Project 2 Rationale

1. Audience

The main target audience for the revamping of the Ithaca Apple Harvest Festival is local Ithacans, mainly those who consume organic and local products. For convenience sake I define them as "townies" and I note that they are extremely environmentally and socially conscious consumers. This excludes Cornell University and Ithaca College students since more locals go to this festival than students. The reason for this is unclear but it might have something to do with the festival being more family oriented and caters to the "hippy" characteristics that Ithacans are known for: young, organic, localvore, vegetarian/vegan, etc.

I went about the festival without having to ask questions. I surreptitiously went around eaves dropping on peoples' conversations and discovered that roughly half of the attendees drove to the event and the other half took the TCAT. As I predicted, most were very environmentally conscious. I would say the major needs these people needed were clear directions to the festival, information on where to park, map of events, and times of events, farms / local stores represented. I would say most attendees were interested in trying the various apple edible products such as the funnel cake and other pastries. Of course, many were equally as interested in trying fresh apples. They are motivated to come because the festival celebrates the local culture and promotes green thinking in addition to offering delectable apple products. There are few impediments for people not to attend the festival, I guess the main one would be transportation. I believe most attendees would have like to have seen better organization in the website and clear navigation to important things like driving directions, TCAT routes that go to the festival, opening and closing times of the festival, and important or noteworthy events going during the festival.

2. Reason for Redesign

As mentioned before, the website needs clearer organization so that information important to attendees can be easily found. The old site had all the vital information clumped together in one page. I would start with a top page navigation bar with dynamic links or tabs to facilitate information finding. The color scheme would be earth tone colors that represent a green and organic way of life. In addition, the font would be in the Sans-Serif family to make words crisp and easy to read off a screen. The site would be modeled after an F-layout for maximum search efficiency of important items and to grab the users' attention. In general the architecture will include at top-page navigation bar, headers, uniform page-layout, and footer.

3. Design

The new design has images that I've created such as the logo and backgrounds using Photoshop and Illustrator. All designs have earth-tone colors to match the "natural" feel of Ithaca and the festival. The logo represents literally the whole concept of the fair—apples—and the circular design is indicative of unity, which is what the fair is trying to denote. The photos were taken from personal friends and off the Facebook Ithaca Apple Festival Album. Overall I attempted to organize the information on Apple Festival into five links in a navigational bar, located at the top of the page so that users could easily view it. The five links denote the most important reasons for visiting the website: to find out how to get there, what things are going on at Apple Festival, and who will be there (Directions, Events, and Vendors, respectively). The navigation bar, headers, and content are organized in an F-layout because this is the most efficient in terms of having users of the site find the information they need.

The main colors of the site are hues of red, green and tan. Red was used to obviously denote apples, green to represent a peace and nature (since most items at the festival are local and organic), and tan was supposed to resemble wood—further adding to a natural, organic look for the website. The CRAP breakdown is as follows:

- Contrast: Green and red are complements of each other therefore contrast well, the tan border of the main page makes the site stand out even further. The fonts Gloria Hallelujah (navigation bar links) and custom font Gochi Hand (found only on the index page) serve to add to playful nature of the festival them as well as look natural and stark. Raleway was chosen as the main font for the content since it is easily readable and clean looking.
- Repetition: Every page has a similar layout, navigation bar, logo, content, even down to the footer design is the same. The only exception is the index page, but that makes sense since it is the first page users will see therefore must be truly unique.
- Alignment: All text and images are aligned left on every page but the index. As aforementioned the index had to be more visually intricate and therefore everything is centered on this page.
- Proximity: There is a healthy amount of padding in each content division, with a header. After each "blurb" of information there is a space to delineate a new topic.

4. User Test

The user test was to see if someone can find where the festival is located, how to get there, what kinds of activities will be going on, and what kinds of vendors will be there. I initially told my two subjects (my friends Christina N.and Christopher G.) nothing prior

to showing them the site. They were both tested individually. I simply just asked if they could do the following once I showed the website:

1. Find out what the Ithaca Apple Festival is about
2. Once you find out what it is about, find out how to get to the festival, potentially looking for a directions
3. Find how to navigate at the event (where a specific stand at the festival will be located)
4. Find out when the festival is taking place
5. Find out what events will occur
6. Find out which farms / stores will be at the event

The results were mostly positive.

My friend Christina (Cornell student and female), who actually is very familiar with Apple Festival and is a vegetarian and eco-conscious (target audience) found the site to be quite appealing. One of her main concerns was that the home page was too bland. In going through the test, she could easily do tasks 1-2. Once she got to task 3 she had some difficulty because the map was too small to read on the website (JPG image). Tasks 4-6 where a breeze as she could correctly use the top page navigation bar to find everything she needed.

My friend Christopher (Cornell student and male) was not familiar with the festival and thus was a good subject to use. Tasks1-2, and 4-6 where easy for him, as expected conring the success Christina had. Yet task 3 presented a problem because the map was not useable since it was so small. He also had positive feedback on the design of the site and suggested that some bright colors be used to make the site "jump."

5. Designs with Test Results in Mind

 After performing the tests I learned the glaring issue with my site was the map of the festival event locations. I used a Jquery map to have the user zoom in. Also I changed the location of the about link to the second most right (I originally had it leftmost of the nav bar).