

ENSE 271 - LoFi Design Analysis with People Centered Design Topics

The website mimics a high-functionality application and is designed to serve the Regina Mandolin Orchestra population. Therefore, we used concepts from “People Centered Design” to model and analyze the low-fidelity templates. The prototypes present a website that has a low threshold (easily understandable) and high ceiling (many opportunities).

- a) **Discoverability** - Firstly, our designs try to be highly discoverable. By using appropriate naming in the navigation bar/side panel, it is easy for the user to determine where they can, and need to go. Ease of interpretation is enforced by common web design signifiers, arrows, links, buttons, and slides. Instructions appear above or to the left of text boxes and interactive pieces are highlighted.
- b) **Understandability** - outlines the user’s knowledge of the meaning of various controls and actions. For example, when users see an upload button underneath the upload area, they understand the file will be posted. An “i” icon / tutorial slide informs users of major controls, users see that selecting checkboxes / date ranges in the “search filter” helps sort information, index beside calendar shows users they can color-code and annotate calendar events.
- c) **Affordances** - This element determines what actions are possible. The plus icon for adding new music is an example of an affordance in some of our lo-fis. The idea of addition is highly familiar for users, and they will immediately recognize what it is for. Symbols and texts are displayed in respective places to let the user know what specific things are meant to be, e.g. calendar symbol to display calendar. Search icon has a magnifying glass and has the text “search for name...”. Buttons, links, tabs, and scroll bars are designed differently than user input areas (such as the login page) to help users perceive an action is possible.

d) Signifiers and metaphors - signifiers communicate actions that take place and convey affordance. We used metaphors to signify action such as a magnifying glass to signify search function, exit icon to signify return to public page, “i” icon / light bulb to signify website tutorial, bell to signify notification, user silhouette to signify account, music note to signify music section, etc.

e) Gestalt Constraints

Proximity / similarity - newsletters, music sheets, and recent updates are presented in proximity with other similar styles. Each group is designed using similar shapes, fonts, spacing, and labels.

Continuance - Tiles are placed in patterns, instead of a random layout, to help users’ eyes move smoothly from one object to another. We used curves, lines, and shapes to guide users from one action to the next like the upload and sign up processes.

Figure & ground - foreground and background will be separated by shape and color.

f) Mappings - Website is designed for the Regina Mandolin Orchestra members, so we used North American natural mapping conventions. Icons show to the left of written details, more negative space on the right side of web design, buttons appear beside associated category / action, color / shape change to signify buttons and links, and icons are icons.

g) Heuristic Evaluation - “**Help Users Recover from error**” - If they navigate to the wrong page, they have direct links to the rest of the site at their disposal. They can easily click on a tab and return to the intended page. If they exit a tab before saving a process such as uploading music sheets, they get a warning message.