

Final Project Report

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Website: https://wangxi-cici.github.io/final_project/index.html

Introduction

In recent years, Chinese fashion brands are playing an increasingly important role in world's fashion industry and become more and more popular both in China and western countries. A wave called "Guo Chao" is spreading among young people, and wearing made-in-China clothes becomes a trend. However, there are no websites focusing on promoting this trend and introducing rising Chinese brands. Most of information related to "Guo Chao" is delivered through news, they are scattered. With the hope of letting more people know the rise of "Made-in-China" and have a better understanding of Chinese brands, I build a website about this hit trend and Chinese local brands that successfully convert their brand images from old to fashion and continuously become well-known in world market. This report shows the process of building this data-driven website by combining the design thinking and computational thinking. Steps from targeting users and defining users' needs to building prototype and testing will all be illustrated.

Problem Definition

1. Strategy

i. Site Objectives

Before the whole design of my website, the very first thing I should do is to define the website objectives. As a girl passionate about fashion, I browse information about fashion from time to time. However, according to my own experience, all the information about "Guo Chao" is not integrated but scattered in various platforms via different forms, so it is hard to have a systematic knowledge of this trend. Besides, whenever I search information about Chinese brands, like their clothing series, brand history or brand concept, I have to visit their official websites one by one, which is inconvenient. So, there are two objectives of my website: one is to help people have a clearer understanding of the trend "Guo Chao", another is to improve convenience when people want to know more about local brands. By browsing this website, audience can gain systematic and integrated information about "Guo Chao" and some

representative brands, the process of acquiring these information may even help them generate a sense of proud.

ii. User Needs

In my final project, I target at those young people who are interested in fashion and have the possibility to buy domestic brand clothes. To figure out the needs of my target users, I interviewed three of my classmates in Hong Kong and two friends in mainland China. They are all university students who love shopping and follow fashion trends. Initially, they all heard about “Guo Chao” but confused what could be regarded as “Guo Chao”. Secondly, they want to know how or why some of local brands become fashionable, namely, the process of brand image update. Thirdly, they want to know which local brands become fashionable and their transformation history, clothing styles, hot designs, etc.. According to their sharing, I thought I could organize my website mainly into three parts: “Guo Chao” introduction, local brands collection and purchasing recommendation. For “Guo Chao” part, their needs can be generalized into concept definition and trendy process. In terms of brands, the main needs are knowing brands’ history, clothing series, and current styles. Finally, their browsing of my website may convert into purchase action. A user map was sketched based on the interviews (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 User Journey Map

2. Scope

According to the user journey map, problems that target users encounter are defined and information they need is summarized below:

- Basic introduction of “Guo Chao”;
- Ways local brands become trendy;
- Representative brands of “Guo Chao”;
- Local brands’ developing history;
- Clothing series of brands;
- Hot designs.

The basic introduction of “Guo Chao” contains its concept definition as well as a line chart which shows the trend of increasing popularity of local brands. According to my research, ways local brands become fashionable are mainly through cross-border co-branding and participation in fashion weeks. Co-branding will be shown in Airtable Kanban view. For participation in fashion weeks, contents are presented in form of video which is more intuitive. Videos are taken from Tencent videos, including different brands’ runway show in New York/ Paris/ Milan Fashion Week. In terms of representative brands of “Guo Chao”, six brands were chosen. All of them are well-known in China for more than 20 years and successfully convert their brand images from old-fashioned to young and trendy, they used to be national brands and now are fashion brands. For the process of local brands becoming fashionable, the best way to show it is using timeline. And clothing series are presented by pictures from brands’ official website or e-commerce website. As for hot designs, they are shown in Airtable Gallery view containing images, product name, price and purchasing URL, providing convenience for users to shop.

Problem Solution

1. Structure

Based on problems and needs that have been defined, a clear structure of my website appeared. While, all the information was independent, I began to think how to arrange elements properly as a comprehensive whole, so that the website can be more user-friendly and engaging. It is important to find the logic among information and match it with users’ expectation and their usage habits. In order to have a clear plan and make the process of building the website efficiently and logically, a hierarchical structure was draw to map out the structure of the website (see Figure 2).

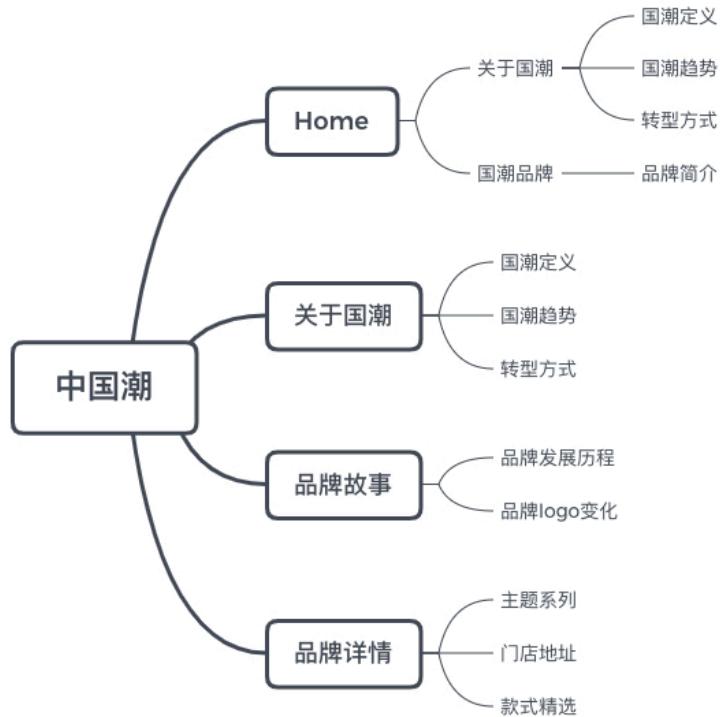


Figure 2 Site Map

2. Skeleton

After all the information needed in my website was organized, several low fidelity wireframe prototypes were created to make the structure and layout of my website more clear (see Figure 3 - Figure 7). These wireframe prototypes were quite convenient for testing if elements were arranged logically and if the layout of each page was reasonable. Since wireframe prototypes can be adapted at any time without costing money or much time, it is the best choice for usability test to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the structure and layout of my website. During the test, I got some useful information for improving the design of website. First, all users suggested that the basic introduction of “Guo Chao” in the Homepage should be shown in navigation bar, which made the structure of the website clearer. Second, one of my friends mentioned that in the Home page, it would be better to shorten text of brand introduction while enlarging the image of each brand, because fewer people are willing to reading long text while they are more into exquisite pictures. Thirdly, some of friends mentioned that in brand story page and brand detail page, a banner or reminder should be added that informs users which brand the page belongs to.

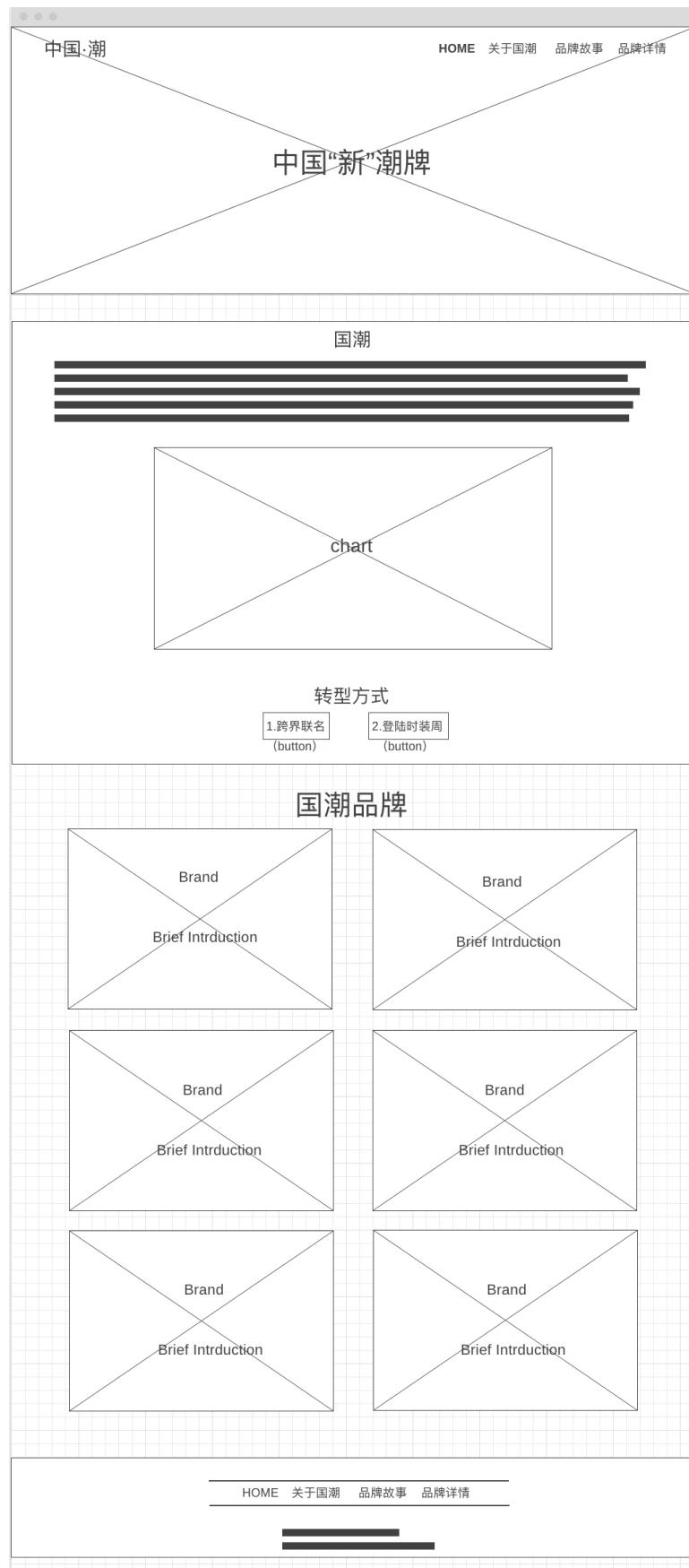


Figure 3 Prototype – Homepage

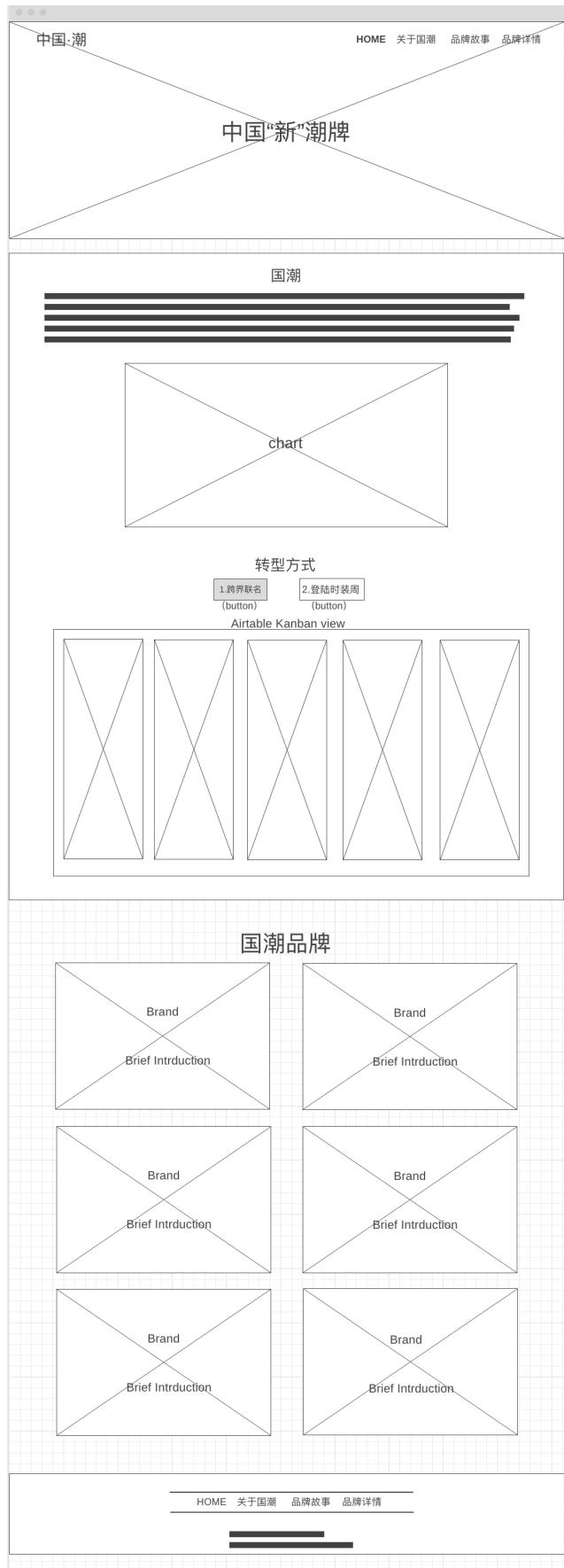


Figure 4 Prototype – Homepage - 跨界联名

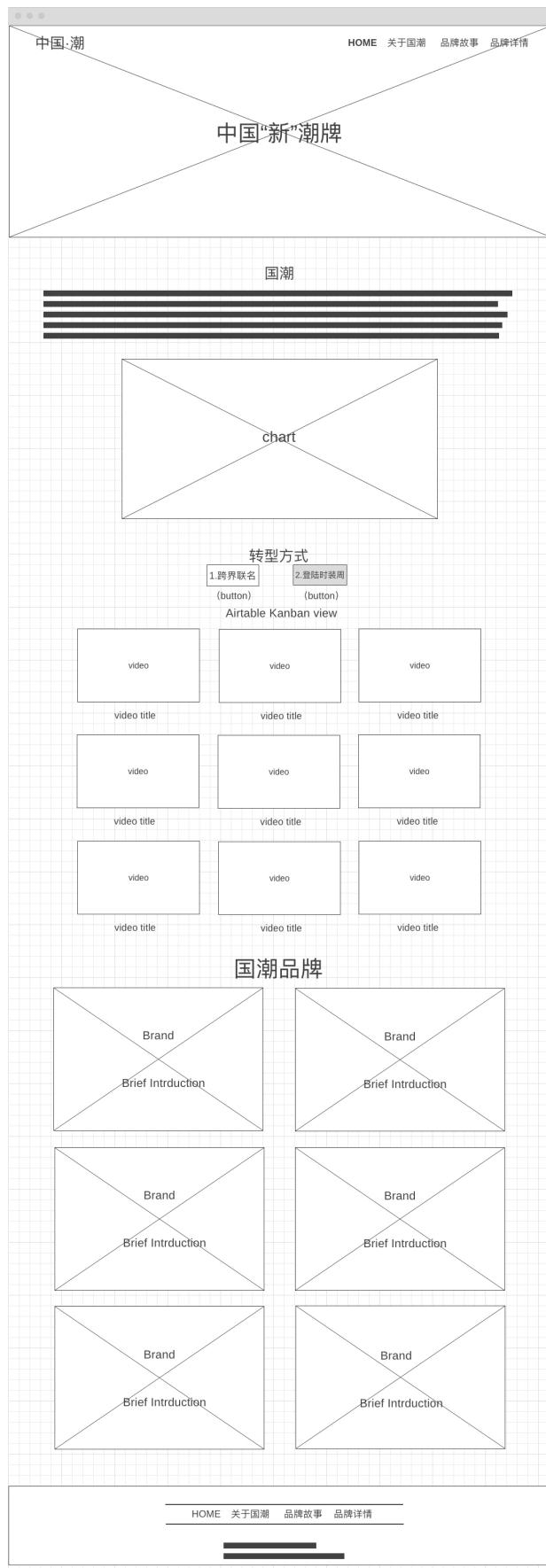


Figure 5 Prototype – Homepage - 登陆时装周

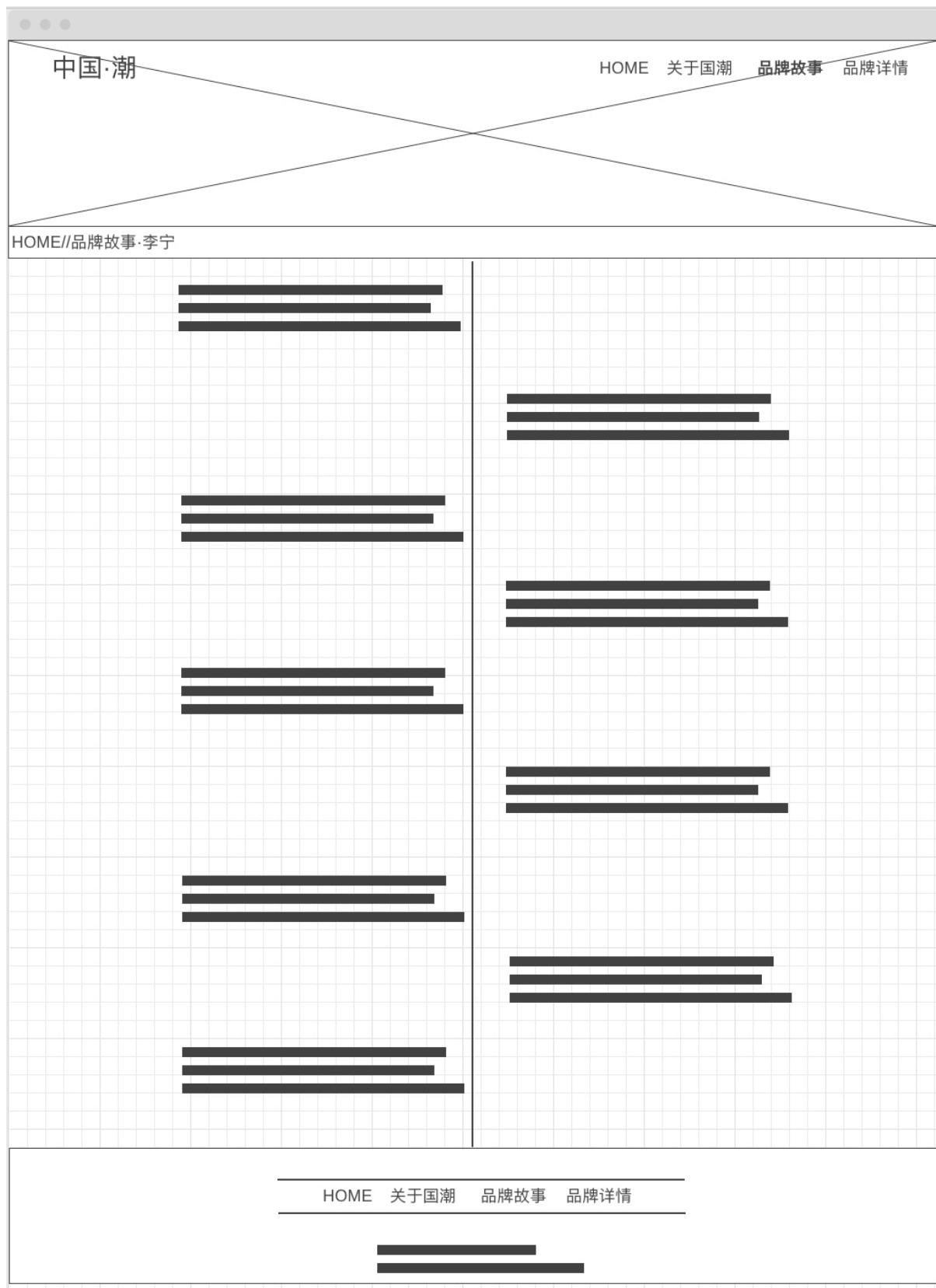


Figure 6 Prototype – Brand Story Page

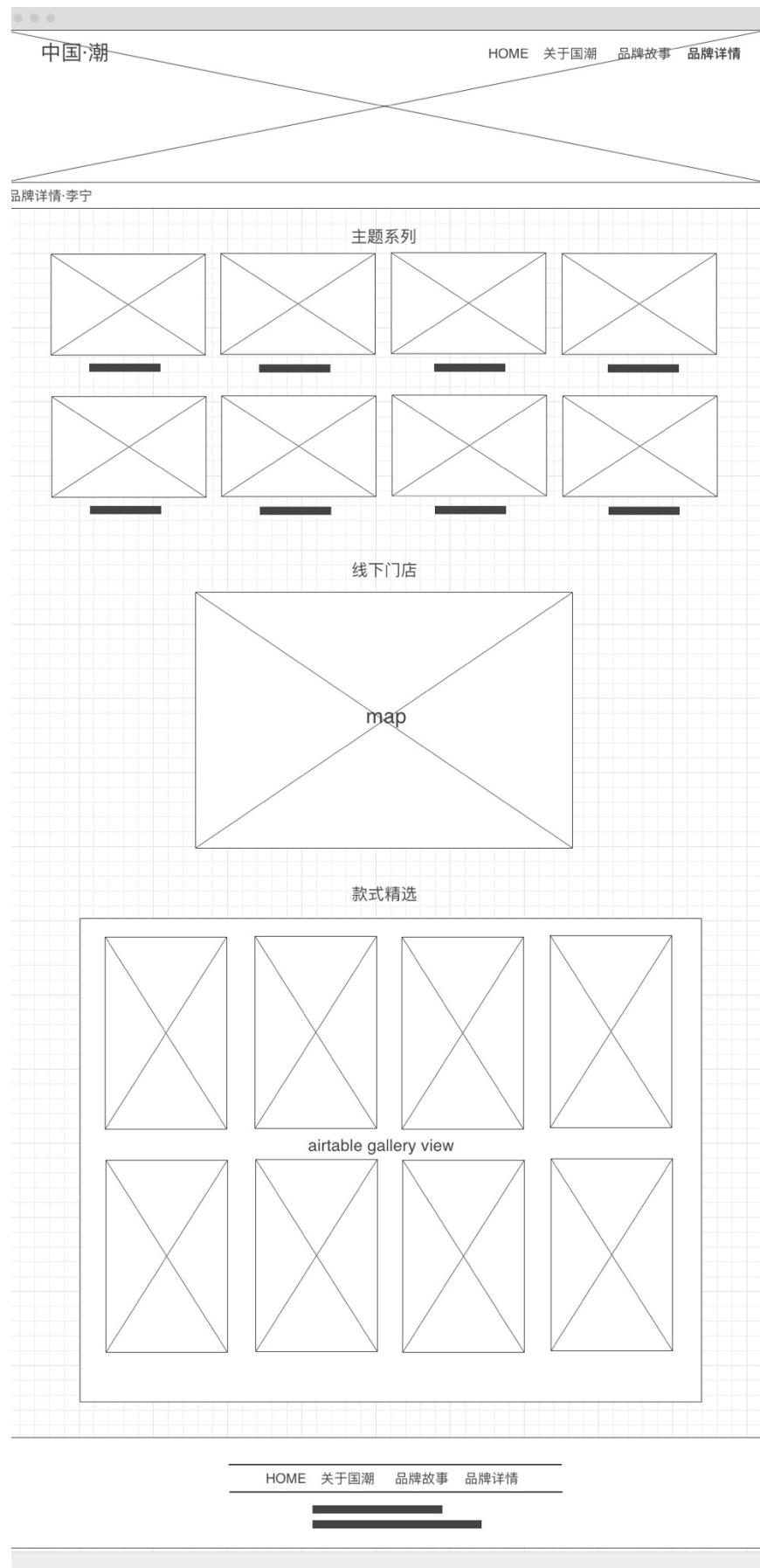


Figure 7 Prototype – Brand Detail Page

3. Surface

After the usability test based on wireframes, I refined the prototypes according to users feedbacks and suggestions. Then I started the visual work. It took some time to find the decent template online, but the template really helped me create designs efficiently. Since my website, especially the Homepage, contains lots of information of various aspects, I chose a template with simple style so that the structure of my website can be clear.

As mentioned above, all the respondents suggested that the basic introduction of “Guo Chao” in the Home page should be shown in navigation bar. So I added “关于国潮” to navigation bar (see Figure 8) and when users click it on navigation bar, the page will automatically jump to “关于国潮” part.

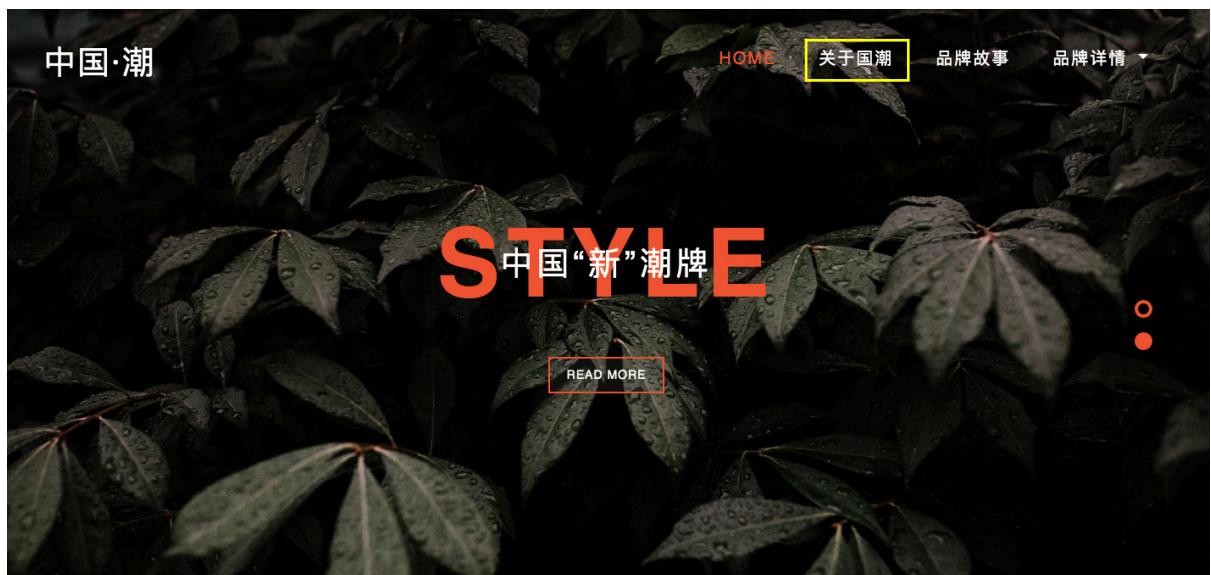


Figure 8 Homepage – Navigation Bar

As for the suggestion that some elements should be contained to inform which brand the page belongs to, I added a thin banner (see Figure 9).



Figure 9 Detail page – Thin Banner

One of my subjects mentioned that long text can be annoying. So, instead of dividing text introduction brand image into separate parts, I combined them together, when the mouse moves over the image, the brand profile will appear, which not only embellishes the interface but also more in line with user habits (see Figure 10).



Figure 10 Homepage - Brand Introduce

To simplify the website structure, I made a drop-down menu on navigation bar (see Figure 11), so there is no need to create another page for brand collection. At the same time, the “品牌详情” on footer at the bottom of each brand story page is different, they link to the corresponding brand detail page (see Figure 12).

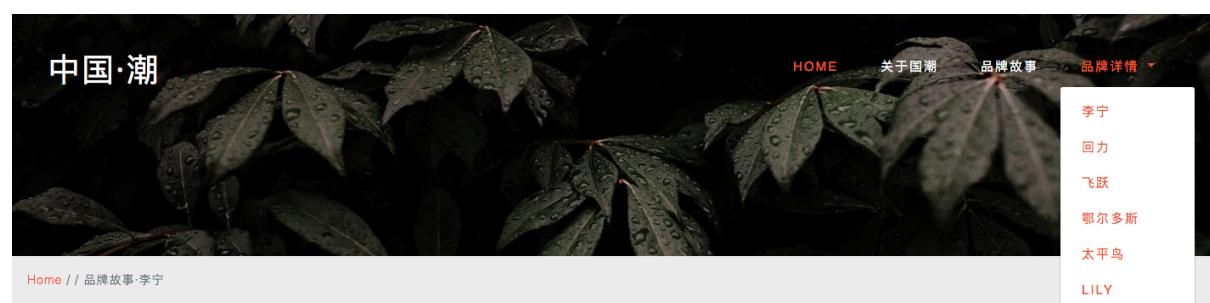


Figure 11 Navigation Bar – Drop-down Menu



Figure 12 Footer – Different Links

Usability Test

To evaluate the usability of the design, five volunteers were invited to conduct the usability test. These five respondents are passionate about fashion trend and are perfect representations of my website's target users, who really helped me find issues of website's usability. Before starting the test, I clarified the purpose of this test and encouraged them to think aloud whenever they were confused or had better ideas, this enabled me to have a better understanding of the and find problems that were ignored.

There were five main questions I prepared for usability test and subjects' actions were followed:

Questions	1	2	3	4	5
What do you think this website is about?	e-commerce website	e-commerce website	Chinese fashion brands	Chinese brands become fashionable	Chinese brands become fashionable
How do you know clothing series of a brand?	Click “品牌详情”	Click “品牌详情”	Click “品牌详情”	Click “品牌详情”	Click “品牌详情”
How do you know the fashion process of a brand?	Click “品牌故事”	Click “品牌故事”	Click “品牌故事”	Click “品牌故事”	Click “品牌故事”
How do you know information about “Guo Chao”?	Click “关于国潮”	Click “关于国潮”	Click “关于国潮”	Click “关于国潮”	Click “关于国潮”
What confused you during the using journey?	The homepage layout is confused.	The navigation bar is not specific enough.	More fashion news of brands	No obvious problems.	No obvious problems.

At the beginning of the usability test, I asked my friends if they could tell what the website is about. Two of them thought it was more like an e-commerce website because of homepage's layout. So, I changed position of "About Guo Chao" and "Brand Collection", moving "Brand Collection" to the bottom of Homepage and "About Guo Chao" just below the horizontally scrolling images. Besides, "潮品牌" used to be in navigation bar, but a subject told me it was too general to know what exactly in this page. So I changed "潮品牌" into "品牌详情", which is more specific.

In the beginning version of my wire-frame prototype, fashion week information was shown via Airtable, the same as how Cross-border Co-branding was shown. While the first respondent conducted the usability test suggested that it would be better to show it in form of video, which is more intuitive and can enrich presentation ways. Later, I asked other respondents if it was better to change Airtable into videos, they all agreed. So, videos are shown in the last version (see Figure 13). Besides, one of subjects wished there could be some latest fashion news related to brands. However, this needs information updating from time to time, due to my limited time, I could not address this need temporarily.



Figure 13 Homepage - Fashion Week

A/B Test

For quantitative usability test, an A/B test was conducted to see if bigger text size in navigation bar leads to more conversions. One of goals I set in Google Analytics was the browse page count, which I think is a quite important metric in evaluating the design of a website. The reason why I changed font size in A/B test is because I thought bigger font maybe more noticeable and users are more likely to click them, which helps increase conversion rate. Figure 14 is the A version (Original) whose font size is relatively small, and Figure 15 is the B version with bigger font size.

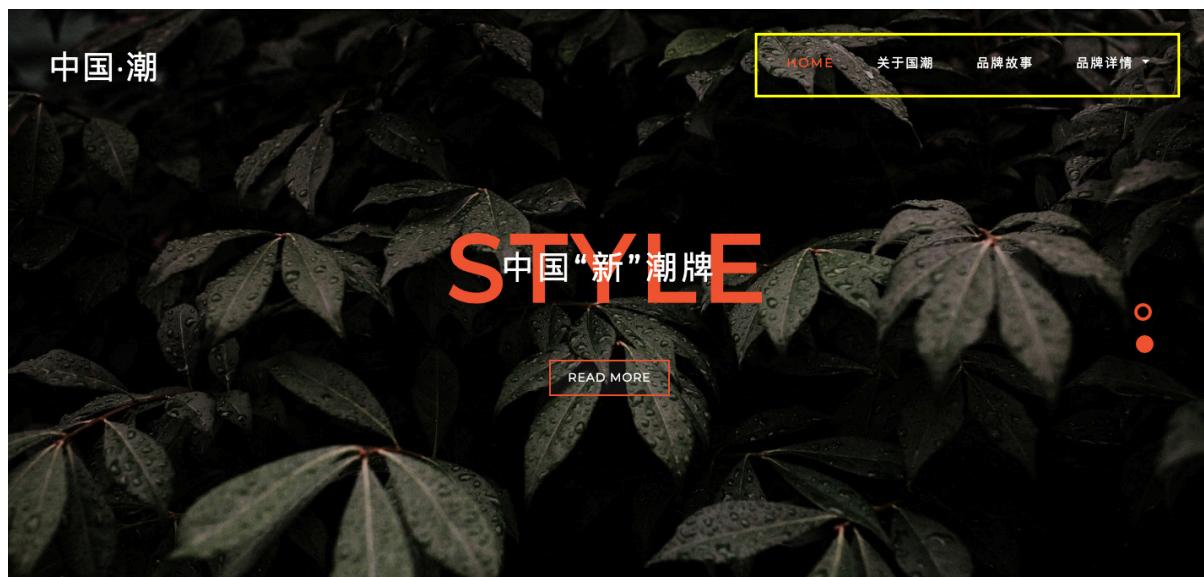


Figure 14 A/B test – Original Version

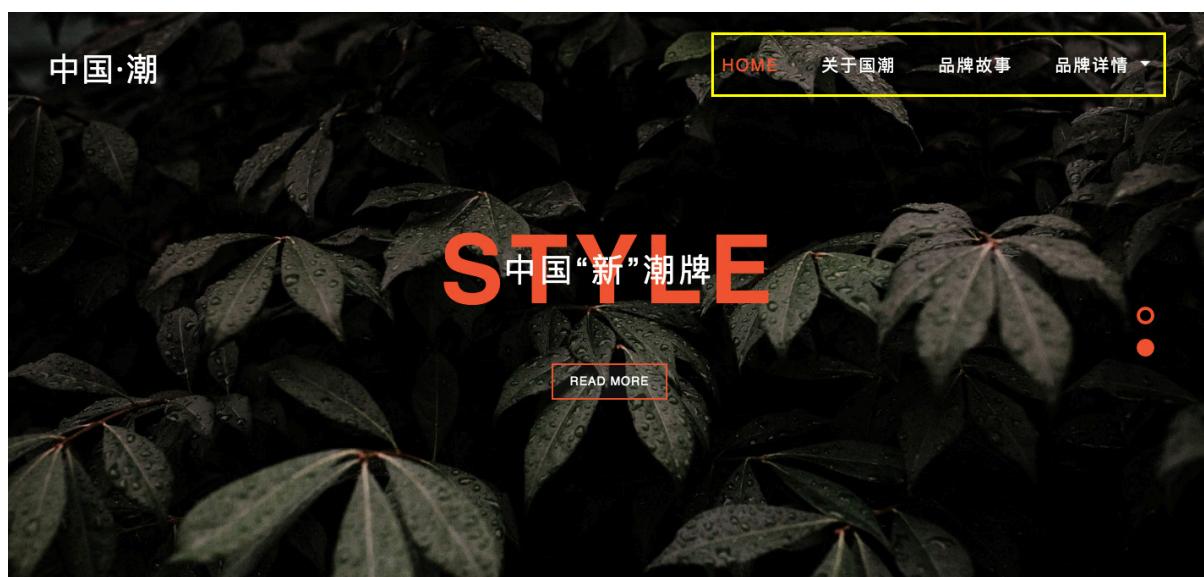
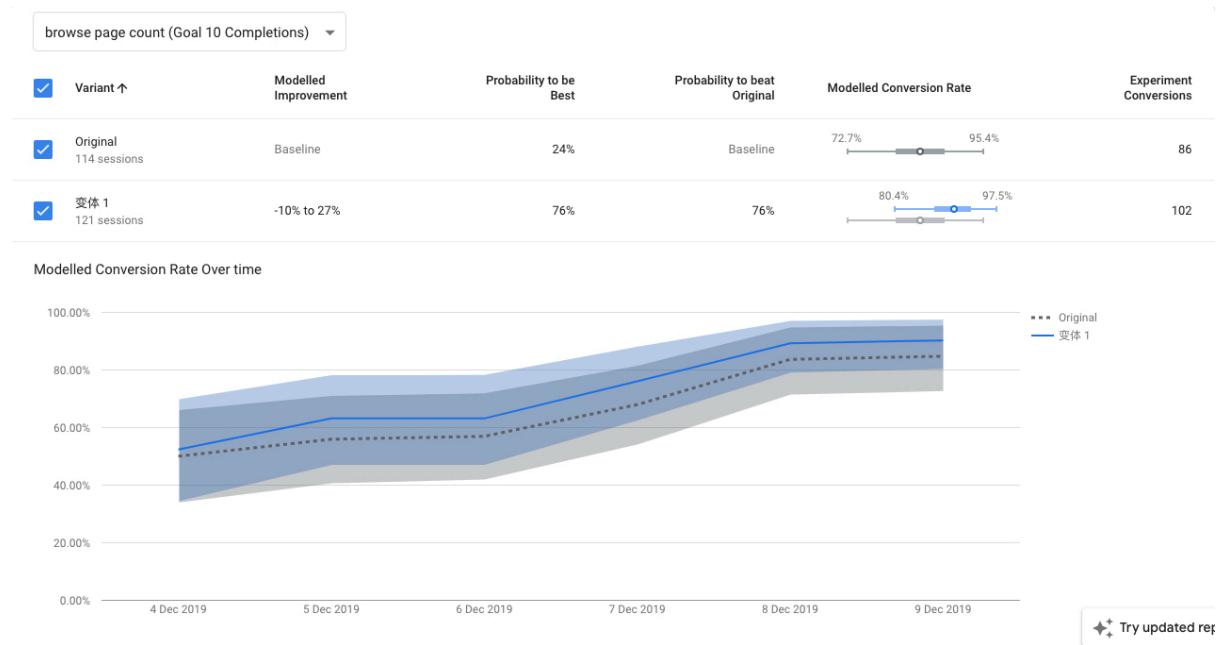


Figure 15 A/B test – Variant Version

After running the test for six days, the result confirmed my expectation. According to data shown in Figure 16 and 17, the conversion rate of variant version is higher than original version from beginning to end. This somehow proves that larger font size is easier to be noticed and then results in a higher conversion rate. However, the experiment duration is only six days with 239 sessions, which is not persuasive enough. More or longer tests should be conducted for a more precise conclusion.



16 A/B test – Result

Variant	Experiment Sessions	Experiment Conversions	gwoOutcomeRate
Original	123	95	77.24%
変体 1	124	105	84.68%

Show rows: 10 Go to: 1 1 - 2 of 2 < >

17 A/B test – Comparison based on conversion rates of goals

Web Analytics

The last step of the final project is to analyze the performance of my website. I promoted the website to target users and used Google Analytics for measurement. I started to promote the website on 4th December among my target users. And thanks to Google Analytics, I got a clear picture of the general performance of my website. After six-day's promotion, a total of 200 users visited my website with 261 sessions (see Figure 18).

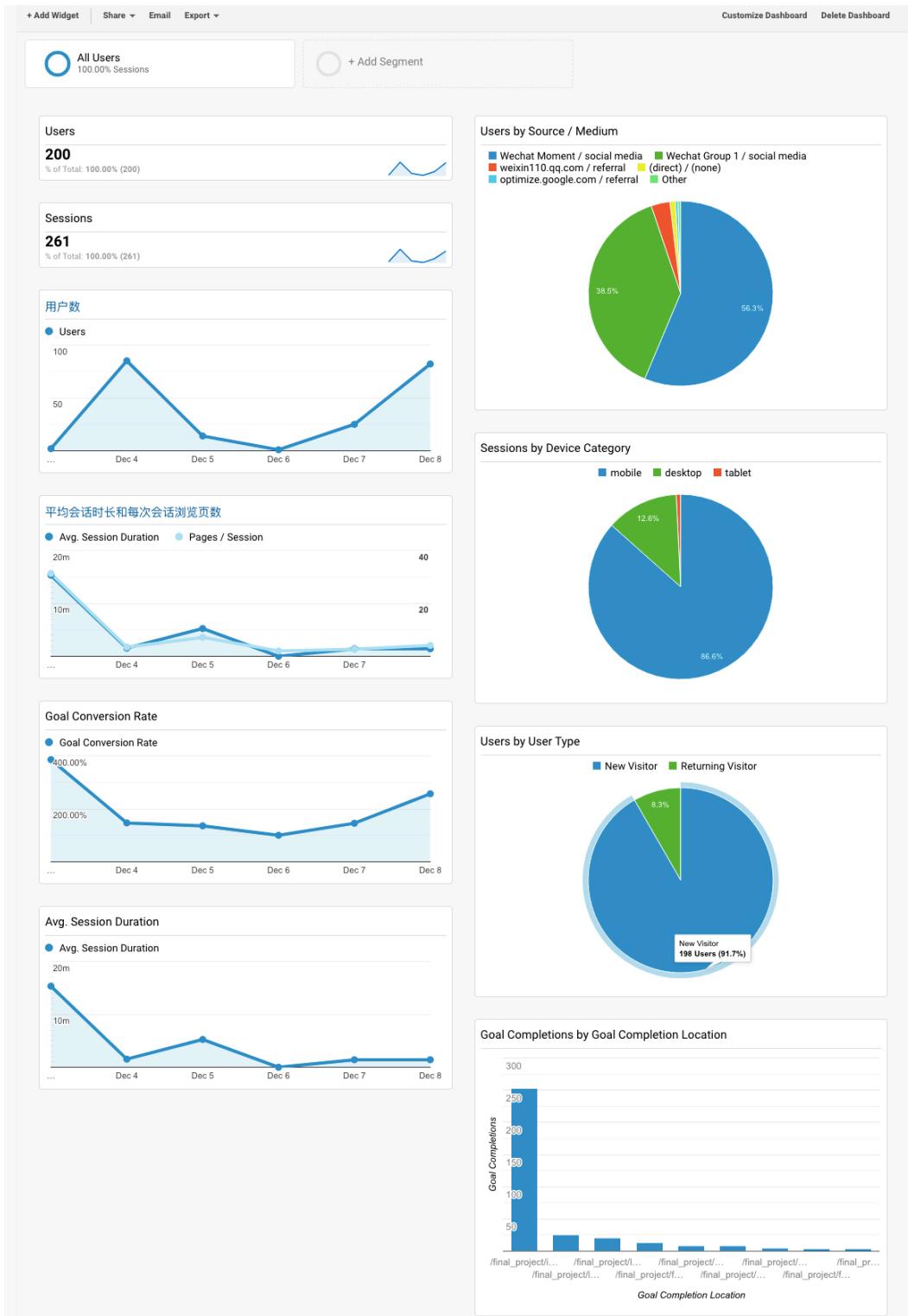


Figure 18 Dashboard

According to statistics showing in Figure 18, WeChat is the main traffic source among all channels and most visitors visit my website through WeChat Moment and WeChat group. This maybe because WeChat is the most commonly used social media either for me or for my target

users. I have hundreds of friends in WeChat and join tens of WeChat groups, which lays the foundation of attracting hundreds of users visiting my website.

Data also shows that 86.6% of users visited my website by mobile devices, this indicates that I should pay more attention to optimizing the mobile version for future improvement. At the same time, the desktop version cannot be ignore, since there are still 12.6% of users using computers to visit the website.

Besides, it's easy to find that the goal conversion rate is high but the average session duration is short. To see more details, I checked the report in Google Analysis (see Figure 19). Then I found that the high conversion rate maybe because I set 15 goals, which is a lot, and this also leads to more goal completions. While the short average session duration maybe because the content in each page need further improvement to be more attractive. It is also noticeable that the Home page acquires most visit, which is reasonable that Homepage is the first page to visit when users enter my website. Lining story page and detail page got more visits compared with other brand pages, which indicates that for further improvement, I should pay more attention to these two page, enrich their content and improve the design.

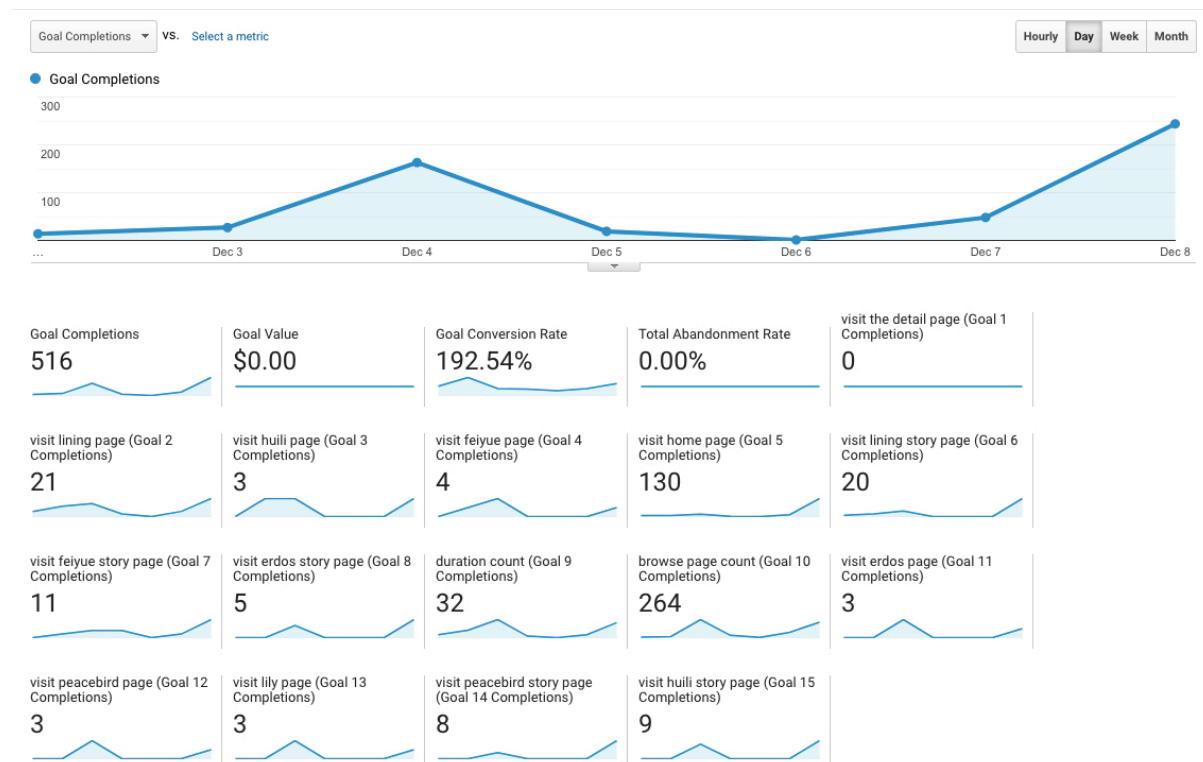


Figure 19 Goal Completion

From Figure 20 we can see that the average session duration is 2m 13s, which is one of the most important part that my website that need to improve. While, the bounce rate (1.49%) performs quite well. This may be either because the design of Homepage is attractive and user-friendly or because content and information contained in Homepage meet users' need and arouse their interests.

Users	Sessions	Bounce Rate	Session Duration
201	268	1.49%	2m 13s

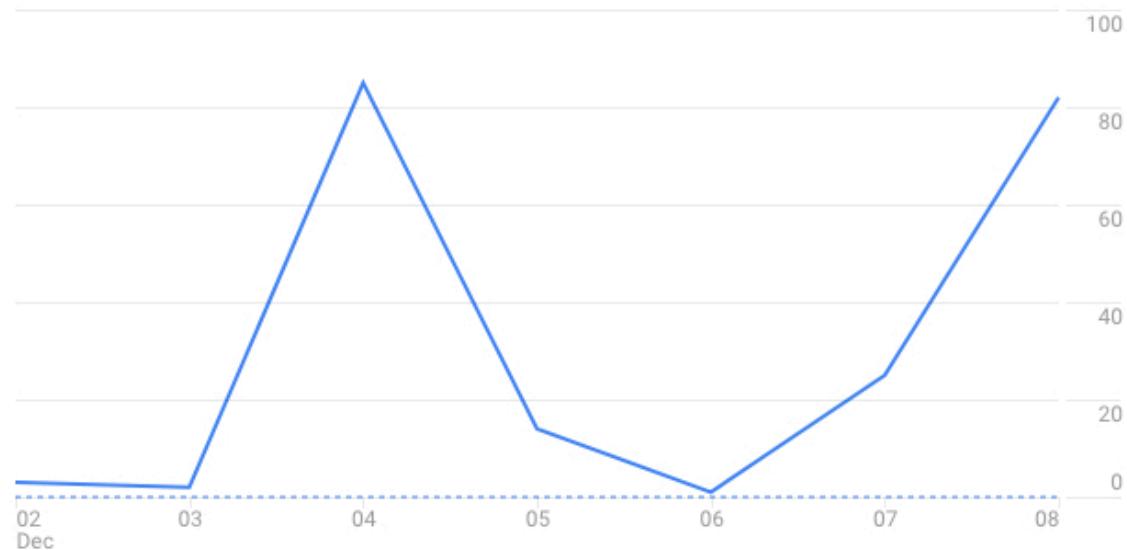


Figure 20 Traffic Overview

Conclusion

This is one of the most difficult but inspiring assignments I've ever complete. I experienced the whole journey of conceiving, design, building, promoting, and measuring a website. I realized the importance of defining problems and users' needs, which is the base of everything. Besides, during the process of developing this website, I became more skilled at HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. However, it took me most of time handling with coding, so the time left for data collection was limited, which is a pity. Last but not least, data analysis for the website is also crucial because it can remind you of things that are ignored and help you with further improvement.