

Questionnaire Answers

1. What do you think are some of the problems with the existing COMP 1950 website?
2. List the things you do not like about the current design of your website?
3. What don't you like about the current course website that you think it should change in future redesign (please list)?

From my point of view (instructor), the problems are all related to access to information. Making sure that the information is presented in a way that makes sense to the user (students). As students yourselves, I'd like to think you could poll each other to find out what things work and don't: you are the target in this case.

4. What do you like about the existing website?
5. What do you like about the current website that you think it should appear in the future redesign (please list)?

It is brief, but to the point. There isn't much in the way of gloss, but it gets the job done. I would still like to keep it stylish, but I like the fact that I am using a lot of the techniques that I teach in class.

6. If you had to pick one thing, what is the most important thing that you would want to keep?

The lecture notes. Without them, there is no site.

7. If you had to pick a second thing, what would it be?

I would keep the manner in which the information is architected - to a degree. I think that following the in-class chronology with a page(s)/site for each week makes the information quickly accessible.

8. What is really missing from the website? What do you want to improve on your current site?
9. What features do you think are missing in the current website?
10. Has there been specific negative user feedback about particular sections of the site? Search.

Easy access to examples or code repositories.

No specific negative feedback, but I would like to hear what the audience (you) has to say.

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11. Who is the targeted audience of the website?

(All BCIT students, All COMP1950 students, only your own class of 1950 students, alumni of your own class, ...)?

Current COMP1950 students. While alumni students could access it, I feel as though they should progress past the course once it is finished. Prospective students might be an audience for a section of the site (like an overview or syllabus) but not much else.

12. What do you consider to be the most important component of the website for the audience (students)?

The notes that accompany each class.

13. What colour(s) would you like to see used in the new website?

I don't really have any attachment to a colour scheme. I would like whatever colour-scheme to be complementary

14. What is your favourite website that is of a similar concept? What do you like about their site & why? (ie. you liked the use of the graphics or photography, or you liked their navigation system, or the colors)

Likely OpenCourseWare by MIT:

<http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/web/home/home/index.htm>

15. What is it about this website that you think makes it so special?

I am not sure I would term it "so special", but perhaps innovative and somewhat inspiring in its idea.

16. How would you want your audience to interact with you or each other through the website?

I don't. The site should be for notes, gathering content or exercises or notes and following along in class. The site is not meant to be a replacement for going to class.

17. How do you feel the students could better navigate the site?

I have no answer for this. Discuss amongst yourselves.

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18. What would make it easier for you to maintain the website?
19. Are you comfortable with editing your own HTML for updating the site or do you want an editing tool?
20. What section(s) of the site currently requires high maintenance?
21. Can this section be changed to lower the maintenance level?

Nothing really is high maintenance. However, keeping the notes up to date can take a long time if a new lecture is designed. Having the ability to edit content on the web would be useful.

Likely some kind of CMS that would allow me to update pages and content without having to FTP Down > Edit > FTP Up

22. What is the primary purpose for the wiki?

Building knowledge through experimental use. Allowing students to have access to a working wiki that will give them the understanding to use the tool as they move forward.

23. What is the primary purpose for the blog?

Have a place to keep users up-to-date on late-breaking news, share interesting articles and post other notices

24. How long do you want your flash intro to be?

Very funny.

25. How would you like alumnis to interact with the website?
26. Would you like them to keep coming back to the site as a possible resource tool?

Originally I would have said no, however, I am beginning to think that it might be an interesting resource area. I could see an alumni area that you have access to once you have passed the course. I haven't thought this out. Discuss in your group.

27. Why are the lecture notes withheld until just before the perspective class?

In my experience, the attendance goes down when the lecture notes are posted weeks in advance. Additionally, I make changes to the notes from time to time and have discovered that some students actually print out the notes, sometimes weeks in advance. Posting them before class avoids this.

28. How do you feel about non-students reading the course material (lecture notes)?

I don't care.

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29. Do you feel there is value in protecting course material for past and present material from non-students?

Possibly, but I am unconcerned at this time. Discuss in your group if you feel otherwise.

30. How important is it for this website to follow the BCIT web standards? (Please be specific on what you exactly want from the BCIT website to be reflected on your website)

Not at all important. The COMP1950 site shouldn't derive any look or standards from the BCIT site. Instead, the site should uphold that which is taught in the course.

31. Who are your competitors? What do you like or dislike about their web sites?

I don't know that I have direct competitors, but I could suggest that W3Schools and MIT OpenCourseWare might be viewed as similar in that they have course material (that is relevant to this project) available online.

32. How will you measure success for this project?

I will take a survey of the students before implementing the suggestions brought forth in this project, and then after. I will ask about look, functionality and other questions.

33. What key items do you wish to have available to visitors on every page of your site (e.g., extent of navigation, search function, subscription function, images, tagline, log, etc.)?

Access to previous week's lectures/exercises/assignments, information about the course and the instructor (could be the same page), access to blog.

34. How often will you add new content? Who will update the content?

- It depends on your recommendation
- I will be updating all the content

35. How do you intend to market your new site?

36. Will you need assistance for this? (weekly submission of site to search engines, banner exchanges, print ads)

I am not really sure. As a faculty member, I am more concerned about the content of my course, rather than the marketability of said course - that is the domain of the School of Computing. Within the bounds of this project, I think it's important to focus on the student that are already in the course, as this site is not meant to be a marketing tool.

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37. What is your target platform and browser?

38. Will the site need to be accessible on wireless/handheld and other internet devices?

All web browsers should at least be able to render the site in some fashion. It should degrade somewhat gracefully to browsers that are (at the most) about 5 years old. Let's take the audience into consideration here: they are you. You are people who likely have a computer at home, likely have a decent enough system to have a recent version of Firefox or IE or Opera. So, that should be a given. However, a tenet of the course is the accessibility of web design. So, I would like to see the site fairly accessible across many platforms. I would certainly like to see a handheld version as well.

39. Are there specific additional technologies you wish to include (e.g. streaming media, Flash, etc.)?

No

40. When you hired previous companies (i.e COMP 1950 students) to redesign your website, what did you like the most about their redesigned sites?

When they took the basic site, thought about how to use it and came up with an innovative (but still useable) revision. There is nothing specific that comes to mind.

41. When you hired previous companies (i.e COMP 1950 students) to redesign your website, what did you like the least about their redesigned sites?

When they just copied what was there, changed some colours and threw in some other pieces of work that demonstrated that they didn't think much about the project. There is nothing specific that comes to mind.

42. What is the ideal timeframe for this project? Is there a specific launch date that needs to be met?

A launch date, no. But a due date is very clearly stated on the project page

43. What do you want your website to communicate? (ie. for educational purpose, text/read only, viewer interactive, blogging)

I want it to accompany the lectures I give in class and be a repository for exercises and examples.

44. Who is your target audience?

This is clearly stated on the project page

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45. Does your audience need to print your pages out for referencing?

46. Do you want to offer PDF or text-only versions of content for easy printing?

I don't believe so, and this seems to go against the stated goals of the class. PDF printing suggests that there is some formatting that needs to be preserved in order for the printed material to have context. I don't believe this to be the case.

47. What type of server does your site currently run on? (Ex: NT, Unix)

48. Do you know what kind of tools your hosting provider supports? (Ex: asp, jsp, cgi, php, databases, email)?

Redhat Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP, PERL, Python, FTP

49. Are you planning any changes to your current hosting partners? (if yes, who were you looking for?)

No.

50. Are there existing photos and graphics that can/should be used for the new look and feel of the site?

51. Will new logo and/or photographs need to be acquired/created for the site?

No.

52. How frequently will new content need to be added?

As events warrant. Typically, I change about 15% of the content (throughout the site) every single term

53. Does new content need a "New Information update" page?

No. All content is new to students as they encounter it.

54. Will multimedia content be needed on the site? (audio/video clips)

No.

55. Do you have employees who are comfortable with updating your site content?

Uh... I am a solitary instructor in a course. So... no. It will be me. I'd love to have employees. Sadly, I have none.

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56. What are the primary goals or purposes of the Comp1950 Website (e.g., delivery of course content, improved access to information and/or course content, etc.)?

The primary goal of the site is to deliver content based on the material for the course. It is sort of like an online textbook. Each week, there is material that supports the lecture, contains exercises and examples, and provides links to relevant resources.

57. Are there any other objectives you hope to achieve with the re-design?

I would like to have a site that allows students easier access to various components of each lecture. As an instructor, I would also like to have a place for exercise, code examples and other resources that is easily accessible and updateable.

58. What primary action(s) do you want students to take (i.e., how would you like students to interact with the site?) from the main page of your site (e.g., browse weekly course content, search, download, send email etc.)?

I would like them to see if there is anything new (ie: blog-like info) and then navigate to the lecture and exercises for the relevant week. This site has some unique requirements, like having audience members coming back each week to find a new lecture. As a result, there is a guarantee that students will come back more than once, and will do so as a requirement for the course. As such, there are no typical reasons to 'capture' viewers before they leave with submission of personal information such as e-mail or signing up for an account.

59. Is the current Comp1950 Website content still applicable, i.e., will the existing content for Content, Lecture and Contact Information remain the same?

60. If not, what other content do you wish to add or remove?

The content will remain the same for this project.

61. Use three to five adjectives or phrase you would use to describe your Comp1950 Course (e.g., leading edge, hands on, comprehensive, etc.)

Current, relevant, informed

62. Use three to five adjectives or phrases to describe how your students should perceive the Comp1950 web site (e.g., cool design, site is simple and straight forward, it's easy to find what I'm looking for, etc.)

Useful, informative, educational

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63. Design (i.e., colours, look-and-feel, user interface, layout, etc.):

These sites are ones I like for various reasons: layout, design, appeal, etc.

- UX Magazine: <http://www.uxmag.com/>
- One Laptop per Child: <http://www.laptop.org/>
- A List Apart: <http://www.alistapart.com/>

Favourite sites:

- Digg- love the updated news, user submitted content, Digg tools and various visualizations
- Reddit - another user supported 'news' site. Simple, fast, basic but great
- Wikileaks - Updated content on 'whistleblowing' activity worldwide. I like this for the concept.
- Apple - Just a really well executed site, top to bottom
- Simplebits - excellent site on web dev and design