

Kari Whiteside
Ahsan Syed
David Roster
Scotty Demoney
Marco Chavez

Design Decisions for IV Lookup

For our website, IV Lookup, we wanted the design to be simple, clean, and easy to use and navigate. We decided to make the home page very minimalistic, with a beautiful picture of Isla Vista at the top to intrigue the user, and a short description of the website's purpose underneath to quickly inform the user of what we are all about. At the top of the page (on every page of our website) we have a navigation bar with links to each important tab: Home, Isla Vista Tour, Landlords, Add a Review, and Support. We designed navigation of our website this way because a nav bar makes each page very easy to find, keeps our pages consistent, and permits easy reversal of actions. The nav bar also supports an internal locus of control, giving the user the power to browse any page of our website that he/she desires. We decided not to have more than 5 tabs, as to reduce the user's short term memory. Another design decision that is consistent throughout the entire website is the use of a light gray box at the top around the title of the page, which allows the user to quickly know what that particular page is all about, with a modern look that is very pleasing to the eye. The box includes a large, bold title to catch the user's attention, and a smaller, more specific description of the page to give the user a better understanding of what it is for.

For the map page, we designed it so that the map is on the left and all of the possible filters are on the right side in a sidebar, keeping our map consistent with the maps on many other websites so it is intuitive to use. Giving the users specific filters is useful because it keeps the user from searching anything else but the properties we have support for, preventing errors.

For the landlords page, we wanted to show the user a list of landlords in a way that they would get a nice overview of each landlord without having to go to the detail page. We included the name of the company, the logo, the average rating, and their contact information to give a nice summary and keep it simple. We also included in each entry a link to that company's detail page, a link to their website, and a link to the map page. All of these are in Dodger Blue to emphasize the fact that they are links (keeping consistent with other links on the internet), and we gave them all icons that match what they link to, as to make them more clear and noticeable. We made the landlord name large and in bold so that they could scroll through and notice each name without having to read the smaller details.

When you click on the link "See Details and Properties" in any landlord entry in the list, a new tab is opened for you for the details page so that you can save your spot in the list and have as many landlord details pages open as you like. This page has a very simple, clean look as well. At the top, we have the company's name and logo, and right underneath we have the information section, so that all of the company's information is in one place on the page. In the properties section, we have a simple side scroller showing the address and an image of all of the properties owned by that particular landlord. We decided to keep this part very simple because the details of specific properties can be very complicated, so we let the user click on the thumbnails to go to the property's detail page, in order to view all of the details. Also the side scroller allows the user to get a sense of how many properties this landlord owns, especially

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because it automatically rotates every few seconds. We also found it to be very aesthetically pleasing, with the simple entries and mesmerizing animation. For the reviews and ratings section, we decided to have an average rating and rating breakdown at the top, in order for the user to get a sense of how good people think the landlord is, without having to read every single rating and review. But if you are that type of person who likes to read all of the reviews, they are all provided below. We organized the details page in this way to keep it consistent with other websites, such as Yelp and Amazon, where the important information is at the top, and the ratings and reviews appear at the very bottom.

The property detail page is designed similarly to the landlords page and the landlord detail page. When you click on a property, a new tab is opened for the detail page for the reasons explained above. We provide, at the top in the gray box, the address of the property and an image of it so it is clear what property you are viewing. Then, designed in the same manner as the landlords list, we provide a list of every unit at that property. In each row item for a unit, we show the monthly rent, deposit, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, utilities included, and parking. These are all of the important pieces of information that people look for in an IV apartment, so we provided them all in one place. Below that, we have ratings and reviews of that specific property, so that people can see reviews about living there (“the sinks always break” or “the surrounding neighbors are really loud because it’s right next to a frat”) rather than just reviews about the company itself. All of the reviews for each of a company’s properties are aggregated into a list for the general landlord reviews, so users can get an overall feel of what it is like to rent from that company and what their properties are like.

On to the next tab: Add a Review. Adding a review is a pretty specific thing to have its own tab, but we wanted people to be able to find it easily if that is the reason they are visiting our website. We didn’t want them to have to go through the list of landlords or lists of properties just to find which one they want to review. We wanted to give the users a tab for this so they could go straight to adding a review after landing on our site. To add a review, the user must choose their address from the drop down, but they don’t get to choose the landlord. Once they choose an address, we will automatically know which landlord it is under. We decided to do it like this to protect the integrity of the reviews, so that people couldn’t just come on and write a review about a landlord they do not have experience with. We also did the addresses in a drop down to prevent errors, so it is not possible for the user to type their address incorrectly. Once they choose an address, they get to choose a rating by clicking on the yellow boxes that represent stars (giving the user a visual representation of their rating), write a title, write their name, and write the review. If the user tries to submit the review without filling out a form, then a yellow box appears at the top, telling them to “Fill in the form completely!”, and if they fill in the form completely and then submit, a green box appears at the top saying “Review Added!”. We made it like this in order to offer informative feedback, so the author of the review knows what went wrong, or that their review was saved successfully.

Last, we designed the support page similarly to the add a review page. Once you send your message to support, a huge “Thank You!” is displayed, giving the user informative

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feedback and telling them that we will get back to them shortly. Then we provide a blue button saying "Continue to Home Page", in order to design the dialog to yield closure, by directing the user back to Home.