page.

Competitors Evaluated

Hoppin' Frog Brewery & Tasting Room

<http://www.hoppinfrog.com/>

This website starts off with a disclaimer asking if you are of legal age to drink and then gives you the option to continue to the brewery website or the tasting room website. The brewery website features their logo and name at the very top with tabs just below to quickly navigate across their website, including Beers, Awards, Events, Directions, Tasting Room, Distributors, Careers, and Contact Information. They also have social media icons at the top right, and a shopping cart at the top as well. The main content below that describes their awards and a little about the history of the brewery with accompanying photos. Below that you find their calendar of events for the upcoming week with their daily specials with details, and a link to access the full calendar. Beyond that they list their contact for group events and parties, their policies, and at the very bottom you have access to all the links listed at the top of the page for easy access as well as their phone number. They feature a plain background with non-distracting elements and a limited color palette.

Rock Mill Brewery

<http://www.rockmillbrewery.com/>

This website starts off on the main page with a row of links at the top, including Home, Tasting Room, Calendar, Our Story, Event Info, Our Brews, Where to Buy, Contact Us, and Tavern.

Strangely, they don't list their name but just a small logo icon at the top. You then see text prompting you to navigate to learn more about their beers. This is the only content you see without having to scroll down. Once you scroll down, the menu appears in a static bar along the top. There is more plain text inviting the viewer to join them in their taproom and lists their hours, some other information about not serving food on Friday nights and their backcountry bbq opening this upcoming weekend with a link to their catering website. Slightly below that is a description of their location, a few policies, and a promotion for a discount at a local deli. Below that is a map alongside their upcoming weekend hours with a link to see future weekend hours, their phone number, and address. Below this we see a calendar layout with events and times listed. Below that is an 'about' statement, a link to download their press package including logos & photos, a link to a beer dinner menu and event archive, and an embedded video featuring their business. Below that they have social media with 12 of their Instagram thumbnails. Beyond that is a detailed list of their group party information details and pricing. Beneath that they have a scroll list of their brews showing 4 at a time. Then they list all locations at which you can purchase their beers. The last section of the page is a 'contact us' field where you can type in and submit your info and message to send directly to them. The footer of the website includes links to their social media and their address. There is a plank wood texture that carries through the website with muted tones and a few accent colors.

Ohio Brewing Company

<https://ohiobrewing.com/home.html>

This website landing page generally fits within the browser window and doesn't require a lot of scrolling. They feature their logo and beneath that their menu bar, including Home, Brews, Events, Menu, About, Contact, and Locations. Directly below that is an image of their brewing tank alongside their recent news feed with interactive links. Below that is another side by side with an option to join their mailing list, and a link for musicians to apply to perform at the brewery. The bottom of the page lists their address, phone, and email, social media icons just below, and a reiteration of their menu at the very bottom with different options (Mailing List, In the News, Press Releases, Resources, Distribution, Jobs). They have a plain white background and simple text layout with very few colors.

Royal Docks Brewing Co.

<http://docks.beer/>

This website begins with a short video background behind their logo, menu bar, and a short statement about their business. The menu bar includes Beer, Wine & Spirits, Food, Events, Shop, About, and Contact. The next section breaks from the dark background video to a white background which features a list of all of their current beers in their taproom, starting with links to their taproom and brewhouse pages, listing the brews in two columns with their own icons and details of type and ABV/IBU content under the names. Directly below is a section for guest taps and upcoming brews on deck with the same info. Right beneath is an update time showing how long ago this content was maintained. The next section features another dark image background with a statement featuring a hashtag of one of their beers, and a link inviting the viewer to look at their beers. The section below that alternates back to a white background and

states their upcoming events with calendar icons to the left showing the date, a title and time with a descriptor image right below, and a brief description of the event. They show two of these and provide a link to see all events. The footer of their website alternates to their accent color as a solid background and lists their locations, phone number, taproom hours, and a field to enter your info for their newsletter all side by side. The very bottom lists social media icons.

Great Lakes Brewing Co.

<https://www.greatlakesbrewing.com/>

This website also prompts you with a confirmation of being of legal drinking age. They feature a tight menu bar starting with their logo, and two rows of menu icons including Beer, Visit, Brewing Good, Store, News and About, continuing below that in the opposite color scheme with social media logos directly under the logo, Beer Finder, Events, Take a Tour, and FAQ links, and a search icon as well as a language selector for the website. Directly below that is a changing image that slowly flips through, showing illustrations of their beers and links to learn more, as well as an upcoming event. Below that the section switches to a colored background with a header reading “What’s on Tap - News - Much Abrew” indicating the content of the rest of the page. The What’s on Tap section below lists the beers that are in season linking to descriptor pages alongside an image of one of the beers in a glass with the tap handle. Below that is the news section with a fixed background that does not scroll, giving the appearance of transparency and featuring their icon in similar color palette, with 3 links side by side to specific articles with a related image heading it, a title, post date, beginning article content, and a link to read more. The section below switches back to a solid white background, titled Much Abrew, with a link to sign up for their newsletter. Below that is their footer with 2 levels of content bars, the top one linking back to the original menu items at the top with more content sections listed below, and below that listing their hours and policies as well as contact info and social media icons.

Navigation and Labeling

Common Navigation Terms:

- Home
- Beers
- Our Brews
- Menu
- Food
- Awards
- News
- Events
- Calendar

- Directions
- Locations
- Tasting Room
- Distributors
- Careers
- Contact Information
- About
- Our Story
- FAQ
- Where to Buy
- Beer Finder

All sites were generally the same navigation-wise, with a top horizontal menu bar, some featuring drop-downs, and linking back to the same or similar content within the footer of the website. Some featured links over text within the content of the page to navigate to other pages on the site, and some existed within 'buttons', with a few content fields to sign up for newsletters or send messages. Some sites changed to a side menu when the screen became smaller.

Content and Features

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

Most have easy navigation with menus at the top and bottom of the pages, some with an option to sign up for their newsletter, social media links,

What types of content is available on the sites?

They offer general information and feature main information about where they are located and hours of operation, some details about their history, upcoming events, policies, the beers they offer and details about them, where to buy their beer outside of their business, and social media hashtags and live content.

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

Maybe like pairing at home options cause that would be like taking the brewery feel home with you, you know?

Links to socials, some have them and some don't. But i think it's only necessary if the social media is well maintained and works with the branding and aesthetic of the site.

Voice and Tone

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

Hoppin’ Frog: friendly, laid-back

Rock Mill: serious, detailed

Ohio Brewing: casual, direct

Royal Dock: local, bold

Great Lakes: helpful, fun

Is there consistency in voice and tone across the sites?

Yes, they each try to present themselves as an attractive place to visit with a fun, lively environment by trying to emulate that through their website layout, presentation, and function.

Design Aesthetics and Layout

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

Most had layouts sectioned as blocks of content you can scroll through. A limited color palette with environmental images/videos of their environment in-house. Very simple, non-distracting typography.

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

The vertical scroll aspect makes the site functionality similar across devices as it appears slightly more condensed and spans more space for smaller screens.

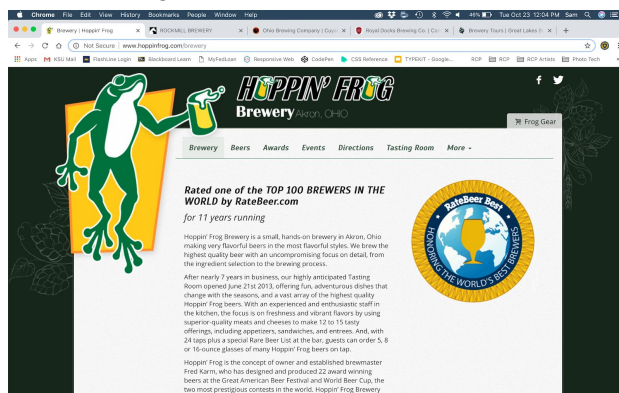
Which design pieces (patterns) could be utilized on our website?

The vertically organized content into clearly separated sections, top and bottom navigation menus, simple color palette and type choice, and condensed content with accompanying tabs/sections of the website to expand on details.

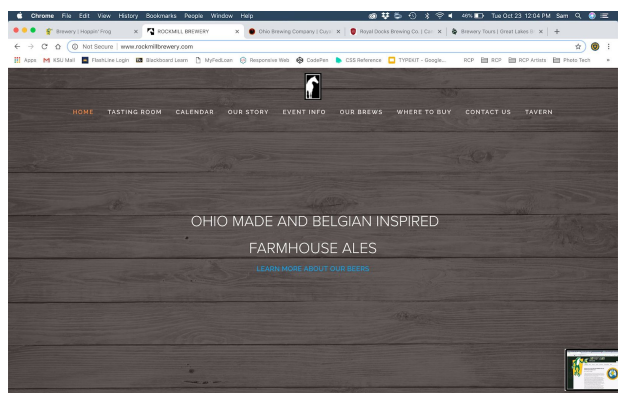
Show side-by-side screenshots of each website evaluated.

(Next Page)

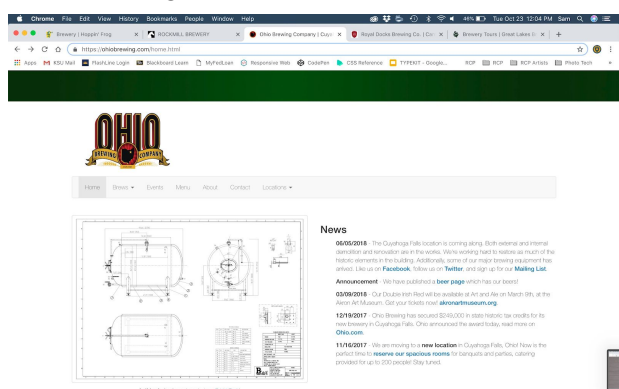
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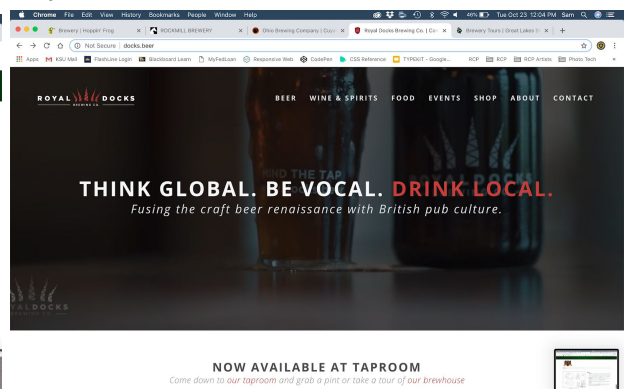
Rock Mill



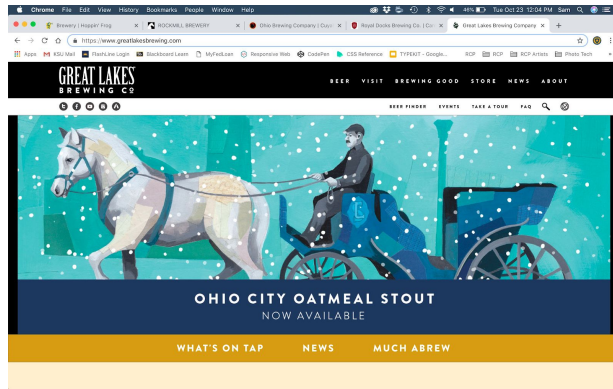
Ohio Brewing



Royal Docks



Great Lakes



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?

What we recommend is highlighting the main goals of the business (marketing new brews and food, promote tasting events and growler service) within the main content area of the website and including other info as secondary (location, hours, social media, history) in a straight-forward design with clear separation of content, making the site visually appealing and keep users on the site longer. A central navigation system with clear content descriptors, bold imagery, and sleek typefaces.

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