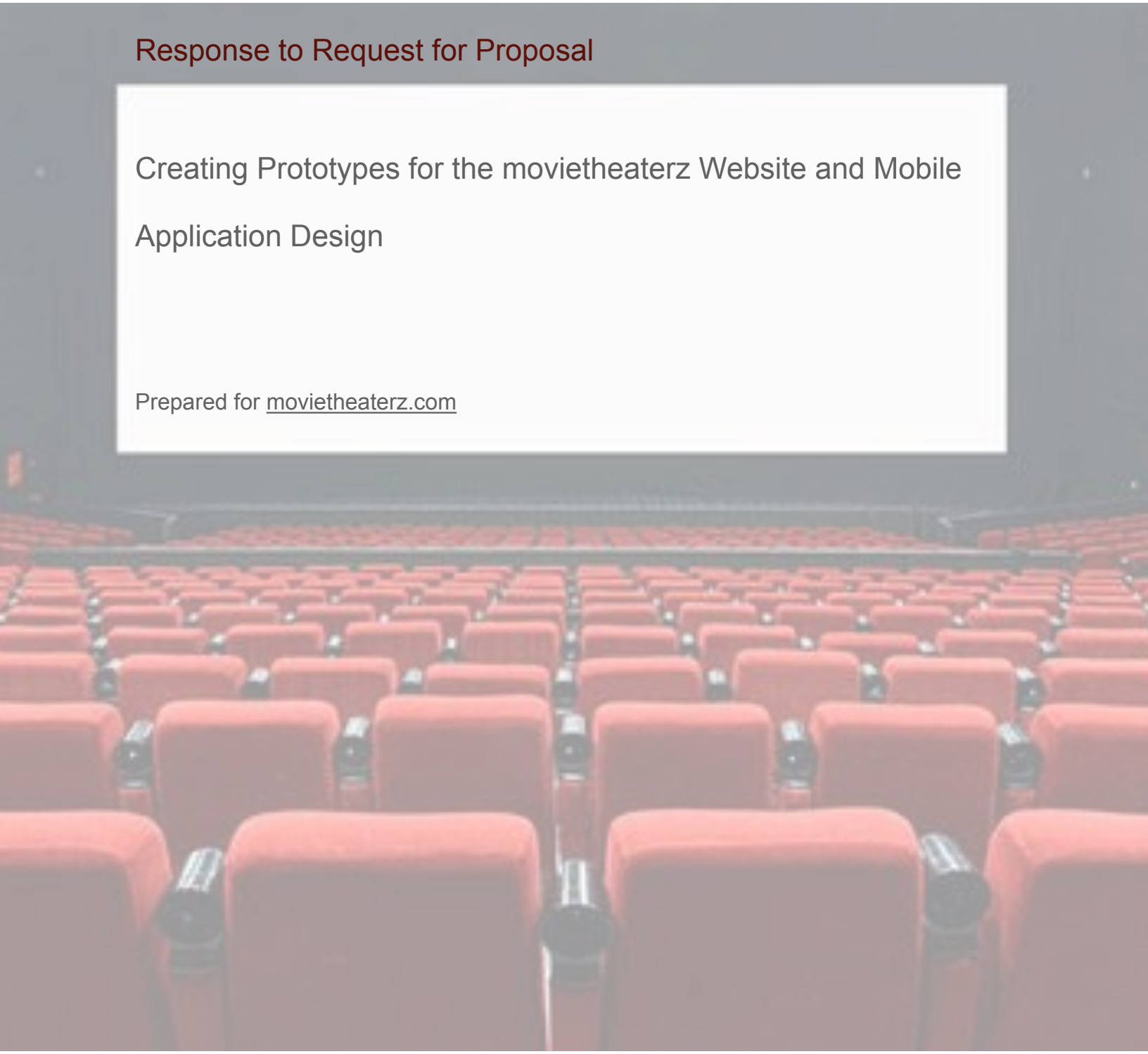
Response to Request for Proposal

Creating Prototypes for the movietheaterz Website and Mobile Application Design

Prepared for moviethеaterz.com



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HCI 430 Final

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Project Details

moviethеaterz.com is developing a new web-based application for desktop and mobile. This application will enable users to locate local movie theaters, search for titles currently playing in theaters, and view news related to those movies. moviethеaterz.com is committed to making the theater-going experience easier, faster, and better. With the ability to find and plan the perfect movie and theater combination, we hope to give back to the community that makes films so special.

Because users use many platforms and devices, it is important to design with both desktops and mobile devices in mind. The app itself must be easy to learn and use, with little need for tutorials or support. The audience is broad, as movie-goers come from all ages, backgrounds, and experiences. Having an application that can provides the information detailed above in a way that is accessible to everyone is a key part of this proposal.

moviethеaterz.com is seeking an agency to create and explore prototypes for this application. The prototypes will then be used in the implementation process by moviethеaterz.com to create the finished product. In addition, the prototypes will be used for models as examples of development and proof of concept. These prototypes will be used to explain the company, application, and goals of future development.

Our Approach

"Designers know too much, and they know too little" (Erickson, 1995). Our team focuses on collaboration, and values testing as a way to improve upon design. Experience is useful, but without user input, it is difficult to be successful in creating a product that people will enjoy. This is why our philosophy is that people, the users, should drive solutions. According to Marc Rettig, "prototyping is worthless unless information is gathered and the product is refined based on your findings" (1994). Our team are facilitators and brainstormers that catalyze a process that should be ultimately controlled by people. We believe that our expertise are necessary for producing a starting point and to realize the proposals and feedback from users. Our team's value stems from the strength of real people who will be the ones using the product.

We will first develop a portfolio of inspiration material. This will source material from your website, your goals, mission statement, company insights, and other content you may supply us. We will research other approaches competitors have taken and draw inspiration from other applications. In addition, we will gather data on target users and approach solutions with a focus on these users. Storyboards help run through scenarios and applications in the real world. Our team will create storyboards that apply to different key users and functions. Those key users will be explored through the creation of personas. These personas will represent the target users of the application and will look at backgrounds, expectations, and product requirements.

Next, we will work through the low-fidelity prototyping with paper and pencil. We will layout the main components of the application for desktop and mobile. This stage is for preliminary layout solutions and to organize content appropriately. Some user testing

may provide some insight, but without functionality, most of the value of the low-fidelity prototyping phase lies in organizing ideas. The core of the application is to be able to search for movie theaters based upon location, search for film titles currently playing in those theaters, and to view news related to the films.

Mid-fidelity prototyping will follow using Axure. In this stage, we add functionality to the prototype with basic navigation and some features that are most important for the application. In this case, we will focus on adding navigation for the different areas of the application for theaters, movies, and news. A consistent navigation bar is important as well as easy to understand text or icons. In addition, displaying the appropriate level of detail in content will be established here. Through research and user testing, we can determine the correct amount of information to give users. The mid-fidelity prototype will enable us to run user tests with tasks that will pinpoint concerns and challenges to be addressed in following iterations. Using groups of individuals that are the target users will yield the most helpful results. Their feedback will drive the prototyping process, with our team coming up with solutions addressing issues users experienced and implementing them to receive more feedback.

Then we work on the high-fidelity prototype in Axure. This stage will yield a product that is very similar to the final version of the application. Our team will create a theme for the application and implement solutions from previous stages.

Prototypes

Our team uses prototypes to work through concepts that can be testing and improved. Throughout the prototyping process, user feedback will be a large source of solutions. In addition, research around current design solutions for competitors or best practices from other sources can be implemented.

Low-fidelity prototypes enable ideas to be quickly represented through illustrations and rough sketches. These images can be helpful in drawing out an initial plan and to work out glaring design issues. Laying out the application physically can reveal problems difficult to understand when brainstorming. These prototypes are not functional, merely an illustration of concepts. They are useful, however, at demonstrating what is possible or best for the design solution. For this project, our team will provide sketches and low-fidelity prototypes of the desktop and mobile applications, utilizing paper and pencil and wireframe.cc. We can work on layout differences between the differing platforms and adapt accordingly.

Mid-fidelity prototypes are functional and can be used to gather sufficient data. User testing is critical at this stage, as feedback informs design decisions for later versions of the prototype. Navigation is present and core functionality is worked on. Throughout this process, many versions come through and are worked on to get a product that works consistently and well.

High-fidelity prototypes are nearly representative of the final application. Navigation and functionality are working and the look and feel of the app is close to the real version.

Tools

There are many different tools for prototyping and developing an application. Our team assembled a chart of the different prototyping tools for comparison. Our main tool we propose using is Axure, which allows us to create prototypes of all three fidelities.

Tool	Strengths	Weaknesses	Comments
Paper and Pencil	• Quick • Easy • Illustrative	• Unrealistic • Unresponsive	This is a great tool for low-fidelity stage of development
wireframe.cc	• Quick • Simple • Display mockup of desktop and mobile	• Unresponsive • Limited tools	This tools can provide mockups of desktop and mobile screens without spending time on navigation and interactivity
Axure	• Supports different fidelity levels • Navigation • Interactivity • Built-in widgets • Library of icons • Collaborative	• Takes more time to work on • Making changes is more difficult	A great tool for creating interactive prototypes for user testing
Photoshop	• Static images • Creating backgrounds • Manipulating images	• Unresponsive • Time consuming	May be helpful in some tasks in conjunction with Axure. Not main tool for prototyping

Summary

Our team is committed in delivering an application that is effective for users. Relying upon testing and implementing changes based on feedback enables us to provide a solution that is best for target users. We draw upon research and our expertise to propose changes and allow usability testing to solidify those changes.

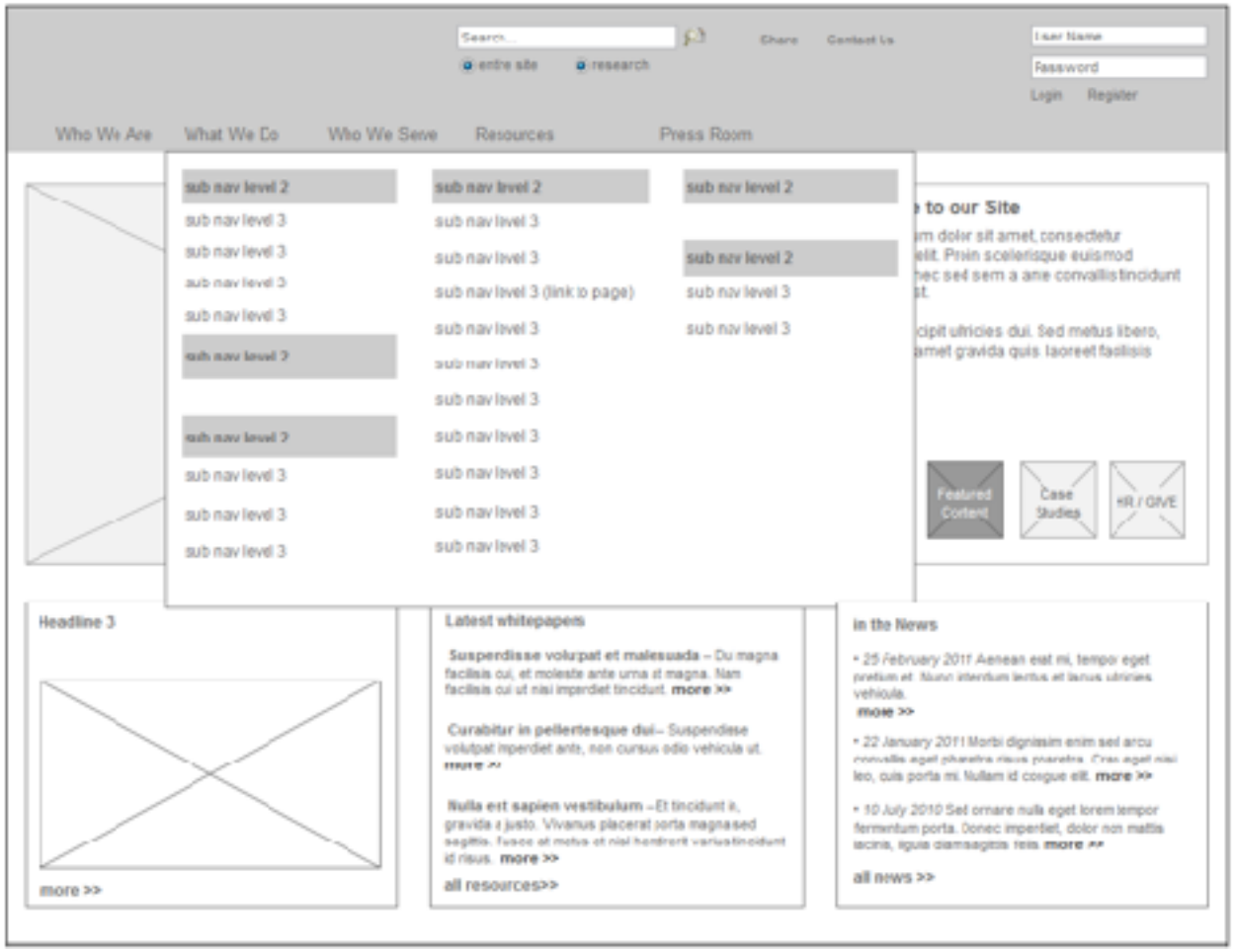
Our approach begins with drawing upon inspiration and materials of your company. Then creating a low-fidelity prototype displaying the main functionality of the application. Personas and storyboards help to find key users and adapt the application for them. The mid-fidelity prototyping phase allows us to develop a functional product for user testing. This stage is critical in taking feedback and implementing changes. Finally, the high-fidelity prototype will reflect the lessons from usability tests, research, and prior knowledge, delivering a final product.

Appendix A

This shows an example of a wireframe from wireframe.cc. The tool enables us to layout a webpage for the application.

Appendix B

This shows an example of an Axure prototype. Interactivity is the key here, as well as the built-in libraries of tools and widgets.



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