

**Team:** Default Gestalts

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**Project sponsor:** Dr. Tim Maciag (ENSE 271 Lecturer)

### **Business need/opportunity**

The South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (SSCF) needs us to find a way to make their Vital Signs PDF report more interactive by creating a website that people can engage with, creating more empathy and relatability with the communities in need. The SSCF hopes to integrate community stories, and connect these stories and the community data to the UN Sustainable Development Framework to help community members understand how the work of local organizations make a significant impact on the work towards the global development goals. Through the interactions with the report, the goal is to call the community to rally towards action on these community issues. Ideally, the interactive report motivates and inspires people to donate their time and resources to improving their community.

As part of course-based learning activities, to work alongside the SSCF to explore new and innovative web designs that inspire people to action around community needs. High-level guidelines, principles, constraints

### **Reflections on project planning, execution, & closing**

- State selected north star & carryover customers selected
  - NorthStar (target) customer: The donors are the NorthStar customers as they are the ones that will be engaging with the website the most. We want these donors to feel like they can relate to the community that they are donating to and making an impact on real life problems.
  - Carryover customers: One of the carryover customers include the charities as they will be the ones on the receiving end of the donations and can let people know how much is being donated where and the gap of what is needed in each community. Other carryover customers include volunteers and government officials as they will keep up with the progress of donations and be more engaged to donate themselves. Also, the community itself are carryover customers because they would be more aware of ongoing projects in their area.
- Summarize assumptions made and constraints uncovered
  - Limits were set by WordPress and its functionality. Some ideas, like creating responsive maps, were not implemented due to difficulty of operating with WordPress. Limitation was also set by first experience with WordPress. Every feature had to be explored and experimented with to find its use in our design.

Due to this, some elements in design were changed, some were dropped, and new things were added.

- Clear structure of the data was not accessible due to not having an updated report, so data from last year was used to determine the structure of the website and information.
- Client's feedback had a big impact on our progress that changed prototypes and prepared solutions.
- Summarize key findings from affinity diagramming, empathy mapping
  - Affinity diagram allowed us to see insights in the company itself. SSCF is a public and nonprofit volunteer sector that guides donors to help the community. This allowed us to change our thought process that would be more similar to the organization. The diagram also helped us prioritize what customer wants the most. The first priority was to keep users engaged on the website and to do so, things like interactive charts, images, links, different visuals, and clear filter options had to be implemented.
  - By creating an empathy map, we gained a better understanding of the emotional and behavioral factors that motivates SSCF in changing their approach of creating different representation for Vital Signs. We discovered the desire for convenience and ease of use, so we focused on creating a template that is simple and intuitive to navigate, with clear and concise instructions. Also, the desire for social connection and community, so we focused on incorporating social features like impact stories, positive and motivational pictures, pleasant color scheme.
- Discuss the initial & evolution of your USM/MVP (why is what you produced an MVP?)
  - In the first iteration of our user story map, we had included features such as the ability to log in and specify what region the user is in so results could reflect that. This idea was thrown after our first meeting with the SSCF representative who said the website should not require the user to login as it is simply an addition to the SSCF website. In the next few iterations, we decided to think more about what the client was really looking for and decided we needed to include a heavier focus on the visuals and immediate impact on the user as soon as they opened the page. We soon added easy to understand visuals to our MVP1 as we understood this has the biggest impact on the user. During our meets, we also heard from the client that one of the biggest functionalities he wanted to see was the ability to search and filter the data. This is one of the main reasons for this project, since the current report is too static, we were tasked with making it more static and readable by filtering and showing only the data the user wants to see. Another

MPV1 task we added was the importance of the user seeing the progress and needs of the charities and communities in the form of a statistical graph.

- Summarize prototyping activities and usability evaluation findings (ensure to include feedback and comments gathered from the customer and your student colleagues and how the feedback/comments guided/changed and informed your design ideas and final solution. Ensure you discuss how your team linked design ideas back to a minimum of three topics discussed in class relating to people-centered design (affordances, gestalt, constraints, etc.)
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- Summarize your final WordPress solution. Include screenshots of your final solution, linking back to prototyping activities, feedback/comments gathered, and lecture topics

### **Reflections on project results**

- Summarize how you felt about this project (likes/dislikes)
  - We were all excited to work with a real client to solve a real world problem that could potentially be used and maintained in the future. We enjoyed having a consistent meeting with the SSCF representative to receive feedback on our thoughts and ideas regarding the direction of the product. This prepares us for a real world agile workflow that we could see in a career post-grad.
  - This project allowed us to truly apply what we were learning in class, allowing us to put theory of design principles into an actual real world setting. Not only building confidence in our skills but also in our knowledge.
- Summarize what went well during the project
  - Each of us had our own strengths and we found a way to utilize them to maximize effort as a group. Another thing that went well was that the three of us got along well and were able to easily ask for help or feedback from one another which made difficult challenges easier.
  - Discussions and problem solving were a strong suit for us. Developing the affinity and empathy map went well, and adjustment to the storyboard.
- Summarize what not went well during the project
  - The timing and communication could have been better but that is unavoidable as each of us were free at different times throughout the day. Wordpress was also difficult to manage at times as it often did not want to work the way we wanted it to work and seemed to “fight back” the more we tried things. Also conflicting visions made it slightly harder to find common ground on layout and functionality
  - Issues that arose was having big ideas that were outside of the abilities or plugins in word press.

- Translating from figma hi-fidelity prototype to wordpress was not straightforward, and resulted in trying to find free plugins to make the basic actions in figma into wordpress. This led to abandoning some interactive components.
- How successful was your team and translating prototypes into WordPress reality?
  - We were able to translate the general page layout and concepts but in the end the final Wordpress ended up quite a bit different then our prototype mainly due to the limitations of WordPress and our knowledge of WordPress.
  - Even after addressing some of the changes required, it was difficult to have design features work or line up correctly.
  - Transferring the basic concepts of our lo and hi-fidelity prototype to word press required alterations and adjustments. This however may have been an improvement due to the requirement to have a more simplistic design, and reduce overly enthused design features that may not have supported the site's purpose.
- Did you find that the people-centered design ideas discussed in lectures helped/hindered your design explorations?
  - The topic of people-centered design definitely helped us think more about who the real customers are first, then creating a design around those users. This forced us to think about what the user wanted to see in the website rather than what us as the designers wanted to see. This was one of the focus points mentioned by the client as he mentioned sometimes users will only be on the website for a couple of seconds so we needed to find a way to catch the users attention within those seconds to give them the information they need.
  - The people centered approach even after the conversations with the client allowed us to think further outside of the box regarding what potential user demographics were, how they use the internet, how they may be led to engage, and what type of content should be available.
  - It allowed us to critically analyze our process to not be tailored and concise not only with content but design and interactions on the site.
- What would you do the same for future projects?
  - The prototyping and fast-feedback cycle was very effective and would be beneficial to do again for future projects. Even if we decided to create new prototypes based off of our current product it would help us come back to the roots of the project and guide us towards a more accurate design.
- What would you do differently on future projects?
  - Future projects would include a better inventory list of available plugins and their uses at the beginning. An issue was the reactive nature of planning specific design aspects without actually knowing which plugins to use and

then having to search for them. A better approach may be to be more general and identify a list of plugins and their attributes, and then seek to design around them. This could benefit in both maintaining a budget, and refining the design plan.

- Summarize opportunities and design ideas for future work
  - Opportunities available in the future would be an ability to better identify the target demographic. It may have been beneficial if SSCF was able to provide an idea regarding the age/gender of donors. This could allow a better idea of design features and principles to incorporate. Particularly we started to think that an assumption could be that individuals who donate would be above a certain age (45) and this could see higher levels of accessibility needs: vision, hearing, computer literacy, etc.

#### Appendix: WordPress themes and plugins

- Document the WordPress theme(s) and plugin(s) selected in your proposed WordPress instance. Ensure to include in your summary
  - Theme/plugin name
    - Elementor: Hestia Theme, 4.7 out of 5 stars with 6,485 reviews, last update march 15, 2023
    - Wonder slider lite 4 stars from 24 reviews, last update March 31, 2023 with 10,000+ active installations.
    - Search Filter Pro 4.5 stars from 142 reviews last updated March 26, 2023.
    - All in one WP Migration 4.5 stars with 7,157 reviews last updated March 31, 2023.
    - WPforms lite 5 stars from 12,857 reviews last updated March 31, 2023 and has 5+million active installations.