

Arusha Crown Hotel Redesign

Rationale

As per my assignment,--to find a website for a company/business in the hospitality industry and redesigning 3 pages: the home page, a content page of choice, and a contact page--I have found the Arusha Crown Hotel website to be the best fit, as it has a landing page in dire need of a markup make-over, the contact page with too much going on, and the photo gallery with a confusing pagination system. It is a site that is well thought out, but poorly presented. A challenge I did not want to do, but had to embark on if I wanted to pass my class.

The home page's first crime, of course, is housing a flash animation as the header. In 2014,--the last time this site was updated--this would have been fine, but in 2018, the soon to be deprecated Flash player, is taboo. You stay away from it like the plague and use one of the other much better supported JavaScript/CSS based animation libraries out there. Another issue that the page has is that it has no call-to-action. Instead, it has text in abundance with little to no typographic hierarchy guiding the user to what is important and thus the business misses out on converting visitors. The footer, on the other hand, is technically in the right place, but practically in an undesirable position. This page though, has the right information to make it useful to the company, but it has not been presented in a way that will help reduce the site's bounce rate.

The contact page has been named the reservations page, this is quite confusing and unusual, since users now have to start guessing in which of the pages (linked in the top navigation bar) the contact form lies in. Apart from that, I also found the page to be hard to process. The large amount of text could be one reason why and the fact that there are two different emails that both can do the same work, could be another. The contact form is the main element and thus must be in centre stage (that is, it is the call-to-action) and so everything on the page must compliment and not compete with it. Furthermore, there is no automated method to reserve a room on the site which means everything must be done manually on the business end. I will not be designing anything to do with this, even though I do understand that it would be an invaluable asset a business such as this.

The photo gallery first shows up on the page as a custom bulleted, unordered list, awkwardly aligned centrally on both axes. It takes user curiosity to figure out that the list items are links to the different types of images about Arusha Crown Hotel. The links are like filters and when clicked, JavaScript lazy loads any images that need to be loaded onto the page. You then have to interact with the buttons that show up to either traverse the gallery (move from one image to another), or go back to the unusual navigation list. This is not user friendly at all. If separating the images was so important, then moving the images to the page that they belong to--images of the restaurant to the restaurant page--would have been a far better design implementation. This feels like a lazy way of implementing image lazy loading. And to add salt to whatever figurative wounds might have been incurred, the navigation list buttons that were first encountered on page arrival will gray out when they have already been clicked. Almost as if the developer wanted you to view the images once only. This, of course, has to change to something more familiar to the user.

All in all, this is a good website and making it look better will be a challenge, since I have no idea how it should look. But, hopefully I can create something that is both appealing to the eye, accessible, and usable. A website with the potential to convert visitors into paying customer or loyal supporters, at the end it is about taking a well thought out design and presenting it better.

Arusha Crown Hotel Screenshots

Place here

Wireframes

Place here

Mockup

Place here