

Team Mandocello - Connecting Lofi Prototypes to Class Concepts

One of the main considerations was improving discoverability, because the customers repeatedly stressed the importance of simple and easy site navigation during their check-ins. Ensuring the site was easily discoverable was an important design consideration when making the prototypes. It was imperative that RMO members could easily understand how to navigate, no matter their desired location, and the device they are using. We considered gestalt in most of our prototypes, representing the site and its content as parts of a greater whole, simplifying the disparate elements down into outlined sections, such as with the card views. On a similar level, we also considered enclosure, to separate navigation elements from page specific elements. In particular, when looking at the way the music sheets and user information were displayed, sectionally, it was only natural to enclose visual elements into those groups, separating them by section, in order to better represent those divisions. We also used proximity and similarity between the cards on the music sections of our websites to indicate that the selectable cards are music sheets. By drawing the site with the design techniques listed, we managed to improve the discoverability of our prototypes.

Another consideration while making the sketches was digital wayfinding and landm. Digital wayfinding is how a user can identify where they are in a given digital space, using certain consistent objects as landmarks. One of the methods used to implement this was the use of distinct icons for each section of the website. For example, the music sheet section of the website is denoted by a music note, which, in some sketches, which is visible both as the header on the sheet music page, as well as in the navigation bar. By using icons consistently in this way, the user could learn to easily see their relative location on the site by comparing the current header to the navigation bar. Moreover, another method used in one of the sketches was to use different orientations for menus in the public vs members only website; horizontal vs vertical, to help differentiate between the two sections of the website. By making distinct, clearly visible landmarks for different sections of the site, we managed to make it easier for users to understand their location when navigating the site.

There were several metaphors used during prototyping. Mainly, in the aforementioned menu icons and section headers, as well as a few general designs. After the customers made a comparison between the members site and a facebook page, as well as mentioning the disused RMO facebook page, we decided to model some of the design after one. In particular, the community post sketch designed to be similar to the posts on Facebook, which some of the RMO members already use. Generally, we're envisioning that if one of the customers uses another social media site, they'll see similar designs on the RMO's website, and have an easier time learning how to navigate it. Another element of this comparison was with the icon designs. While some of the icons are analogous to those used on Facebook, the RMO has other needs. As well as the conventional icons, we made specific icons for those needs. For example the icons for sheet music, or governance docs, or the video archive, are all based on physical analogues. Because of this, it will be easier for users to understand what each icon's page is used for. By comparing our site to social media and to physical objects when prototyping, we hope to have made it more intuitive for users to understand the site.