University College of Northern Denmark

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Title of project: Aalborg Zoo Microsite

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**Synopsis**

The project is aimed to solve the problem, that has arisen during the last years regarding the lack of donations, and the impossibility to implement their projects.  
 Our client, Aalborg Zoo, has the issue connected to the Conservation Foundation. The problem can be solved by creating awareness amongst people about their Christmas Event which includes donations for AZCF. The product that we need to come up with is a responsive microsite for a campaign whose purpose is to promote Aalborg Zoo’s Christmas Eve event, focusing on raising donations for AZCF. This campaign would run throughout December 2019.

Project participants:

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Scope: on the end

Link to the solution: on the end

May the report and product be made public: ???

Date: 14.11.2018.

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# **Introduction**

*“Aalborg Zoo is Denmark's second biggest Zoo and in 2014, it was visited by 415,000 guests making it Aalborg's most popular attraction”.* (Visit Aalborg, 2016.) Likewise, Aalborg Zoo is offering a lot of opportunity and memories that everyone should experience.

Our job is to create a microsite for Aalborg Zoo where we are going to promote Christmas Eve event along with the donation campaign. The main reason why we are creating this website is because the last donation campaign was not very successful, and we believe, we can raise awareness among people with our microsite solution.

# **Problem description:**

Every year, Aalborg Zoo hosts a Christmas Eve event with free entry and a series of activities for both children and adults. They also make use of the occasion mention their projects which the guests are more than welcome to support.

Their new website has a dedicated subpage for each of their events, however, there is relatively little information since they communicate primarily through Facebook. The website contains quite a lot of information about Aalborg Zoo Conservation Foundation (AZCF), but due to the prioritization of the content, the subpage can seem aimed towards applications for fund recipients or potential collaboration partners.

Although they host over 10.000 guests every year, their previous attempts to raise funds for AZCF during the event showed disappointing results. Unfortunately, AZCF does not know the reason, but it could be the lack of a clear alignment of expectations.

The goal for the event has always been “to give a gift to the city and send off many happy guests”. The existing information does not emphasize the fundraising and only mentions one specific project. Therefore, another reason could be a mismatch between the cultural significance (and context) connected with Christmas Eve, and the serious message of the fundraising.

Based on their previous experiences, Aalborg Zoo now wishes to change their approach and create awareness about their fundraising as a period leading up to the Christmas Eve event. This is an opportunity but also a challenge precisely because of the two different mindsets: the conservation of nature and Christmas cheer with the family.

The problem, in this case, is that Aalborg Zoo is not provided with the necessary donations, in order to implement their projects.

The problem is mainly for the client because they offer a free entrance, and they are expecting more donations, meanwhile, the customers are not quite aware of the possibility of the donation.

The problem is relevant due to the fact that they cannot accomplish the projects without the donations. Without the project works they cannot stand out and notice themselves from the other zoos and also make them visible for a bigger audience.

This Problem should be solved by creating awareness and draw more attention to the projects and their importance as well.

The consequences of not solving the problem are going to lead to the shutdown of the different projects, and they cannot save wildlife. Although it will not have any impact on the Zoo as a tourist attraction.

# **Problem formulation:**

This project focuses on the message, with user understanding and information architecture as starting points. Moreover, there is an emphasis on the visual presentation and technical realization of the product.

The focus of this assignment is to create a microsite which focuses on raising awareness and make the donation part of the Christmas tradition. We will solve that by collecting data from the client meeting, user test, official site of Aalborg zoo ( www.alborgzoo.dk ), Black mamba’s website ( https://www.blackmambas.org/ ), and the Payamino project website ( http://www.payaminoproject.org.uk/ ).

The donation part is somehow hidden and as an attendee at the Aalborg Zoo during the Christmas time, the visitors may not necessarily know that there is a donation part too. In order to implement their projects, Aalborg Zoo needs to create awareness. So, how could we ensure the people that they can find the relevant information regarding the donation on the website?

# **Research method:**

We need to determine how we want to organize the studies in order to solve the issue. We are going to take everything step by step and research in detail in order to achieve all the knowledge that we need.

We start by looking at Aalborg Zoo’s website and find the relevant information for our case, after the client meeting double checks everything, and look for further information. In order to achieve the knowledge that we need, we are supposed to have a clear understanding of the problem, how is the money going to be used, and based on the user research we need to find out how the donation appeals to the users.

We agree on using the prototyping method because it is easy to use and is a simple way to compare different ideas as well as to communicate our thoughts; the interview method gives us a fresh and brief perspective and helps us gain an understanding of how people use our product because this is vital if we want to achieve high user satisfaction.{is that a quote?}

We also follow the waterfall model because it uses a clear structure and it transfers the information well, even if it would be harder to make changes during the whole process, it maintains the stages clearly defined.

We need information about the currently running projects like Black Mamba, Elephants, Payamino, and also information from the client meeting and the Christmas Eve Event in Aalborg Zoo. And we will collect the data by searching deeply on their website, we will attend the client meeting and also try to get through all the information on their website about the projects and events that they what to implement.

For creating a clear idea and gather together all our thoughts, we use Photoshop and the wireframe prototypes on paper (which can be seen on the appendices). We plan to finalize the product by using HTML&CSS and we plan to start with the mobile first design.

We also prepared some questions for the client meeting because we want to clarify which their projects are, what is the problem with the donation and how can we solve this issue, what is the average of people that are attending to their Christmas Eve Event annually and how it is related to the donation part.

The advantage about using the research method is that we get a lot of information about the client and a better understanding of the problem but on the other hand, the disadvantages would be the amount of time spent on prototyping and conducting the interview/ user test. The lack of user data means that we would need to make a quantitative research without having enough time and also resources.

# **Applied theory:**

We are using a lot of different theories on this project. Also, we believe that the theories will help us to create a successful website. Firstly, we are testing a lot of different fonts and font combination for this website. We are trying to find a perfect match between the different fonts. It is really important that the fonts match because want to accomplish the connection between fonts depending on the purpose of our website. Likewise, we are using Font joy website in order to try different fonts and in order to compare a various number of font combination. Finally, we come to the agreement to use two different fonts for this website - Source Serif Pro and Quicksand.

After choosing the perfect font combination, we decided to test our fonts in accordance with the website colours. Colour contrast checker on the Web AIM website is helping us to test and choose the colours suitable for people with visual disabilities. We are choosing website colours based on the colour harmony from the Aalborg Zoo website. Thanks to this website, we are able to test our colour contrast for normal, large text, graphical objects and User Interface components.

Likewise, we are following the rule of thumb while creating the mobile design. *“Hoober’s research shows that 49% of people hold their smartphones with one hand, relying on thumbs to do the heavy lifting. Clark took this even further and determined that 75% of interactions are thumb-driven. With this understanding of hand placement, we can conclude that certain zones for thumb movement apply to most smartphones.”* (Ingram, 2018) Based on this statistic, we are considering the position of the elements on our mobile site. Also, we want to make sure that our content on the mobile-site is reachable without any difficulties.

Moreover, one of the theories that we are using is - Gestalt principles. We are designing our website content based on similarity and proximity. With this theory, we are able to organize our content based on the specific rules which are going to give our page appealing look.

# **Analysis:**

The process of creating a website requires a lot of time and patience. We are agreeing that we are going to use the prototyping process while designing the microsite for Aalborg Zoo. Prototyping process is one of the best ways to come up with website design and ideas. We are choosing the prototyping process because it is easy to use, and it is the easiest way to compare different ideas. Also, prototyping is a simple way of communicating, it emphasizes user requirements and expectations and it reduces risk by exploring specific aspects of the system before making final decisions.

As it is written in Dam, R. & Siang, T, 2017. Design Thinking: Get Started with Prototyping, the prototype could be defined as being “*a simple experimental model of a proposed solution used to test or validate ideas, design assumptions and other aspects of its conceptualization quickly and cheaply, so that the designer/s involved can make appropriate refinements or possible changes in direction.”* We have learned that prototypes can take many forms, but they are tangible forms of our ideas. We believe that we can use prototyping as a form of research because it allows us to explore some problematic areas and at the same time, it allows us to think about how we could improve or what should we innovate. We also have the opportunity to test the prototypes, and we think that this is one of the most important things because in this way we can clarify some issues that we might have towards our ideas, and we could find out some of our users’ preferences or requirements, and in this way, we could create new and improved solutions. Likewise, we are following four different stages of the prototyping process by Kussmaul & Jack (2006.) - Prioritizing, Creating, Reviewing and Reacting.

We are deciding to create questions for the user research that can help us to create the microsite. We expect that the answers that we are going to receive from users will help us to decide and make the whole process easier. (see the interview transcript in Appendices)

The first stage of prototyping we are starting by discussion, with every member of the group involved. We are sharing our opinions and thoughts about how the final product should works, as well as the visual identity of the microsite. Because every single person is unique and has different ideas, all of us sketched our visions and concepts. After that, we are stating one's case and convey the suggestion why we believe our prototype would be a good choice to realize. After we finished with the basic sketch of the website, we are slowly starting to add more and more details.

Furthermore, we are starting to get more into the details with the discussion what content should we display and what kind of colours and pictures we should use. We agreed and disagreed on some of the decisions, but despite that, all of us approved the prototype we decided to realize. We have come to a conclusion to use Christmas colours and pictures of baby animals since that could encourage awareness among people and that could make people donate. This decision is based on our user research. We asked the question, based on our hypothesis, that a good choice of the images can influence a person to donate. All of the answers confirm our hypothesis. As the best match for our question, we consider the answer: *“Definitely! Whenever I see a picture of a cute animal, it attracts me to click and read more information about it.”* (Interviewee B, see appendices)

We are starting with the prototyping process by creating the basic website structure that contains a header, section, article and footer elements. During the first process of prototyping, we are choosing to create a one-page solution for all screen sizes. The goal is to present all the content on the one webpage, which is going to ease up navigation through the website and present all the accessible information. We decided to sketch our microsite starting with the mobile-first version, and after that with the tablet and desktop version (see Figure 1 in appendices).   
The main reason why are we choosing to design mobile-first is that we have a lot of content and a lot of information about Aalborg Zoo’s Christmas Event. With mobile-first approach we are having an insight about the size of our content and how can we arrange it on the website.

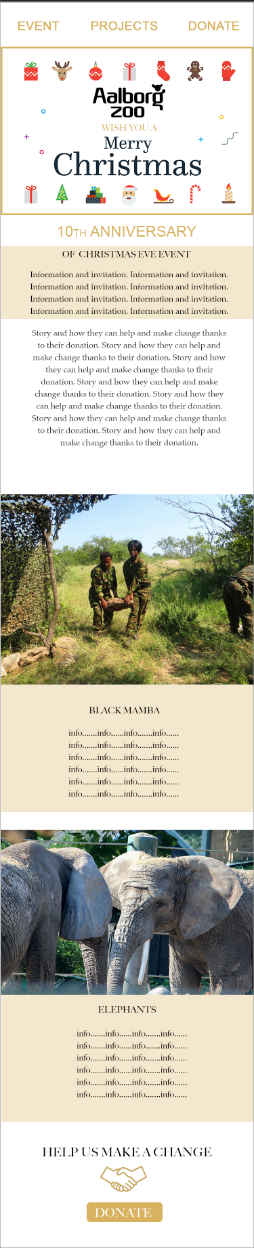
Due to fact that we decided to start with the mobile-first technique, we are also starting by prototyping for a mobile device, at the first place.

In order to assure, all of us are sharing the same ideas for the final visual identity of the microsite, we are deciding to create a Photoshop layout based on our previous sketches.   
The navigation is placed on the top of the microsite, and by reason of one-page solution, we are choosing to make it fixed on the position while scrolling the website. We are also adding a smooth scroll component to the navigation. We consider that the combination between fixed navigation and smooth scroll is perfect, also that is very modern, and it can be seen on many websites these days.

The first element is the image with a Christmas theme to command attention to event closely connected with Aalborg Zoo for 10 years in this time of year. *“Images provide an opportunity to create an emotional connection with visitors — a big, bold photograph or illustration of an object makes a strong statement and creates a stunning first impression. This layout is great when you need to demonstrate only one product/service and focus a user’s attention on it.”* (Tristan, 2018)

In the next section, we are placing a short introduction and invitation to the Christmas Eve event. The welcome text is going to be five to seven sentences long, so it is easy to figure out what this microsite is all about.

The content is aimed at users, who are more likely to be interested in this event. In this case is our focus on families and young people. We are going to research, what content we need for the website and also how we are going to find it. First, we are looking for content on Aalborg Zoo’s website and gathering everything relatable. Then we are going to have questions in the client meeting as well if we have any specific content needs. The website progress and improvement can be seen through the sketching history. We are coming up with the different types of design ideas and the different arguments for every idea. Thanks to this process we are not having any difficulties while working on this project.

Underneath the invitation, we are writing about how the event became a tradition, and we are pointing out how this time of year should be focused on helping and carrying. In that way, we are trying to raise awareness with regards to possibilities of donating.

The Projects section consist of the Images and information about each of the currently running projects. Looking through the projects we see that they currently have three projects running. These projects have their own website as well, so we can gather more information from those as well. The Black Mamba’s website is really detailed, and it is really hard to cut down the information to a quickly readable format. The elephants and the Payamino project do not have that much content so that is easier to manage.

We are choosing to use a grid to create this part, which will make the process easier due to fact that we want to make this part to be different on the mobile from the other devices.

On the mobile will be structure, of this section, designed as one column and six rows. The structure of the tablet and desktop version will have two columns and three rows with the *“Alternating layout, which alternates the placement of image and text on each horizontal row. The zigzag layout’s recent popularity is likely due to the fact that it breaks the monotony and adds visual interest to a long page.”* (Flaherty, 2018)

The last part of the microsite is aimed at the donation. To address the user, we are using the slogan: "Help us make a change." To emphasize the meaning we are adding the image of shaking hands, which is a sign of helping and supporting. *"Using visual communication is crucial to an overall strategic communication plan."* (Boatman, 2018)

During this stage, we are deciding not only about the placement of the elements but also about their visual appearance. We are agreeing to keep the look of the website simple and pure. To emphasize the Christmas themes, we are using gold colour on white background, with red details on the top image. Also, we are researching the commercial-free images, based on the content that is going to be displayed on the website.

Based on our sketching and previous steps, we are deciding to make a basic structure in HTML, and after we agreed on the look of the photoshop mock-up, we started coding right away.

Firstly, we are doing the wireframe part and the navigation (see Figure 4 in appendices). Then we going to start adding all the pictures and text in. After we got the pictures in place and the text as well, we starting to work on the button and the CSS of the website. After the wireframe, we decided to use a grid system, that contains the different part of the side. This is a good choice because we can make the responsiveness of the website much better with the grids. Now after the CSS for the mobile version is in place, we are doing the different media queries and we are adjusting all the elements of the website to multiple screen resolutions.

We are agreeing on putting a donate option on the website. Even though we do not want to make the website as a dedicated donate website, because that is not the task, but a donation option is nice to have. We are thinking about adding a form or making a new page for the donation option and fields, but we are not sure yet. So, the decision landed on a button with a drop-down function to hide the content and agreed that this donation section with the button should go at the bottom of the website after the articles, so if someone is really dedicated, then the option is there to make a donation for a good cause. We are also trying to figure out how this section and button should look like on different devices with different screen sizes.

We are planning to make the Donation button connected to the donation form after making the button active, to maintain the one-site solution. After trying different ways and failing, we are succeeding with the solution by the checkbox. We are creating a simple form consist of fields for basic information, about a user, which are necessary for any online payment, for example, full name, card number, date of card expiration, amount and so on. In our user interview, we confirmed the hypothesis that for the user it is better to see options for the amount of donated money by the answer: Yes, with this range, I could easily see what's the reasonable price to donate. (Interviewee B, see appendices) On the other hand, the second answer was fundamentally different: No, I don't like it, because when I donate something, I want to be in charge in charge how much money I want to donate, and I don't want to choose from different options, so I just want to tell the price and send it. (Interviewee C see appendices) To make a compromise, we are not using options, to choose from, for the amount area, but we are creating the placeholder inside of the field, saying 150kr, to show the users, that they don't have to donate thousands of crowns to make a change and help. At the same time, we are leaving the amount of donated money on their decision.

After asking Andy about how many screen size specifications could we have in the CSS, we are making at least 5 ones to display the website in the best format possible. Because we are going with the mobile first option that means that we need to add quite a bit of CSS into the media queries. The website has a fixed menu bar at the top on all different screens. We are also not sure how to make the articles both visually and technically pleasing. Because the articles are going to take up a lot of screen space and we do not want to make the users overwhelmed when they see that the articles are quite long. So now we are trying to decide whether the mobile page should have overall less text or how we can hide the text and make it available with one click, and how we can make that without using any kind of JavaScript, only pure CSS.

# **Problem solution:**

After collecting data from the client meeting, user test, official site of Aalborg zoo, Black mamba’s website, the Payamino project website and after analyzing the whole case, we succeeded in creating a website that engages the donation into a Christmas Tradition. We focused on making a microsite that is raising awareness amongst people about the donation and at the same time, we tried to put the relevant information regarding the projects in relation to the donation, in order to ensure people that they can find what they need.

Conclusion:

-Reflecting upon the changes between the final product and iterations before and the methods that we’ve used.

-How the first interview helped us with finalizing the product.

-Interface difference and how the usability is on different devices.

-Gathering the results and what we’ve achieved during the process.

The whole Project went really smoothly we have not had any arguments at all. At first, we did the researching and figured out what the content will be roughly on the microsite that we are creating for Aalborg zoo. Then came the Prototyping. This part was really quick, and everyone was satisfied with the results. We had the client meeting, and after it, we made sure that the prototypes could include all the parts that we originally put in (we were concerned about the donate button). After it was the design process and figuring out a Christmassy colourway and design for the whole website, but in a restrained way, because that seems more like Aalborg zoo, so we went with a washed-out golden colour mainly. We were writing the report almost every day, so we could have a pretty good overview of the process. The final microsite was far better than anyone expected it to be at the first place.

# **Process reflection:**

We found the whole group pretty balanced out, it was easy to make the project because of that. Everyone was on the same page, it was easy to figure out when to do what and that made the whole process easy and quick. The Report was a new thing, and we had struggled with it at the beginning, but eventually, we could figure it out. We had all the materials on GitHub and that is why it was easy to collaborate on everything. Most of the work was done from home, but the discussions about the work we had in the class or booked a room for it after classes. We would be happy to be in this same group once again.

# **Literature list:**

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-Samantha, 2016. The Thumb Zone: Designing for Mobile Users [online] Available at: < https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2016/09/the-thumb-zone-designing-for-mobile-users /> [Accessed 30. November 2018].

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# **Appendices:**

# Interview transcript:

1. Do you consider yourself as a person who is influenced by images or stories of animals connected to any kind of donation?

A: I think I am… It is different to see, for example, a baby lion, that needs help, from, I don’t know…alligator.

B: Definitely! Whenever I see a picture of a cute animal, it attracts me to click and read more information about it.

C: Yes, I think I am influenced by the images, and well I think it is important to have images that are able to convince me to donate money.

2. If the donation form is too complicated and long (takes more than 2 minutes and include registration or e-mail confirmation.) are you still willing to donate?

A: Well, If I would be really decided that I want to donate that it is okay to spend some time on it, I guess.

B: Honestly, it depends on my mood and the main cause of the donation.... if it is something that is really touching me, then I am ready to spend some time filling the information.

C: Umm well, I wouldn't really say so, because I think it's the most important thing to have a proper website what doesn't require lots of time and I can just use easily and simply.

3. Would you like to see a range of payment options as well as your own option?

A: It would be good to have some prepared options to just click on.

B: Yes, with this range, I could easily see what's the reasonable price to donate.

C: No, I don't like it, because when I donate something, I want to be in charge in charge how much money I want to donate, and I don't want to choose from different options, so I just want to tell the price and send it

# Project work diary

The first day of the project 19.11.2018

-start working on the front page of the report

-search for relevant information to put on the microsite

-try to categorize the content

The second day of the project 21.11.2018

-start sketching the microsite

-start to read and explore the Aalborg Zoo website

The third day of the project 22.11.2018

-start to take notes about the relevant tips that the teachers were giving to us

-work on the sketches

-come with new ideas

24.11.2018

-read the report and know what the problem is and what is the solution

-user test

-conclusion

-start with the problem formulation

-make the problem solution sort of a recipe

-focus on „the how” of the assignment (How do we plan to solve the problem?)

26.11.2018

-focus on the research method and start writing the questions that need to be answered

27.11.2018

-having a clear idea on the research method and having all the questions answered

-start making an example of how the microsite should look like, on a photoshop document

28.11.2018

-start writing on the report

-share the tasks

-book a room to write on the report together

-gather all the ideas

29.11.2018

-continue writing on the report

-structure the report briefly

30.11.2018

-have a clear view of the information that we should put on our microsite

1.12.2018

-start coding the microsite

-try to figure out how to code the button without JavaScript

2.12.2018

-succeeded in coding the button with our lecturers’ help

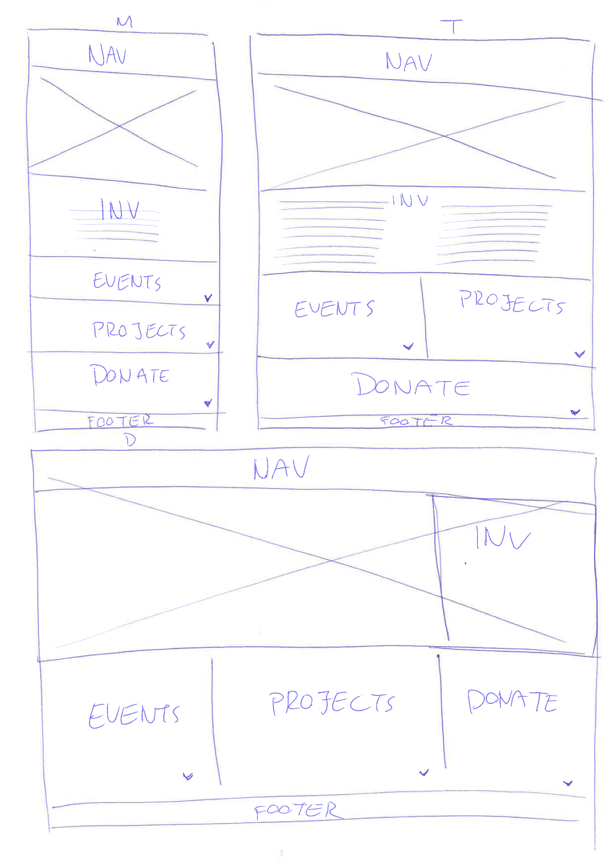
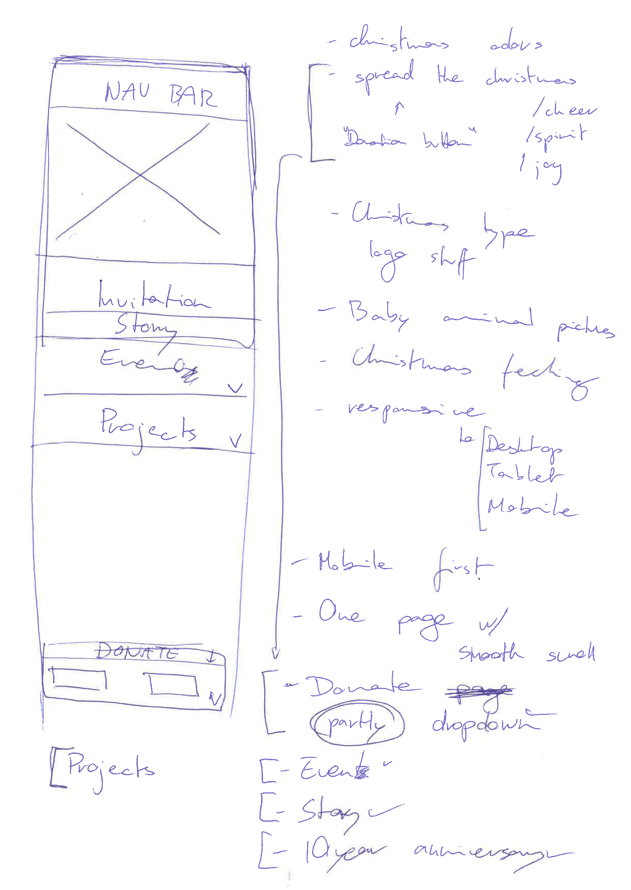
-continued on writing the report

3.12.2018

-almost finishing our microsite

5.12.2018

-try to put together everything that we wrote for the report

 Figure 1 Figure 2

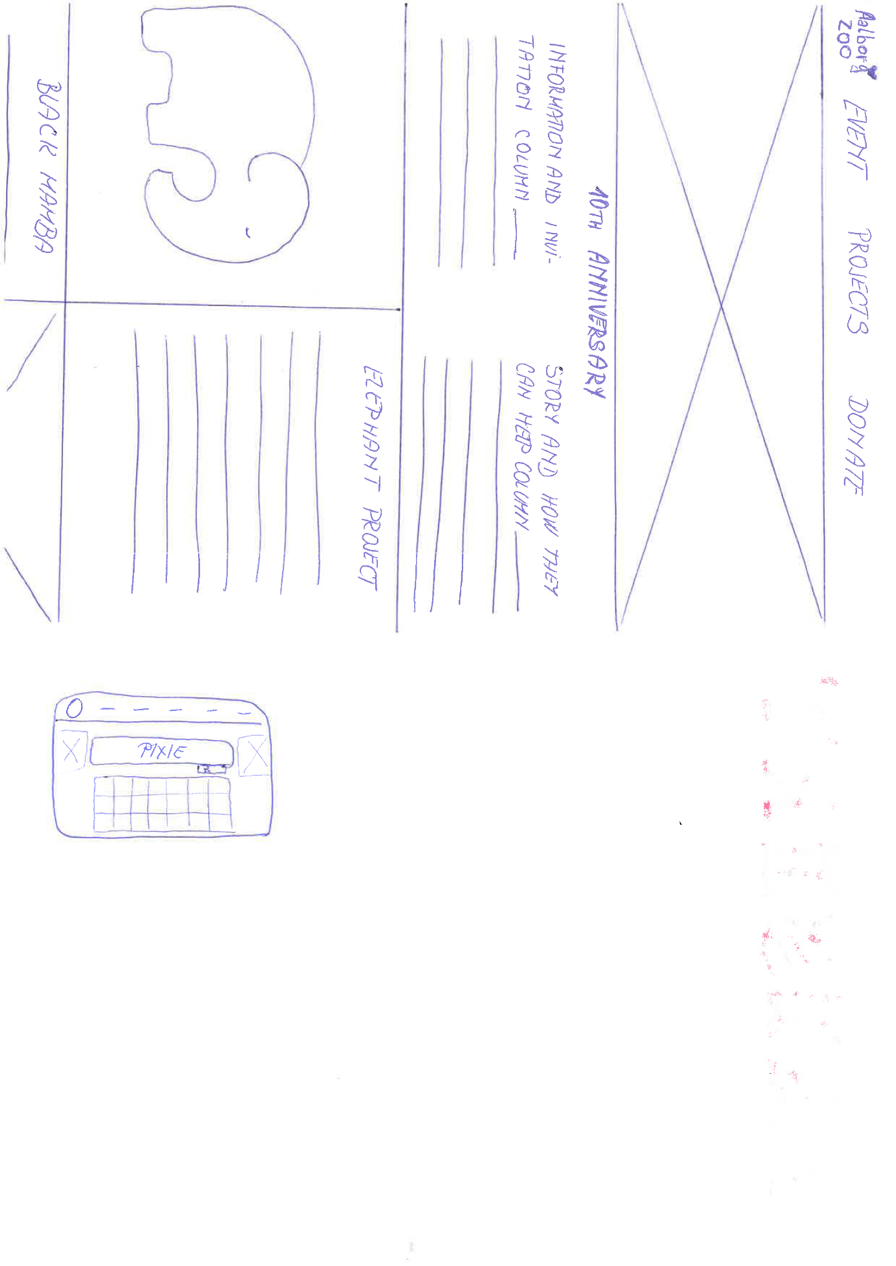
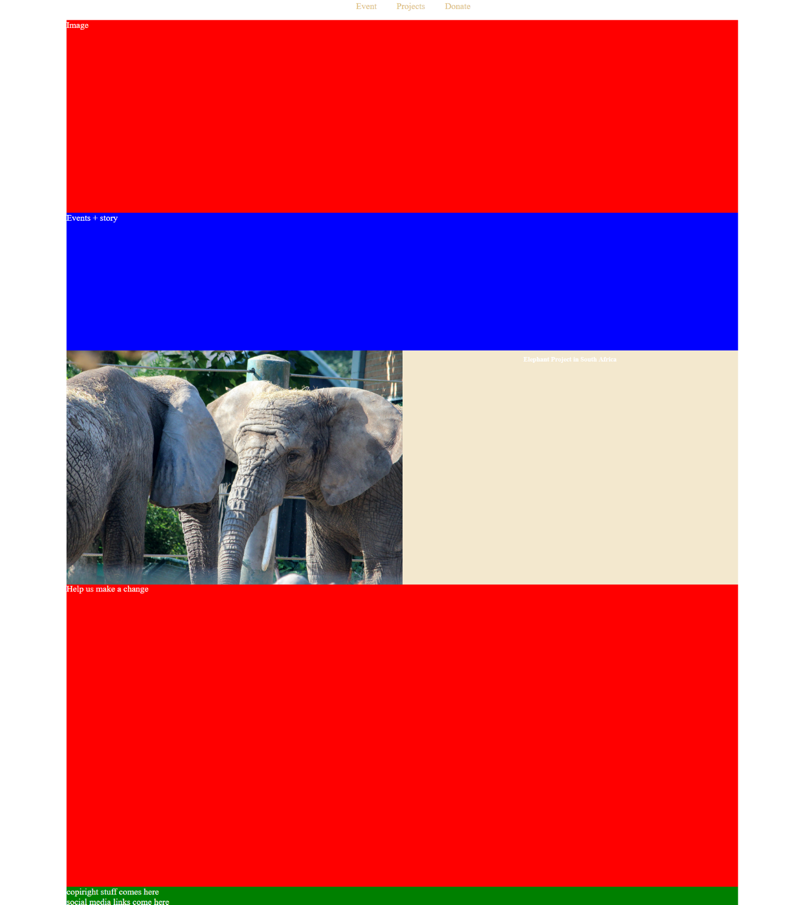


Figure 3 Figure 4

