

P1A Critique: Deconstruct and Analyze

GreatMoods
Great Fundraising!

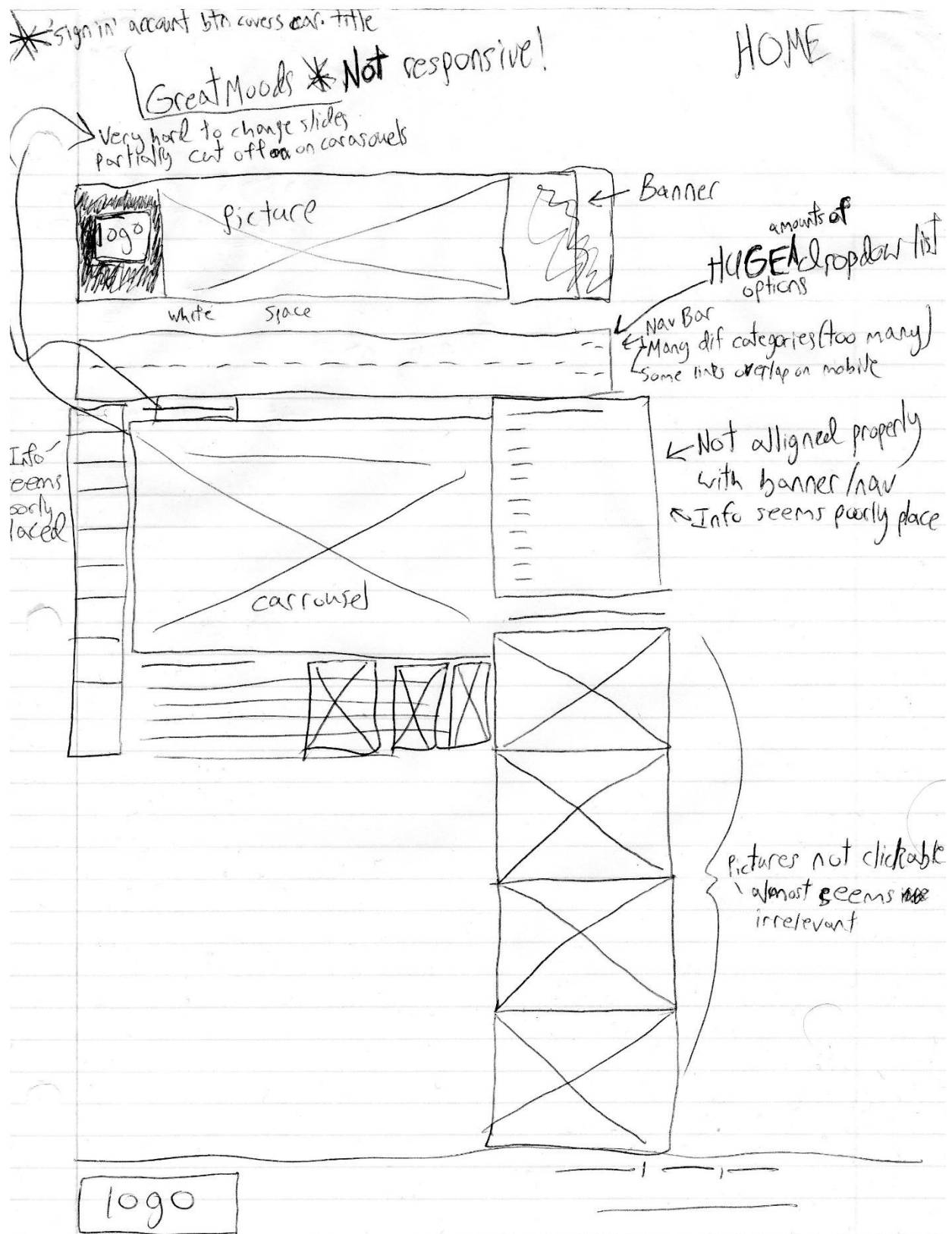
Greatmoods.com

Critique By: Evan Bogart

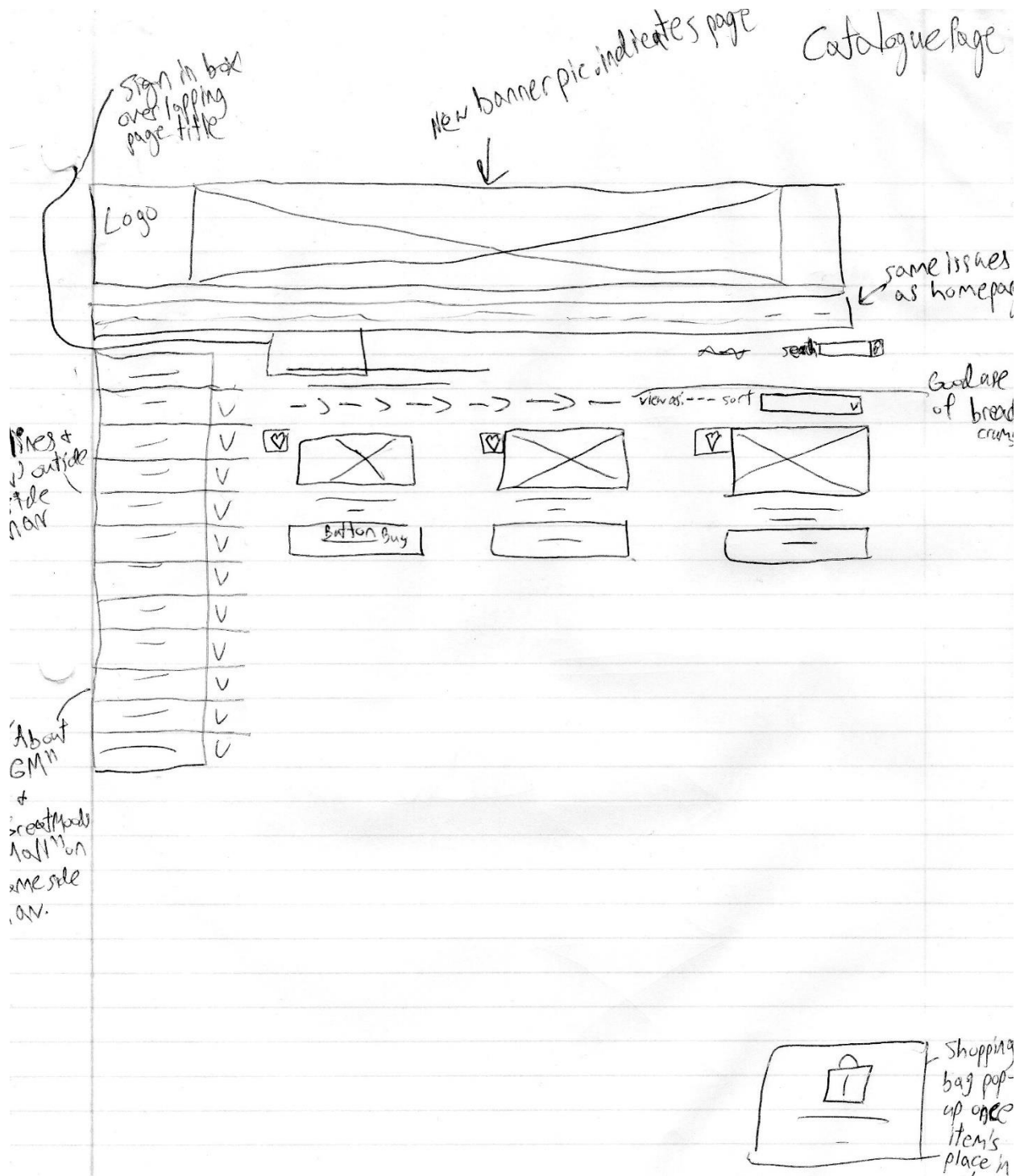
Overview of Greatmoods.com:

Great Moods is a site that assists in fundraising events through allowing users to sell fundraising materials via Great Moods hosted stores, and by giving those users fundraising accounts and stores. These accounts and stores make it easy to manage and organize fundraising events.

Great Moods Homepage | Wireframe Sketch



Great Moods Catalogue Page | Wireframe Sketch



Great Moods Homepage | Desktop View | *Alignment*

Alignment:

- Placement of elements such that the edges line up along common rows or columns, or their bodies along a common center (*Universal Principles of Design, pg 24*).

Pros:

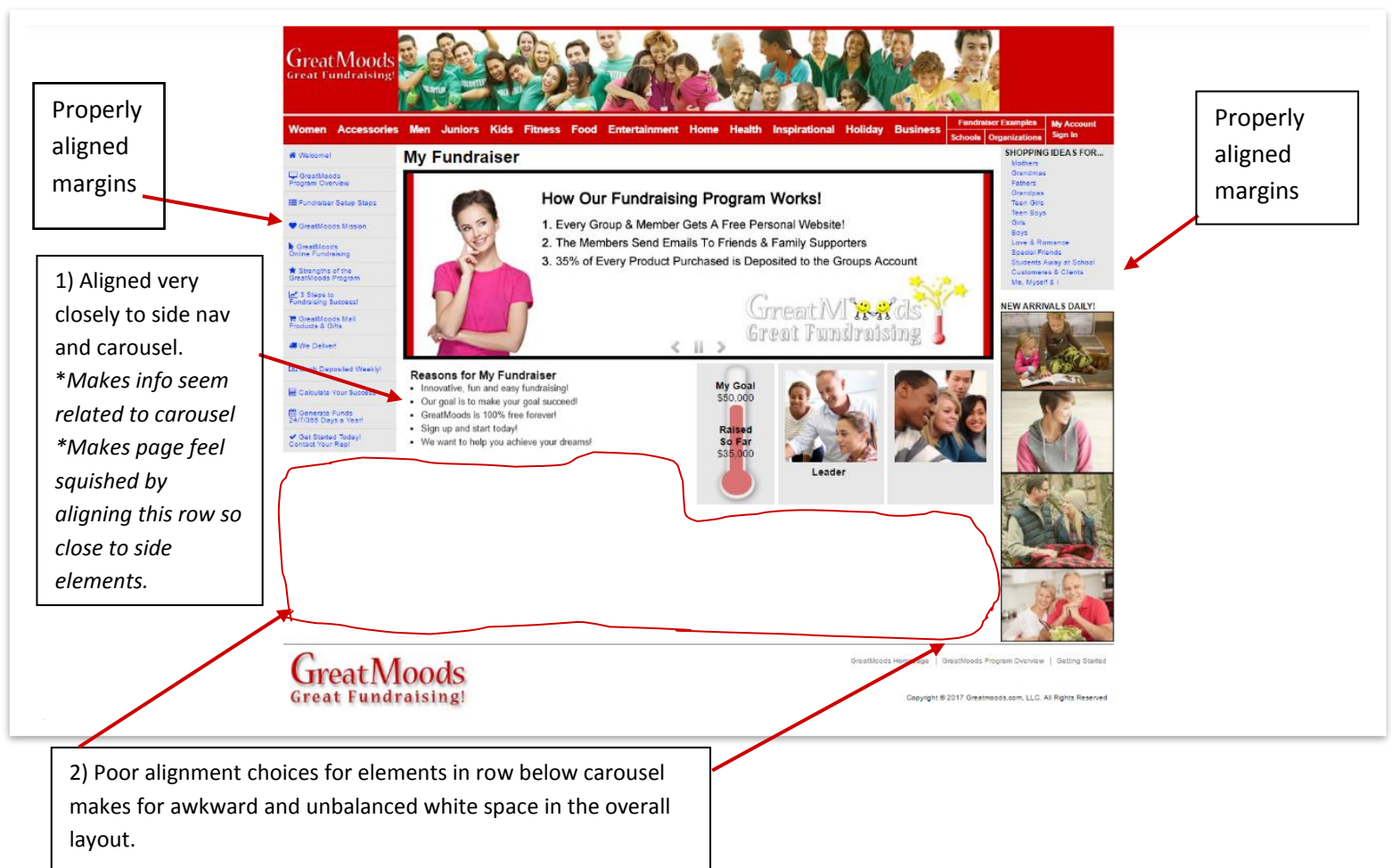
It seems an alignment issue that I had originally noted in my deconstructed wireframe has been fixed. Before some of the side navs were leaking outside of the page margins - page margins are now properly aligned. Side navs, top nav, side pictures, and footer all properly align on the margins in the main container with content.

Cons:

Alignment for the “reasons for my fundraiser” text block does not seem natural on the page, which can lead to taking away or lessening user focus on that specific text. The text box is too closely aligned with the side nav and the carrousel. This does technically follow the alignment definition – as edges on this text block do line up along with the carrousel and are at aligned on the margin of the body. But, by choosing to align simply via end of margin, the importance of the text becomes lost, and I’m almost left wondering if the text is a continuation of information for the carrousel. The text block’s current alignment is also offset with the 3 grey boxes in the same row, and it creates awkward white space.

Recommendations:

If this row with text block and the grey boxes were aligned by adding space between the carrousel, then the division of information would be clearer. Vertically aligning the text block with the width of the grey boxes in that row would also make for a well-designed alignment choice. Along with pushing away from the carousel, this row of elements could benefit from being pushed away from the side elements a bit, as the current alignment makes the layout feels squished together.



Great Moods Homepage Nav | Desktop View | *Five Hat Racks*

Five Hat Racks:

- There are five ways to organize information: category, time, location, alphabet, and continuum (*Universal Principles of Design, pg 100*).

Pros:

Clearly listed subcategories which group items by similarity slightly eases user pain when browsing through this huge inventory of offerings. In the “schools” and “organizations”

dropdowns (not shown), list items are organized alphabetically. Both these methods of organizations help users find products more efficiently.

Cons / Recommendations:

Subcategories are not listed alphabetically. Some of the subcategories seem randomly organized into category fields; for example, there are accessory listings like scarves and jewelry in the “women” navigation option even though that could easily be categorized in the “accessories”. Organization and even categorization of the top navbar seems completely random at times, and I wish it were arranged more logically; for example, fitness and health seem like very similar categories which could be combined.

Subcategories Utilized

Some main categories are so similar that they could be combined or renamed.

The screenshot shows the Great Moods Great Fundraising! website. The top navigation bar includes: Women, Accessories, Men, Juniors, Kids, Fitness, Food, Entertainment, Home, Health, Inspirational, Holiday, Business, Fundraiser Examples (Schools, Organizations), and My Account (Sign In). Below the navigation bar, there are several product listings organized into columns. Red arrows point from the 'Subcategories Utilized' box to various subcategory lists under the 'Women' and 'Accessories' main categories. Yellow arrows point from the 'Some main categories are so similar that they could be combined or renamed.' box to the 'Women', 'Accessories', 'Men', 'Juniors', 'Kids', 'Fitness', 'Food', 'Entertainment', 'Home', 'Health', 'Inspirational', 'Holiday', and 'Business' main categories in the top navigation bar.

Women

- Activewear Depot
 - Apparel Under \$20
 - Active Tops
 - Active Bottoms
 - Sports Bras
 - Active Sweatshirts
 - Active Outerwear
 - Jackets
 - Lounge Wear
 - Caps & Hats
 - Bags & Accessories
 - Extended Sizes
- Athleisure
 - Performance Tops
 - Performance Bottoms
 - Sports Bras
 - Sweatshirts
 - Jackets
 - Hats & Headbands
 - Bags & Accessories

Accessories

- Fun Fashion Boutique
 - Short Sleeves
 - Long Sleeves
 - Tank Tops
 - Blouses
 - Flowy Tops
 - Pants & Shorts
 - Dresses & Skirts
 - Sweaters
 - Lounge Wear
- Full Figure Boutique
 - Short Sleeves
 - Long Sleeves
 - Tank Tops
 - Blouses
 - Flowy Tops
 - Dresses & Skirts
 - Sweaters
 - Lounge Wear
 - Activewear
 - Sleepwear
 - Romantic, Loving Gifts
- Scarves, Scarves, Scarves
 - Scarves Under \$20
 - All Scarves
 - Infinity
 - Shawl & Dress Wraps
 - Cashmere
 - Cold Weather Comfort
- It's a Wrap!
 - All Wraps
 - Cardigans & Sweaters
 - Cashmere Collection
 - Ponchos & Shawls
 - Dress Wraps
- Top Hats: Emporium & Haberdashery
 - Beach & Sun
 - Gardening
 - Visors & Caps
 - Hat, Gloves & Scarf Sets

Wild West

- Women's Tops
- Dresses & Skirts
- Ponchos & Wraps
- Jewelry

Pretty in Pink

- Passionately Pink Apparel
- Pink Pajamas & More
- A Touch of Pink Scarves
- Pink Bags & Accessories

Camo Store

- Apparel
- Sweatshirts
- Accessories

Sparkle

- Jewelry Under \$20
- Apparel with Sparkle
- Dazzling Jewelry

Going Bananas for Pajamas

- Pajama Sets
- PJ Tops
- PJ Bottoms
- Nightgowns & Nightshirts
- Cozy Robes
- Lounge Wear
- Socks & Slippers

Sole Mates: Socks and Slippers

- Lifestyle Socks
- Leggings & Tights

Romantically Sweet Boutique

- Sleepwear
- Jewelry
- Romantic, Loving Gifts

Top Shop

- T-Shirts
- Short Sleeves
- Long Sleeves
- Flowy Tops
- Tank Tops

Grab a Sweatshirt

- Hoodie & Crew Neck
- Front Zip
- Performance Sweatshirts

Game Day

- Shirts
- Sweatshirts
- Caps & Hats
- Scarves & Gloves
- Accessories

The Campus Store

- Trendy Tops
- Sweatshirts
- Dresses & Skirts
- Jackets, Vests & Fleece
- Backpacks & Bags
- Cape & Hats
- Scarves & Gloves

The Great Outdoors

- Sweatshirts
- Sweaters
- Outerwear
- Headwear
- Gloves & Scarves
- Accessories
- Blankets

Backpacks & Bags: For On-the-Go

- Backpacks
- Drawstring Backpacks
- Kids Backpacks
- School Bags
- Gym Bags
- Beach & Totes
- Leather
- Crossbody & Shoulder
- Canvas

Sun, Sand & Surf

- Towels for the Beach
- Beach Bags & Backpacks
- Beach Accessories
- Hats & Caps

Footer:

- Get Started Today! Contact Your Rep!
- Sign up and start today!
- We want to help you achieve your dreams!
- Raised So Far \$35,000
- Leader

Redundant subcategories that relate to main categories. (Accessories ex. Shown by red arrows.)
*Main nav category lists could be reduced and organized more logically by eliminating subcategory redundancies.

Great Moods Homepage Nav | Desktop View | *Hick's Law*

Hick's Law:

- The time required to make a decision is a function of the number of available options (Universal Principles of Design, pg 120).

Pros:

Subcategories and category choices (for the most part) obscure complexity of lists - much like for the “five hat racks”, both principles provide an increase in efficiency for browsing list choices.

Cons:

It's obvious that this design principle was overlooked in the creation of this site. The sheer amount of categories, subcategories, and specific list items are insane. The vague category meanings coupled with an overwhelming amount of subcategories will definitely slow down a user's decision making process. In order to speed up efficiency for a browsing user, hick's law must be addressed.

Recommendations:

Categories and subcategories need to be rethought out and cut down – main navigation options are broad and can lead to confusion. Consider removing dropdown altogether, and placing subcategories (which are each different stores) onto a different page. Having the main category navigation options as a button that leads to specific category pages with subcategories (stores) and items offered would allow for more efficient decision making; this type of page could even use filtering options so users could have even more efficient ways to browse and make decisions.

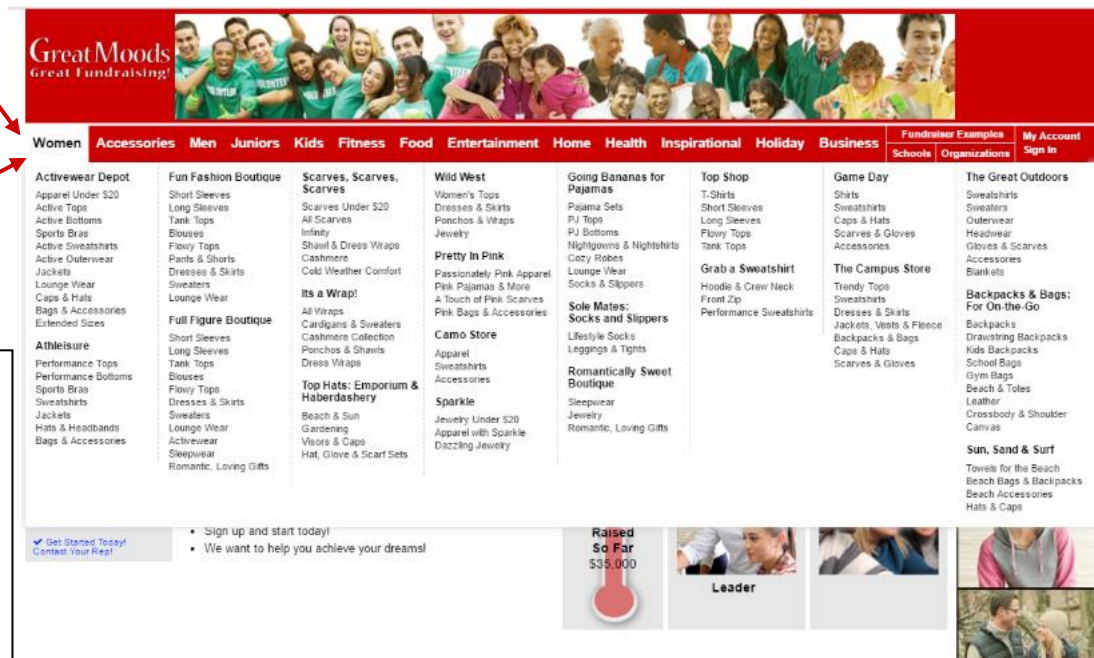
One foolproof workaround for this - if keeping this monstrous dropdown menu is essential - is to have a search bar where users can search for certain items, categories, or stores

(subcategories). With all the information given in these dropdowns, a search bar would allow for users to easily and efficiently find items and make buying decisions.

Broad navigation choices.
*leads to far too many subcategories

Too many subcategories and subcategory list items.
(list items being the store options listed under bolded subcategory names)

Could use fewer categories.
*Could be fixed by sorting through current information and combining relatable categories



Consider making main nav options buttons, and moving all listed subcategories onto a different page - allow for filtering options there.

*Would eliminate need for dropdown that covers almost all main content, and would make decision making easier.

Great Moods Store Pages | Desktop View | *Consistency*

Consistency:

- The usability of a system is improved when similar parts are expressed in similar ways.
(*Universal Principles of Design*, pg 56).

Pros:

Aesthetic consistency is utilized throughout pages through a consistent main navbar and logo, consistent side navbar, and (most of) the colors are consistent throughout. Functional consistency is minimal, some side nav options utilize this by having a text description and an appropriate icon for further understanding and usability; some examples: “We Deliver” has a moving truck; “Calculate Your \$uccess” utilizes a calculator along with that ‘\$’ in place of the ‘s’; “Cash Deposited Weekly” has a dollar bill next to it. The products pages also have a search function, which is functionally consistent, but not aesthetically consistent with it’s front page (I feel like a search option on homepage would be beneficial).

Cons:

Overall, the store pages on this site feel different than the homepage. The store pages do not have a footer, which is a lack of aesthetic consistency and internal consistency. The “Buy Now” buttons are a cool looking blue, but it goes directly against the color scheme. A new image is added to the header depending on what page you’re on, which looks ugly and is inconsistent with the overall site. A new sidebar nav is added above the original sidebar navigation from the home screen. This new side navbar has 0 purpose, as it is utilizing the exact same information as the header navigation main categories – the new side navigation would actually make sense if it had filtering options for specific stores or categories... but nope, it’s just makes for redundant information taking up space.

Recommendations:

- Change “Buy Now” color choice and use a color consistent with the brand.
- Either remove the newly added side bar, or utilize it for filtering options.
- Add the footer to all pages, not just the homepage.
- Consider moving banner image into the main content to emphasize what store you’re in – or consider no image at all and use large font stating what store you’re in.
 - Seems logical to replace “Great Moods Mall” with “Activewear Depot”.

The screenshot shows the Great Moods Mall website interface. The header features the Great Moods logo and a navigation bar with categories like Women, Accessories, Men, Juniors, Kids, Fitness, Food, Entertainment, Home, Health, Inspirational, Holiday, and Business. A sidebar on the left lists various product categories. The main content area displays a grid of products, each with a 'Buy Now' button. Annotations with red arrows point to specific elements, suggesting design changes for consistency and usability.

Annotations:

- Consistent logo, options, and color scheme (red, white, grey) for navigation bars.** (Points to the top navigation bar)
- Consider changing relevant store title here and not changing banner image** (Points to the 'Great Moods Mall' title in the header)
- Get rid of inconsistent banner images – they might be “consistent” for related page information, but it really weakens the overall aesthetic consistency for the site.** (Points to the banner image showing a person in a green shirt)
- Search bar with magnified glass functionally consistent.** (Points to the search bar in the top right)
- Change button colors to match Great Moods color scheme.** (Points to a 'Buy Now' button)
- 1) Some icons seem utilize functional consistency for increased learnability.** (Points to the sidebar icons)
- 2) Consistent use of sidebar, BUT inconsistent placement on page** (Points to the sidebar)
- (not visible in screenshot) -- Add footer for increased consistency.**
- *Store pages feel like they abruptly end without a footer**

Great Moods Store & Home| Desktop View | *Legibility*

Legibility:

- The visual clarity of text, generally based on the size, typeface, contrast, text block, and spacing of the characters used (*Universal Principles of Design, pg 148*).

Pros:

The typeface and size of font used for store products are well designed and look well on the overall layout of the page – price fonts and color seem adequate as well. For the most part, main navigation text is contrasted well against the red navbar and the font is very easy to read; the dropdown's do a nice job in differentiating subcategories through using bold type, while using non-bold text for listing types of items listed in the subcategories.

Cons:

- The bulleted list on the homepage is far too small – especially for important homepage information about the website itself.
- Side navigation text is very small.
 - Blue hyperlinks do not contrast well against the grey background.
- Main header, second header, and bread crumb links inside store pages are not spaced apart appropriately.

Recommendations:

- Consider changing side navigation background and hyperlink colors to improve contrast – also gives opportunity to work on a better color scheme.
 - Consider enlarging font size of side navigations.
- Space out store page information headers and breadcrumbs.
- Make homepage font larger.

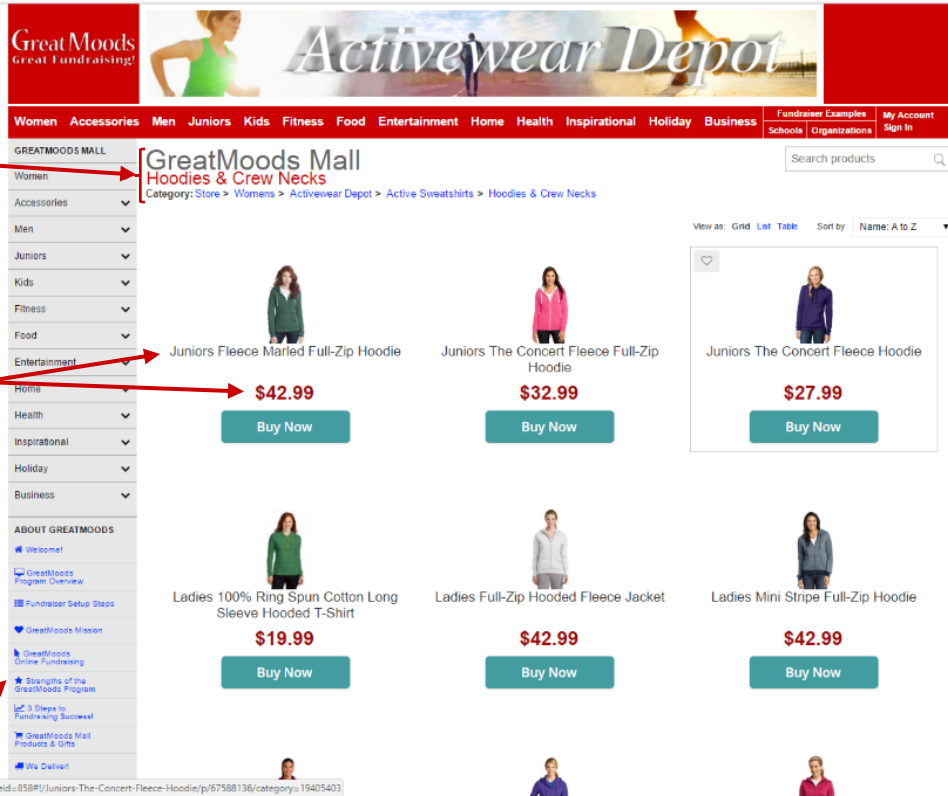
Store information headers and bread crumbs have poor use of line spacing.

Good use of typeface, font size, and color for product names and pricing.

Blue on grey does not contrast well. This couple with small type makes the side nav difficult to read clearly.

Font is way too small for homepage information about the company.

White font color for navigation links contrasts very well against red background.



Great Moods Store & Home| Desktop View | *Highlighting*

Highlighting:

- A technique for bringing attention to an area of text or image (*Universal Principles of Design, pg 126*).

Pros:

Subcategories in main navigation dropdowns effectively highlight information through using of bolding subcategories and having normal typeface for the list items of subcategories; this makes it easier to quickly browse through the huge dropdown menus on this site. Main navigation also successfully utilizes inverting of colors – colors are inverted in its inactive and hover states, which provides for distinct category titles.

Fonts for product listings and price are both pronounced, and are appropriate for an item's listing – the utilization of red font for price is also a good approach for putting more emphasis on that important piece of information.

Cons:

Typeface for the homepage list title “reasons for my fundraiser” is a lot more difficult to read than the typeface used for product listings. The use of bold font for the header, and use of bulleted list items, still don't do enough to highlight this information on the page. Use of inverting is poor for the main side nav – blue on grey does not do when in attracting attention, it only adds noise to the page.

Typeface for products looks good, but the headers for the store pages could use a change in typeface to look more consistent with the products. I also feel the choice of red for the section type seems unnecessary.

Recommendations:

- Change typeface for “reasons for my fundraiser”

- OR, consider adding a colored box behind and having inverse font color.
- Choose typeface for store headers to look more consistent with the product listings typeface.
- Do away with colored section font on store pages.

Failure to properly inverse text in a pleasant way leads to ugly side navigation and does a poor job highlighting these links

Typeface, use of bold, and use of bullets still don't do enough to differentiate this text on the page.

White text on a red background is a good use of inverting colors in a distinct and meaningful way.



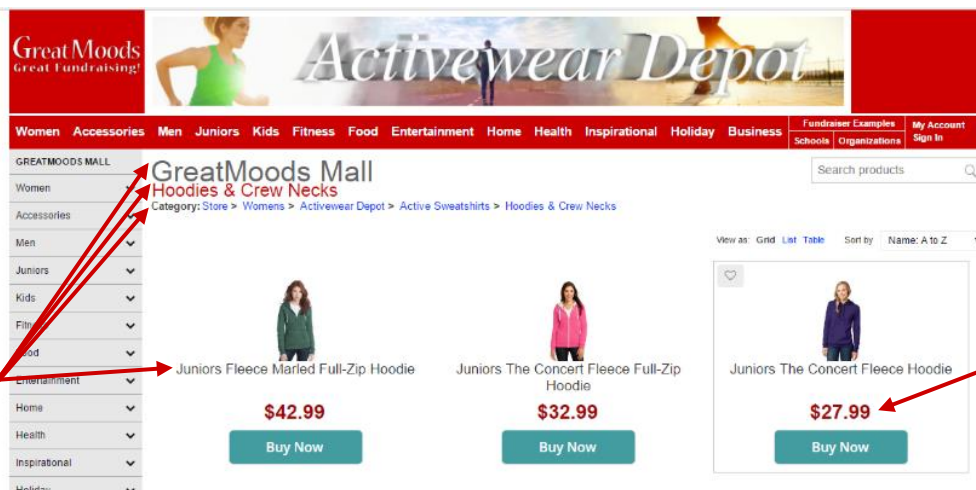
GreatMoods
Great Fundraising!

GreatMoods Homepage | GreatMoods Program Overview | Getting Started

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Multiple typefaces and multiple different text colors makes for a noisy looking page. I wish all fonts looked a bit more like the product listings.

One of the best use of colored and bold text on the site – showing price. This is an important piece of information and is appropriately highlighted to reflect that importance.



Great Moods Store & Home| Desktop View | *Wayfinding*

Wayfinding:

- The process of using spatial and environmental information to navigate to a destination (*Universal Principles of Design, pg 260*).

Pros:

Navbars make it clear where a user can travel to. Store sections are properly oriented. Products are divided evenly in their own subspace on store pages. Signage is used through headers throughout store pages, but isn't utilized much on the homepage. Route monitoring is used for store pages by using breadcrumbs; this is useful to see where you are in the site, and for going back down the path you traveled. Landmarks are used via the banner image, and tell users what store they are in via images with font – which is a decent way of relaying that information, but this approach looks ugly in regards to the overall design.

Cons:

- Many navigational options in the main navbar worsens route decision-making for users.
- Homepage does not properly utilize orientation – which leads to poor destination recognition.
 - Only reason this is a distinct homepage is because this is where you are routed upon entering the great moods url or clicking the great moods logo in the navbar.
 - Page does have a title, which is “My Fundraiser”
 - Not a clear indicator of anything, and I’m not quite sure what that’s referring to in the context of the page.
- Signage for store pages has irrelevant “greatmoods mall” on every single store page.

Suggestions:

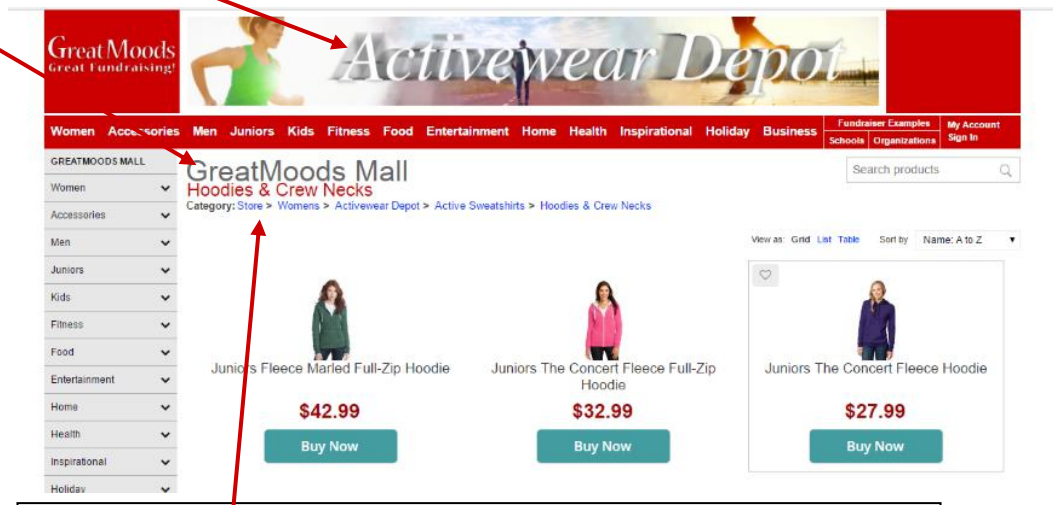
- Consider cutting down on navigational options to improve route decision making.
- Properly label homepage
- Label store pages with store name in place of “great moods mall”
 - Consider having “greatmoods mall” as an ugly and consistent banner throughout all stores.

Not a great page title for homepage – confusing. A header in this area is usually for page indicators.



Consider fewer navigational options to improve route decision making.

“Greatmoods Mall” is a redundant header on every store page. It would be more appropriate to have the store name here as opposed to having it in the banner – which can easily be overlooked and is of course ugly.



Proper use of route monitoring through bread crumbs allows for efficient navigation through store pages, and indicates clearly the path traveled and the current page a user is on.

Great Moods | *Critique Summary*

After critiquing with the following methods: Wayfinding; Highlighting; Legibility; Consistency; Hick's Law; Alignment. It became apparent that this site is not necessarily up to par in regarding design principles, and it needs a lot of work. Just about the only portion of this page that I found consistently did well following the principle was the main navbar navigations – not the categories or huge dropdowns, but the consistency throughout pages and correct use of inverse of text while still utilizing Great Moods branding colors.

Text and side bar navigation really need to be overhauled on this site. There are far too many typefaces, and the sizes in type vary far too often. Categories need to be reduced; they need to be rethought out and recategorized – in it's current state there is far too much information to browse through.

Store pages don't utilize footers, and add an extra side navbar that has the exact same nav options as the topnav bar. Buttons on store pages for buying products don't relate to the color theme for Great Moods at all, and are completely inconsistent when compared to the site design.

The homepage needs to better portray the purpose of Great Moods, and store pages need to be more consistent with homepage fonts, colors, sidenavs, and footers. All elements I critiqued have many areas that need improvement – I found more cons than I did pros for most design principles.