

Analyzing Competitive and Inspirational Sites

Website: University of Notre Dame *Link:* <https://www.nd.edu/>

The University of Notre Dame is non-profit Catholic research university in Notre Dame, Indiana.

1. Identify who (what types of users) you think it is targeting.(Home page)

Targeted Users:

- Prospective [Catholic] Students
- Current Students
- Visitors /Researchers
- Alumni

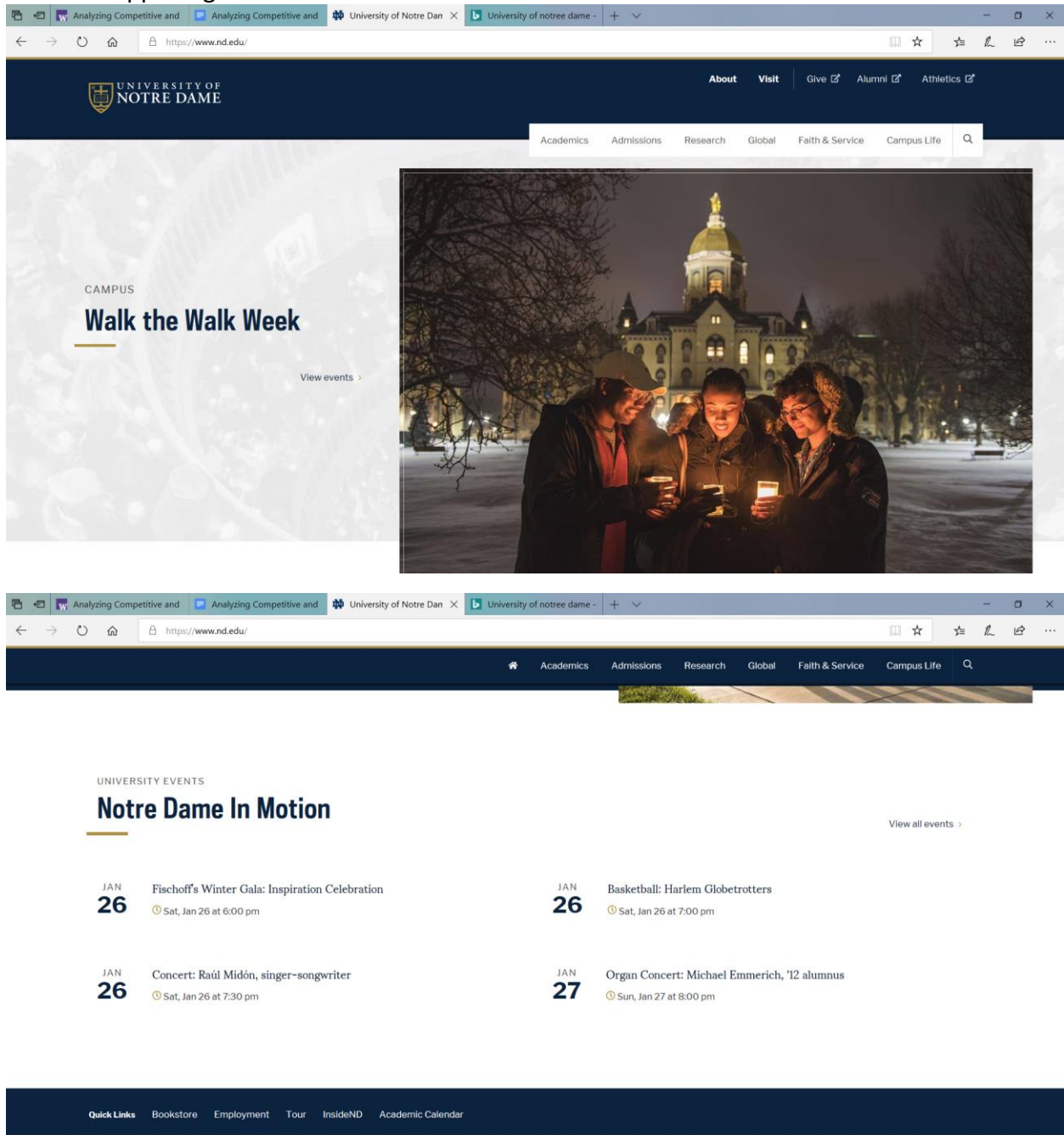
2. Identify what the main goals of the site seem to be.

- Demonstrate Mission/Objectives(“Research, Global”, “Faith & Service”)
- Provide a visual of campus life
- Reveal prestige status
- Provide information on upcoming events /Campus News
- Social media

3. Identify which heuristics and design metrics

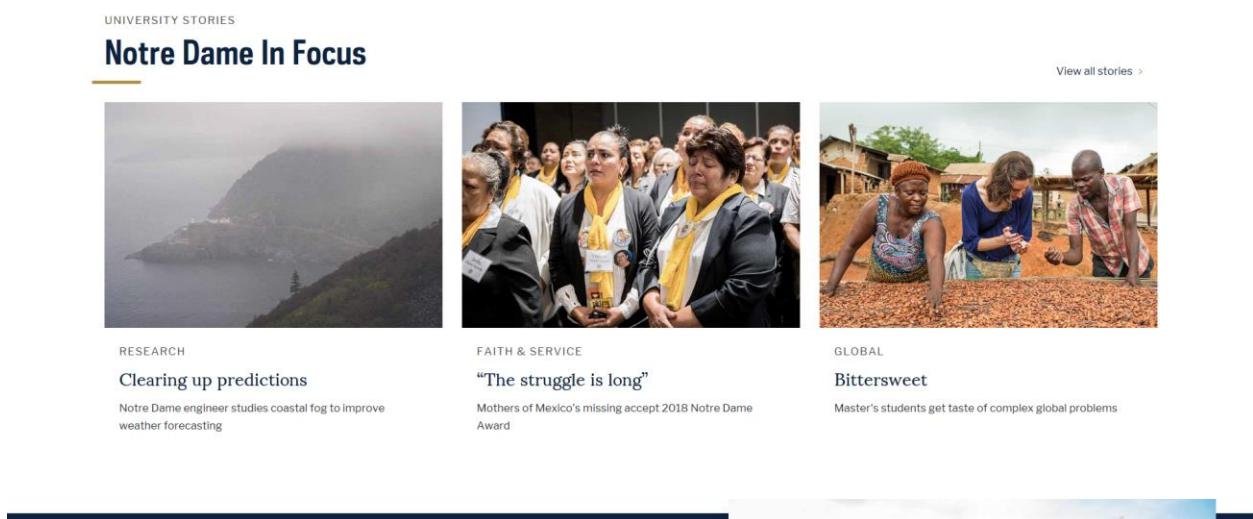
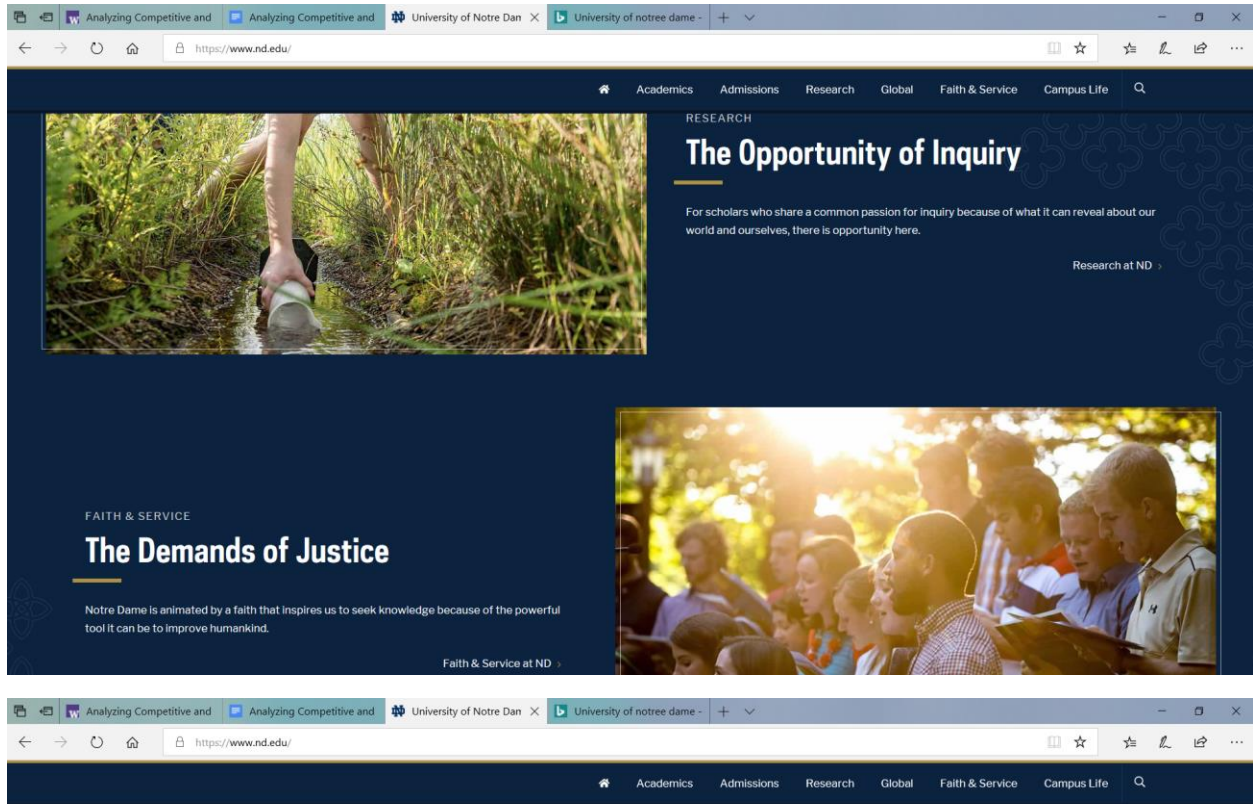
Visibility of system status

Homepage Screenshots 1 & 2 : Shows how Norte Dame displays their upcoming events and provides a link that user can follow to easily find out more information or about more event that are happening.



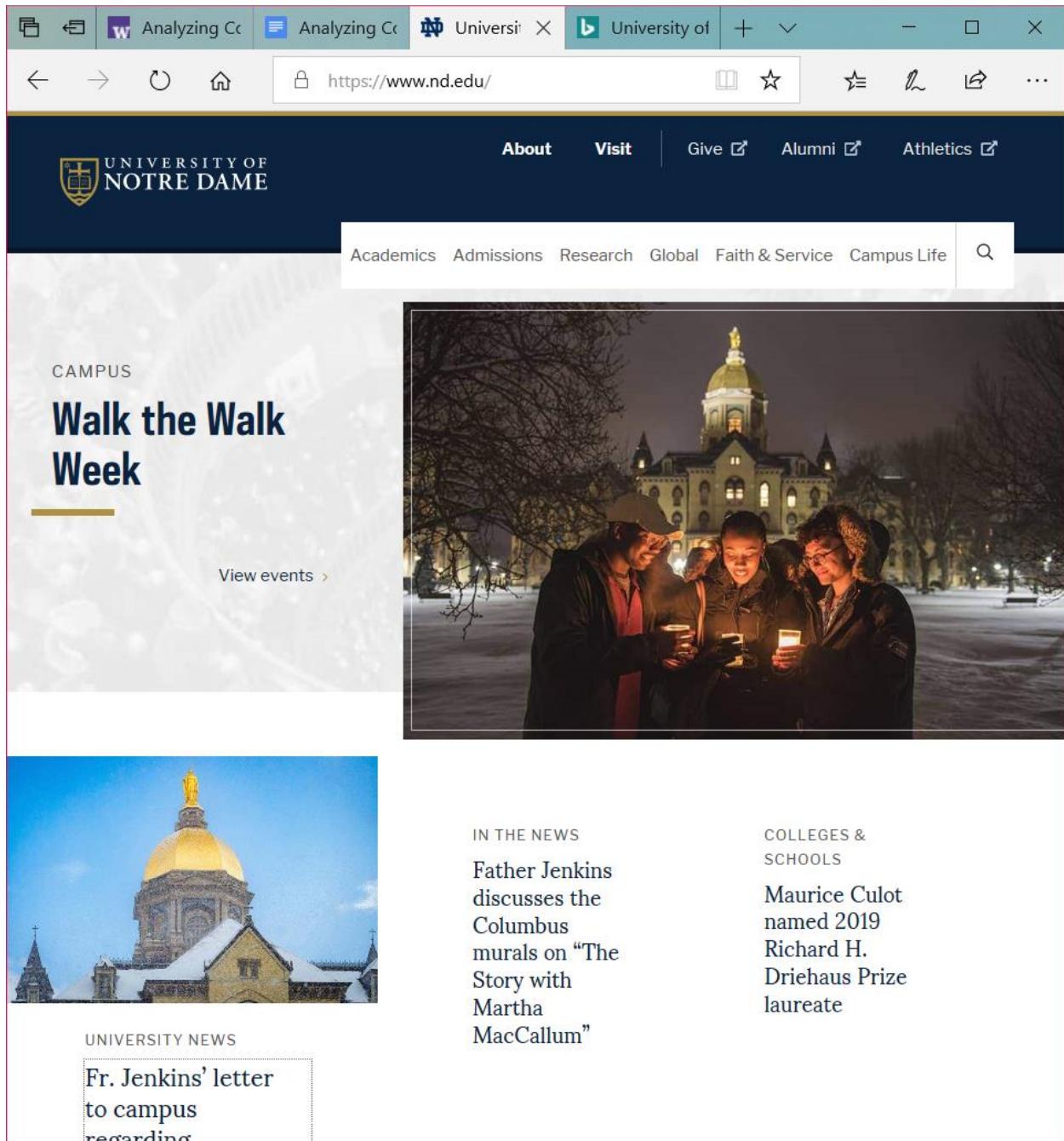
Aesthetic and minimalist design**

Homepage Screenshot 1& 2: On the home page there is not allot of variety in information the website focuses on only topics that are most important to the school such as Faith & Service, Research and Global/international involvement.



Match between system and the real world

Homepage Screenshot: The links on the homepage are given names that are short and descriptive enough so a user would know exactly what information will be found when they click on the link.



4. Identify a few key areas where it doesn't live up to its promise (given the heuristics of interest).

User control and freedom*

As I go through the site there does not seem to be a clear way to return to the last page or even the homepage just by using the links within the webpage. Some trial and error are needed.

Help and documentation***

I did not see a help or documentation page on the website if there was one it is not easily found from a new user standpoint. I think that like a FAQ page would be helpful or contact information that you could call for general information.

Group Conclusion of Analysis

Common highlights

Many of us found that the inspirational sites we researched emphasized clean UI, consistent aesthetics, and effective information architecture. Additionally, using easily recognizable vocabulary that college students would expect on a university website seemed to be a common theme. Considering that the main user is the prospective student, it is essential to provide an inviting and effective experience for these users. These users are looking for specific information and need to navigate to that information easily and quickly. Additionally, attractive UIs and themes help convince these users that the university cares about its reputation and appearance, and that the university wants to look good for the user.

Common lowlights

There were multiple instances of unclear navigation on some sites, with some links leading to incorrect/misleading web pages and other links not providing accurate indication that the user was interacting with any specific element in the navigation menu.

Users who struggle to find/navigate to essential pages, especially new users or prospective students, are much more likely to immediately back out of the site due to frustration at the inability to find what they're looking for.

Research Questions

1. What are the top priorities for the website ?
2. Why will people come to the site? Why will they come back?
3. What are the typical tasks that users will need to perform on the site?

4. Do you think that the website is successful?
5. How is the success of the website measured, if at all?
6. Are there any marketing activities that will drive traffic to the website?
7. Which tasks are critical for users' success on the website?
8. What is the single most important message the user should remember?
9. What action should the website entice the user to take?
10. Who is the website's top competitors?